MARYLAND
ESEA FLEXIBILITY
REQUEST

February 28, 2012
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Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF REQUESTS

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

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5. Resources: Resources necessary to complete the key activities, including staff time and additional funding.

6. Significant obstacles: Any major obstacles that may hinder completion of key milestones and activities (*e.g.,* State laws that need to be changed) and a plan to overcome them.

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

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

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

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

Each request must include:

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

Requests should not include personally identifiable information.

Process for Submitting the Request: An SEA must submit a request to the Department to receive the flexibility. This request form and other pertinent documents are available on the Department's Website 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

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS, CONTINUED

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.

COVER SHEET FOR ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST

Legal Name of Requester: Bernard J. Sadusky, Ed.D.	Requester's Mailing Address: Office of the Superintendent Maryland State Department of Education 200 West Baltimore Street Baltimore, MD 21201

State Contact for the ESEA Flexibility Request

Name: Mary L. Gable

Position and Office: ***Assistant State Superintendent - Division of Academic Policy***

Contact's Mailing Address:
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Telephone: ***410-767-0473***

Fax: ***410-333-2275***

Email address: mgable@msde.state.md.us

Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Bernard J. Sadusky, Ed.D.	Telephone: 410-767-0462
Signature of the Chief State School Officer:  X	Date: 2-28-12

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, as appropriate, even if those schools do not have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more.

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

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

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

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

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

Optional Flexibility:

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

☐ 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. (Principle 2)

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

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

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

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

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

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

☒ 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.
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.

I. Maryland Context

Maryland has 24 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) from 23 counties and Baltimore City. As of fall 2011, those 24 LEAs had 852,211 PreK–12 students (see http://www.mdreportcard.org). Generally speaking, Maryland divides its schools into six regions. The Baltimore Metropolitan Region has six LEAs: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County, Harford County, and Howard County. It also has the SEED School, a publicly-funded, residential boarding school featured on May 23, 2010, on CBS News' *60 Minutes* program. The Baltimore Metropolitan Region is the largest of the six regions. The National Capital Region includes Montgomery County and Prince George's County and is the second-largest region in the State. The Western Maryland Region has four LEAs: Allegany County, Frederick County, Garrett County, and Washington County. The Upper Shore Region has five LEAs and includes Caroline County, Cecil County, Kent County, Queen Anne's County, and Talbot County. The Lower Shore Region has four LEAs and includes Dorchester County, Somerset County, Wicomico County, and Worcester County. Finally, the Southern Maryland Region is home to three LEAs and includes Calvert County, Charles County, and St. Mary's County.

Maryland will continue to take advantage of its relatively small number of LEAs (24) to provide individualized support and ongoing technical assistance in carrying out the State's goals. Dr. Bernard Sadusky, Interim State Superintendent, meets monthly with all LEA Superintendents, and appropriate MSDE staff meets monthly with Assistant Superintendents and curriculum content supervisors. Maryland's small size makes it a good investment for developing and implementing education reform, as the State's close relationship with all 24 Superintendents ensures constant collaboration, oversight, assistance, rapid communications, and capacity building.

II. Engaging All Stakeholders about the Flexibility Application

Maryland is quite experienced in engaging stakeholders, especially teachers, to build support for education reforms. Maryland has a long history of bringing together education, business, foundation, and community agencies to achieve student success, and to actively engage them in reform efforts.

Maryland utilized much of the communication plan from the State's work on Race to the Top to ensure engagement of all the appropriate stakeholder groups. An Executive Steering Committee coordinated Maryland's Race to the Top application, ensuring that all stakeholders were informed and contributing suggestions. The committee was co-chaired by now-retired State Superintendent Nancy S. Grasmick and James DeGraffenreidt, Jr., the president of the State Board of Education. Membership included the Director of Policy for Governor Martin O'Malley; the presidents of the Baltimore Teachers Union (American Federation of Teachers [AFT] affiliate) and the Maryland State Education Association (National Education Association [NEA] affiliate); the Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM), school boards, elementary principals, and secondary principals; the Maryland Parent Teacher Association; the Maryland Business Roundtable; representatives from higher education (State and private colleges and universities, and community colleges); and an advisor from the national AFT.

The letters of support from most of the organizations these individuals represent, as well as from a broad spectrum of others across the State for the Race to the Top application, confirm that Maryland is a united community committed to systemic and sustainable improvements in its public schools. In fact, among the many letters of support Maryland received for its Race to the Top efforts was correspondence signed by every 2009–10 Maryland Local Teacher of the Year (including the teachers from Montgomery County and Frederick County — the only two Local Education Agencies (LEAs) that did not sign on to Race to the Top) and from approximately 30 former Teachers of the Year, as well as Milken Award winners who collectively expressed their support for the Maryland reform plan.

Similarly, as Maryland began preparing the application for the ESEA flexibility, multiple efforts were made to engage as many stakeholders as possible. Maryland held or participated in at least thirty-eight meetings (see Appendix C-1-Consultation Evidence), representing stakeholders from all the appropriate groups in Maryland (see Appendix C-2- Stakeholder Groups) to discuss the flexibility

application process and solicit feedback on the options offered in the application.

Continuing the success of the work on Race to the Top, Maryland used many of the groups that have been convened for Race to the Top work to gather feedback on the flexibility application. This includes the Race to the Top Executive Advisory Meetings. This group includes LEA administrative personnel, teachers, principals, students, parents, higher education, organizations representing students with disabilities and English Language Learners, and business organizations.

As mentioned above, the Interim State Superintendent of School, Dr. Bernard Sadusky, holds meetings with all 24 Local Superintendents on a monthly basis. Dr. Sadusky has discussed the flexibility application with the superintendents in at least the last 5 meetings, beginning September 2011 through January 2012. He solicited their views on the pros and cons of applying for the flexibility and then about each of the components of the application. As the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) staff drafted versions of each of the components, Dr. Sadusky brought them back to the superintendents for feedback that was used to revise the models.

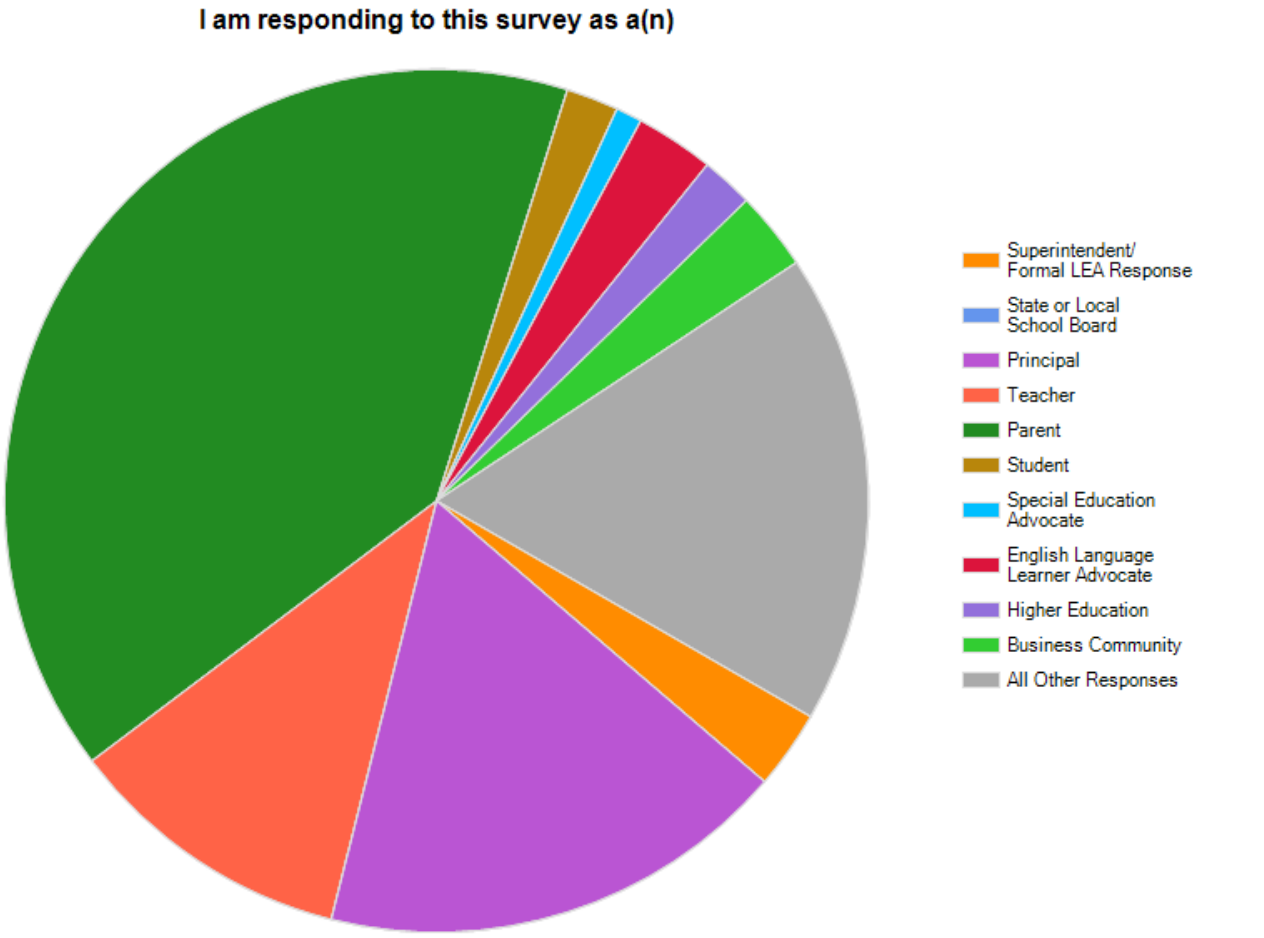
Similarly, Dr. Sadusky and his staff presented information about the components of flexibility and the process of developing the application to the Maryland State Board of Education at each of its monthly meetings (September 2011 to the present). The Board provided feedback on the decision to apply for flexibility as well as offered feedback on the elements of the flexibility application which were incorporated into the final application. Additionally, the State Board of Education held a special meeting on February 13, 2012, after the public comment period ended to review and endorse the final application.

Dr. Sadusky and his staff provided updates to the Governor and the legislative analysts explaining the flexibility request, what the flexibility would mean to Maryland, and soliciting feedback and support for Maryland's application. MSDE staff have attended student council meetings, parent and community engagement meetings, gatherings with teacher associations and meetings of advocacy groups for both children with special needs and English Language Learners. During the public comment period, MSDE sent a personal copy of the application to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and to the Advocate for Children and Youth (ACY) to request their feedback. All of these meetings were in addition to the outreach done with members of each of these groups who sit on various councils

spearheaded by MSDE. Each time a member of the MSDE staff went out to these groups they offered an explanation of the purpose of the flexibility, an update on where Maryland was in the drafting of its application and sought feedback on any developments. All comments were collected and incorporated into the final application (Please see Attachments 1, 2, and 3 for evidence of Maryland's engagement and the feedback received.)

Maryland posted a draft copy of the application, all attachments, appendices, and a link to the survey monkey feedback tool online (1/25/12) with a message, prominently displayed on the first page of the MSDE website. Emails were sent (1/26/12) to advocacy groups, LEAs, the Community of Practitioners, and groups of stakeholders that had been engaged in this work to alert them to the posting of the draft. The draft remained posted for two weeks (until 2/8/12 at noon) and all comments were either emailed directly to MSDE staff or gathered through a survey monkey feedback site (see survey in Attachment 3).

In the two weeks that the draft remained posted, MSDE received 94 comments, the majority (41) of which came from parents. Fifteen of the comments came from "others" such as representatives of teacher unions, non profits, and non publics, president of a youth organization, grandparents, Supplemental Education Services provider, a Committee of Practitioners member, and several LEA central office staff. Eighteen respondents identified themselves as principals, eleven as teachers and at least four identified as English Language Learner or Special Education Advocates. The pie chart below illustrates the variety of stakeholders who responded to the opportunity to provide feedback. It is important to note that individuals could identify as being in more than one stakeholder category. For example, a teacher who was also a parent could mark both categories. The responders came from every district in the State, with Baltimore City being the most represented (34).



Individuals were able to write open ended responses about their thoughts on the consultation section as well as the four Principles and then rate each section and the overall application. Twelve individuals commented on MSDE's consultation strategies. The comments were generally positive with one respondent thanking MSDE for the opportunity to provide input and noting "Community input provides a forum to gain broader support for MSDE priorities and to improve upon program direction and planning."

In Principle 1, feedback included some concerns about technology in all districts, principal preparation programs, and addressing the students taking ALT-MSA. This was due in part to the fact that the application that was posted was in draft form. Maryland has specifically responded to concerns about students who take the ALT-MSA in the application and has included these scores in achievement and growth measures within the School Progress Index. Overall, this section received positive feedback with one respondent noting "Pleased to see a special focus being put upon ELL students and students

with disabilities."

Eleven respondents offered feedback on Principle 2 which was relatively positive. One concern about Maryland's accountability system, that subgroups will not receive the appropriate amount of focus, has been continually voiced by Special Education advocates and was mentioned in the feedback in Principle 2. MSDE staff have been working closely with the special education and English Language Learner communities to allay some of these concerns. Maryland preserved a strong focus on subgroup achievement in AMOs, retained its n size of 5 to maintain strong accountability for all students, and has proposed a reward structure that specifically rewards schools for reducing achievement gaps with all subgroups. These decisions were made with the advice and consultation of the advocates in these areas. In fact, one respondent noted that "We were pleased to see that MSDE will continue to require accountability requirements and will also improve data systems that have the capacity to differentiate between subgroups in a meaningful and useful approach."

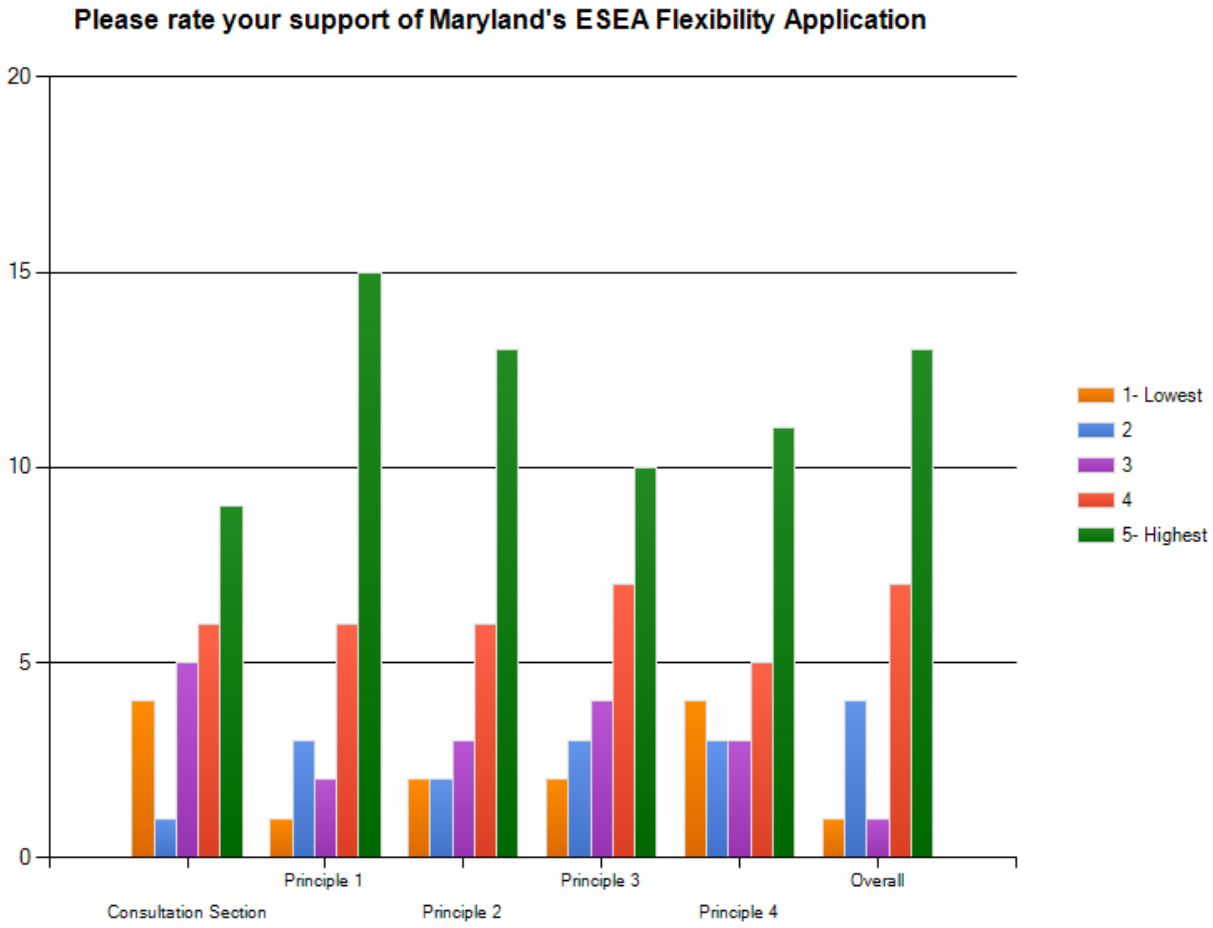
Feedback on Principle 3 was completed by 12 respondents. Overall, they responded that they were pleased with the steps Maryland has been taking to redesign its teacher/principal evaluation system. Positive comments included praise for considerations of student growth, allowing the option of a fourth rating category, and linking evaluation with professional development. Concerns included using the School Progress Index as part of the evaluation model, evaluating the effectiveness of the assessments to be used, and the evaluation cycle. MSDE has responded to many of these comments in the final application, including a clearer explanation of the School Progress Index and how it will be used in the teacher/principal evaluation model.

There was no explanation of Principal 4, reducing duplication and unnecessary burden, at the time the draft proposal was posted. Therefore, many of the comments were about the lack of information. At the time of the posting, Maryland made a statement that it would evaluate and based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. Since the posting, Maryland has explained how the Master Plan process reduces the paperwork burden and that future meetings about this process will pay special attention to even further reduction of duplicative reporting without jeopardizing the integrity of the accountability systems.

One concern that was raised in the feedback process came from Supplemental Education Service (SES)

providers mainly from Baltimore City with additional concerns from SES providers in Baltimore County and Prince George's County. Because the flexibility would allow low-performing LEAs to use the funds they had been required to reserve for SES for other uses, SES providers are concerned that their services will be eliminated. Maryland has responded to this by clearly stating in the application that an LEA may still choose to use its funds for SES, although it will not be required to do so. Furthermore, Interim State Superintendent, Dr. Bernard Sadusky, met with a group of representatives from SES providers in the State to hear their concerns and explain Maryland's position. Still, the SES providers encouraged parents to contact MSDE to advocate for "keeping" SES. As a result, each section of the feedback has some comments about maintaining the current SES programs. Additionally, MSDE received approximately 200 postcards that were pre-printed "Save SES" and approximately 20 calls from parents requesting the same.

Overall, MSDE was very pleased with the feedback and stakeholder input received through the public feedback survey. Twenty-nine of the respondents chose to rate the components of the application and the application overall. On a 1-5 scale with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, the overall application received a 4.04. A graph of the overall ratings is below:



Although some concerns were raised about specific portions of the application and the level of involvement certain groups had over others, MSDE is confident that consultation was approached in good faith in as many ways as possible. One respondent validated this impression by stating "The application paints an accurate picture of what has happened in the process of stakeholder involvement and reflects the current status of Maryland's progress in meeting RTTT requirements and those of the ESEA waiver." MSDE staff made a concerted effort to not only involve all stakeholder groups, but to respond to their concerns either verbally, through email, response letters, or in this application. Seventeen respondents chose to make general comments on the application. MSDE is especially proud of the following comment from the Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition:

> We want to applaud MSDE for its commitment to meaningful stakeholder input and the responsiveness of MSDE leadership who are involved with this effort. In addition, we want to acknowledge that prior to releasing the draft, MSDE already made key decisions that demonstrate a strong commitment to accountability for students in every subgroup and to improve instruction through implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

III. Engagement around Principle #1— College- and Career-Ready Expectations for all Students

Maryland's work on engaging stakeholders to work on creating college- and career-ready expectations began before the opportunity for ESEA flexibility was announced. Like many other Race to the Top states, Maryland had already agreed to adopt the Common Core State Standards as part of its Race to the Top application. Importantly, this decision was informed by many of the stakeholders in Maryland.

Beginning in the summer 2002, Maryland departed from a long tradition of total local curriculum control to implement a Statewide Maryland curriculum. Maryland developed the Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC) in the summer 2002 and took the mathematics and reading curriculums to the State Board in June 2003. It was voluntary for LEAs to adopt the State curriculum. More than 900 educators throughout Maryland came together to develop the curriculum in English/Language Arts, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, health, physical education, fine arts, and school library media, and to develop cross-cutting expectations and tools to help content-area teachers instruct English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. Educators in each of the State's 24 LEAs were deeply engaged in developing this curriculum. In 2008 the VSC became the Maryland State Curriculum and all 24 local districts aligned to this curriculum for the Maryland School Assessments (MSAs) and the High School Assessments (HSAs). This experience served as a model for engaging teachers and their representatives as Maryland adopted the Common Core State Standards in June 2010 and began development of the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum.

In both reforms, and as described below (see Principle 1), Maryland initiated meetings of cross-district, cross-discipline, and cross-grade-level (including higher education) to come together to develop a model curricular framework based on the Common Core State Standards. These cross area teams also included educators with a focus on English Language Learners and Students With Disabilities (SWD). MSDE shared the draft products iteratively with educators in each of the 24 LEAs and in higher education for multiple rounds of feedback and redrafting until the writing teams were satisfied that the materials were of exceptional quality. The curricula were shared with grade-level teams at the Educator Effectiveness Academies (described more below) which MSDE conducted over the summer 2011. The participants in these Academies were tasked with bringing the information back to their own schools and had to develop a plan for doing so (See Principle 1 for a more complete description).

State Board adoption was the culmination of months of active participation by Maryland educators and stakeholders in the development of the standards. Three MSDE staff members provided feedback and guidance to the Common Core State Standards Initiative during the standards development phase. Four representatives from Maryland colleges and universities — Francis (Skip) Fennell (McDaniel College), Denny Gulick (University of Maryland, College Park), Bernadette Sandruck (Howard Community College), and Stephen Wilson (Johns Hopkins University) — also served on the standards development teams or feedback teams. In addition, MSDE, the Maryland State Education Association (MSEA), local colleges and universities, and the Maryland Business Roundtable provided extensive feedback.

To expand the base of participation, MSDE invited all 24 LEA supervisors in each of the content areas of reading, English/Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies to comment, along with all 24 Local Assistant Superintendents for Instruction, the 25 higher-education representatives on the Statewide Standards for College English Committee, and mathematics higher-education representatives.

Twenty-three of the 24 systems (90 educators in all) were represented at regular MSDE content briefings and feedback sessions on the Common Core State Standards. With the permission of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), the 24 Local Assistant Superintendents received an overview of the draft K–12 Common Core State Standards at their February 2011 meeting and were given the opportunity to identify concerns. Moreover, to get a head start on the next phase of implementation, 10 Reading/English/Language Arts specialists from multiple LEAs and 14 mathematics specialists began comparing the draft Common Core State Standards to the existing Maryland State Curriculum (see the gap analysis description in Principle 1).

Concerned about the difficulty in engaging higher education faculty and cognizant of how imperative their involvement was to creating college-and career-ready standards, MSDE contacted the University System of Maryland (USM) and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to set up a meeting specifically to gather feedback from the higher education faculty. Two meetings were held, one for English/Language Arts and one for mathematics, involving more than one hundred faculty and including not just teacher educators, but English and mathematics content faculty as well. MSDE staff from the Division of Instruction presented the draft of the curriculum frameworks for all grade levels in both content areas. Higher Education faculty reviewed the frameworks and offered feedback that

MSDE staff then incorporated into the final frameworks. MSDE also used this opportunity to explain the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the role higher education faculty could play in that work. (Appendix C-3)

Most importantly, this collaboration created a network of practitioners from the full P-20 spectrum to continue to work together to ensure that all students in Maryland are college- and career-ready. MSDE has continued to offer regional meetings for all teachers, principals, students, parents, other LEA representatives, higher education faculty, and any other interested stakeholders, to continue a dialogue about college- and career-ready standards (Appendix C-4).

Finally, MSDE publishes a monthly update on Race to the Top that often includes information about the progress on implementation of the Common Core State Standards and the PARCC Assessments. MSDE also issues a document titled "*Maryland Classroom*" that provides ongoing updates about all the initiatives in Maryland education. Both of these documents are published on the MSDE website and the *Maryland Classroom* is distributed in limited numbers to every school in the State. The purpose of both documents is to continue to reach out to the public and engage all stakeholders in all reform efforts in Maryland. (Appendix C-5 and can also be found at: http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/race_to_the_top).

IV. Engagement around Principle #2— State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability and Support

Teachers and their representatives were also intricately involved in the development of the State differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. MSDE held multiple meetings to solicit feedback from teachers and their representatives including presentations to Educators Association representatives. The National Teacher of the Year 2010, Michelle Shearer, and the Maryland State Teacher of the Year 2011, Joshua Parker, were both engaged directly about their thoughts and feedback on the process.

MSDE held a stakeholder meeting for all the LEA superintendents and/or their accountability and assessment representatives to engage them in the development of this system. Eighteen of the twenty-four LEAs were represented. The group, which included at least six superintendents, reviewed the requirements and options for Principle 2. They agreed that they wanted to do an Index that expressed

the value Maryland places on achievement, student growth, gap closing, college- and career-readiness, and the graduation rate. They discussed the options of super-groups, n-sizes, and which schools should be involved. They advised the MSDE staff drafting the model to keep it simple, align it with strategic initiatives, and base all components on presently available data, with the ability to add more as data became available.

In addition to the above mentioned meeting, MSDE provided updates and gathered feedback at the monthly PSSAM meetings in November and December 2011 and in January 2012. MSDE shared progress, data, and the draft Index. The superintendents' continuous feedback was utilized in the development of the models.

As the components of the new model were developed, MSDE staff shared them with all of the stakeholder groups MSDE works with as well as offering to visit all teacher education associations and any district that wanted more explanation and input. This resulted in attendance at Special Education Meeting, ELL Advisory Council, and an LEA Teacher Union meeting. At each meeting, staff presented the most recent version of the new recognition, accountability and reward system, solicited input and support and brought it back for consultation and action as appropriate. The ELL Advisory Council recommended a differentiated approach to AYP for ELLs that links both a student's time in an ESOL program and current English language proficiency level (beginning, intermediate, advanced) to expectations for achievement on State assessments. The ELL Advisory Council also felt that NCLB was an important catalyst for transparency and accountability regarding ESOL programs and ELL student achievement. The group cautioned that we do not want to lose ground related to this emphasis on rigor and accountability for ELLs. Additionally, special education advocates shared emails, letters and feedback on "n" size and discouraged the use of a super subgroup and the use of the IEP as a multiple measure. In response to this feedback and the suggestion that Maryland keep its small subgroup size for AYP purposes so as not to lose the focus on ELL and SWD students, MSDE is maintaining the current "n" size of 5 and is not requesting an increase in "n" size.

To continue feeding all the input into the model, MSDE formed an internal working group of Assistant State Superintendents, led by the Interim State Superintendent. This group included two consultants hired by MSDE to help develop the specific metrics. Meeting on an almost bi-weekly basis, every member of this group solicited feedback from stakeholder groups, brought it back to the authors, and

was responsible for making sure all voices were heard, incorporated, and included in the final application while also responding to the feasibility of the model options.

V. Engagement around Principle #3 — Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

While the broad framework of Maryland's new educator evaluation system has been established through State law, MSDE relied extensively on consultations, feedback, and focus-group discussions with teachers and principals from throughout the State to begin filling in key details and next steps. Similar to Maryland's adoption of the Common Core State Standards, the work for this application actually began with the Race to the Top application. Specifically, a series of 24 focus groups consisting of 432 stakeholders — including superintendents, human resource directors, teachers, ELL and SWD educators, representatives of teacher associations, and representatives from higher-education teacher preparation and arts and sciences faculty — provided input on the draft framework for teacher evaluations that was originally presented in Maryland's Race to the Top Application. Eleven focus groups engaged 200 principals and 30 supervisors of principals on the draft framework for principal evaluations. Just as a similar consultative process a decade ago helped the State shift to a mandatory curriculum (described in Principle 1) that was widely accepted and used, this outreach and consultation on the evaluation system has helped lay a strong groundwork and broader buy-in for the new evaluation system as Maryland shifts from a locally determined system to a Statewide framework with required components and consistent quality, but still with local flexibility.

Additionally, Maryland established the Maryland Educator Effectiveness Council (MEEC) which required the participation of representatives from individuals/groups such as: State Superintendent; Members of the General Assembly; Governor's Policy Director; State Board of Education; Local Boards of Education; LEA Superintendents; Maryland State Education Association; Baltimore Teachers Union; LEA Assistant Superintendents for Instruction; LEA School Business Officials; LEA Executive Officers; Local Accountability Coordinators; LEA Human Resources Directors; Title I coordinators; Principals; MSDE/LEA identified teachers; Institutions of Higher Education (USM system, private colleges and community colleges); Community/Business; PTA; National Psychometric Council; Maryland Assessment Research Center for Education Success (MARCES); and students. At least six teachers or their representatives where required to make up the Council. The job of this Council is to submit recommendations to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Maryland State Board of Education for the development of a model evaluation system for educators. The interim report

of this Council, informed by the pilots (discussed below) is the basis for the Maryland model that is included in this application.

As part of the work of the MEEC, Maryland held a series of think tank meetings that were designed around specific content areas. In addition to content areas, there were ESOL teachers, special educators, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) educator think tanks. The think tanks were charged with how to define student growth for content that is not part of the content accountability assessments and what measures would be used to then evaluate the teachers of the specific subject or area. Some examples of feedback include: the group of ELL educators identified sample measures of an ESOL teacher's effectiveness, English language proficiency assessment measures, and specific ELL "look-fors" for teacher observations and teacher portfolios; the Special Education group identified reasonable growth measures that included pre and post measures, improvement over baselines and growth from pre to post rather than IEPs; Science educators focused on quarterly assessments and portfolios; finally, mathematics educators recommended that student growth be incorporated with a focus on how pre and post tests are constructed. All recommendations were then presented to the Maryland Educator Effectiveness Council and were considered for incorporation into the report and pilot models.

Currently seven districts are piloting the system recommended by MEEC (see Principle 3 for more information). The leadership teams of these pilots, which include superintendents, district staff, principals and teachers, meet on a monthly basis and offer input and feedback into what is and is not working and how that information can be used to make adjustments to the Statewide model that will be piloted in the next school year. MSDE has hired three RTTT contractual employees who act as liaisons between the pilot districts, non-pilot districts, and MSDE to ensure a continuous feedback loop of communication and adjustment.

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.

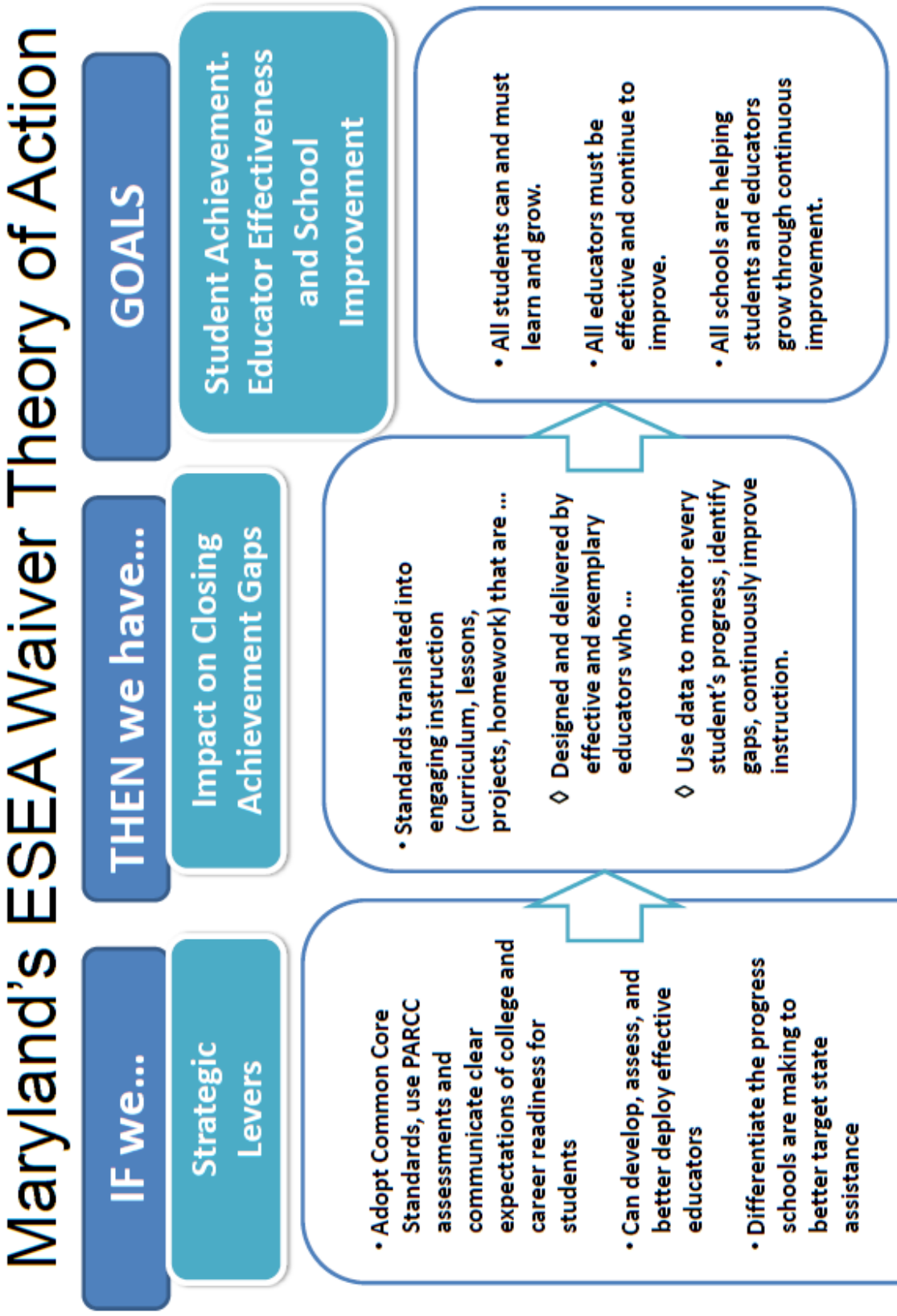
Even in its fourth straight year as *Education Week's* number one ranked school system in the nation and the *College Board's* number one ranking in Advanced Placement performance, the Maryland Department of Education (MSDE) is always challenging itself to improve. MSDE's core values of commitment to every student, belief that all students can and must learn, certainty that schools must help students grow, and conviction that the educator evaluation system must be equitable are achieved through data-driven accountability systems, high standards of excellence from teachers and principals and dynamic collaboration between Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and MSDE. Maryland's ambitious mission is to provide every student with a world-class education that ensures post-graduation college- and career-readiness. Every student must be prepared to graduate from a Maryland public school with the content knowledge and learning skills to be successful in the future, whether post-secondary education, job training, or an immediate career.

Maryland's excellence in education is made possible by seamless and supportive partnerships connecting the 24 LEAs with MSDE. Maryland continually challenges its education system to be "world class" by providing strong State education policy, programs, and leadership. Annual reports by every school system on student achievement are scrutinized within the framework of State and federal standards. LEAs are required to include strategies and methodologies for further improvement, which must be approved by the Maryland State Board of Education.

Maryland educators are building a homegrown Maryland Curriculum, aligned with the Common Core State Standards, to help students achieve the national standards. Such cutting-edge activity is also visible in the emphasis on a Statewide technology infrastructure that links all data elements with analytic and instructional tools to better monitor student achievement.

In regards to Principle 1, Maryland adopted college- and career-ready standards for all students and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), which is focused on developing summative assessments that will measure each student's readiness for college and careers and will be sufficiently reliable and valid for student and school accountability. The new Maryland CCSS Curriculum Framework emphasizes the incorporation of Universal Design of Learning (UDL) principles. As for Principle 2, Maryland's approach to differentiated recognition, accountability, and support builds upon the differentiated accountability structure that Maryland has been using for the last four years with renewed attention to achievement, equity, growth, and attainment. For Principle 3, Maryland is committed to taking bolder, more aggressive steps to develop an evaluation process for teachers and principals and use that information to help develop the strongest educator corps in the country. Finally, for Principle 4, the flexibility will help Maryland in consolidating similar reports to reduce the burden on schools and school systems in duplicating reports.

The implementation of the flexibility described in this ESEA flexibility request will enhance the ability of the Maryland State Department of Education and the local school systems to increase the quality of instruction for all students as well as improve their achievement levels. Maryland's dedication to accountability, support for educators, spirit of collaboration, and insistence of excellence for all students were fundamental in helping Maryland win Race to the Top, and will continue to guide Maryland in preparing world-class students.


Maryland's ESEA Waiver Theory of Action
IF we...
Strategic Levers
• Adopt Common Core Standards, use PARCC assessments and communicate clear expectations of college and career readiness for students
• Can develop, assess, and better deploy effective educators
• Differentiate the progress schools are making to better target state assistance
THEN we have...
Impact on Closing Achievement Gaps
• Standards translated into engaging instruction (curriculum, lessons, projects, homework) that are ...
◊ Designed and delivered by effective and exemplary educators who ...
◊ Use data to monitor every student's progress, identify gaps, continuously improve instruction.
GOALS
Student Achievement. Educator Effectiveness and School Improvement
• All students can and must learn and grow.
• All educators must be effective and continue to improve.
• All schools are helping students and educators grow through continuous improvement.

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

1A 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.

Maryland's Plan for complete implementation is provided in table form in Appendix 1.B – a narrative of the work is below:

I. Maryland's Definition of College- and Career-Readiness

Through work over recent years with the Maryland P-20 Council, the Maryland Business

Roundtable for Education and our 24 Local Education Agencies, MSDE has developed the following definition for College- and Career-Readiness.

College- and career-readiness includes mastery of rigorous content knowledge and the abilities to apply that knowledge through higher-order skills to demonstrate success in college and careers. This includes the ability to think critically and solve problems, communicate effectively, work collaboratively, and be self-directed in the learning process. More specifically, a student who is college- and career-ready should:

- Be prepared to succeed in credit-bearing postsecondary introductory general education courses or in an industry certification programs without needing remediation;
- Be competent in the *Skills for Success (SFS)* which can be found at http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/2990BAB1-3E67-4E08-9D0E-297014ADE008/10606/SFSFeb1998.pdf. (SFS includes learning, thinking, communication, technology, and interpersonal skills.)
- Have identified potential career goal(s) and understand the steps to achieve them; and
- Be skilled enough in communication to seek assistance as needed, including student financial assistance.

II. Adoption of Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

On June 1, 2009, Maryland signed the Memorandum of Agreement to participate in the development and adoption of internationally benchmarked State standards through the Common Core State Standards Initiative led by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). This initiative now includes 45 other states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories. At that time, Governor Martin O'Malley stated, "Maryland has a long history of high educational standards, which have helped our State to be recognized as the number one-ranked system in the nation. At the same time, our schools and our students must compete globally, and we must continue to raise expectations." The standards were adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education on June 22, 2010 (Attachment 4 is an excerpt from the minutes of that meeting- the complete minutes can be found at: http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/5D922A58-42B9-420F-997F-11CF4B13DEB4/24679/June222010.pdf).

The Common Core State Standards represent an important evolution in standards-based reform, an area where Maryland has demonstrated leadership since the 1980s. Indeed, in 2011, Education Week's *Quality Counts* report gave the State's standards an A ranking. Maryland has led the nation in establishing strong academic standards and accompanying curriculum; shown how to effectively engage hundreds of teachers, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) across the State in developing standards and the State Curriculum; sought outside experts to evaluate the quality of the curriculum; and benchmarked the State's standards and curriculum against those used in high-performing states and countries. Most recently (2007–08), to ensure that its standards were world class and rigorous enough to prepare students for college and careers, Maryland aligned its high school curriculum with the American Diploma Project's College- and Career-Ready Benchmarks in reading, English/Language Arts, and mathematics.

Given this track record for Maryland, the Common Core State Standards are the logical next step in providing a set of rigorous expectations for the State's schools to build on the work the State has accomplished over the past two decades. The standards provide the essential foundation to ensure that all students, including those who traditionally have not succeeded at higher levels, have access to the challenging education opportunities that more privileged students have long taken for granted. As described more fully below, Maryland plans to take essential steps over the next several years to make these standards accessible to all Maryland teachers and students with a specific focus for students with disabilities and English Language Learners by incorporating Universal Design Learning (UDL) principles throughout the standards (Appendix 1.B).

III. Gap Analysis

After the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, MSDE's Division of Instruction created and shared a transition plan. The first step in the transition process was to review the final version of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and compare them to Maryland's State Curriculum. Members of MSDE's Division of Instruction staff invited educators from LEAs, including ESOL teachers and Special Educators, and higher education to compare the State Curricula in mathematics and Reading/English/Language Arts with the CCSS using the Achieve Common Core Comparison Tool (CCCTool). The information provided by this tool was a roadmap to guide State teams in updating the State curriculum, developing tools for

Maryland educators and providing professional development. During the months of August and September 2010, educators completed the match and rate process. This information forms the data set and reports that curriculum revision teams used to create curricular documents and produce and identify materials for the Online Instructional Toolkit.

Mathematics

The CCCTool for mathematics indicated that 88% of the Common Core State Mathematics Standards matched Maryland mathematics standards; there are 495 Common Core State Mathematics Standards. The strength of the matches is categorized as excellent, good, or weak. Twelve percent of the Common Core State Mathematics Standards had no match to Maryland mathematics standards. The mathematics teams considered the strength of the matched standards, as well as those standards that have no match, as they developed curricular documents and tools. Grade level differences were reviewed and appropriate adjustments to the Common Core State Curriculum were completed by May 2011.

Of the 495 Common Core State Mathematics Standards, 55 are "+" standards (all in grades 9 – 12). This means that these standards are not required for students to meet the College- and Career-Readiness standards but represent additional mathematics that students should learn in order to take advanced courses such as calculus, advanced statistics, or discrete mathematics. These "+" standards are the weakest match between the Common Core State Standards and Maryland mathematics standards with a 42% match. The strongest matches occurred in grades K – 5 where the match was 100%.

Overall, Maryland teams identified the strength of the matches in mathematics:

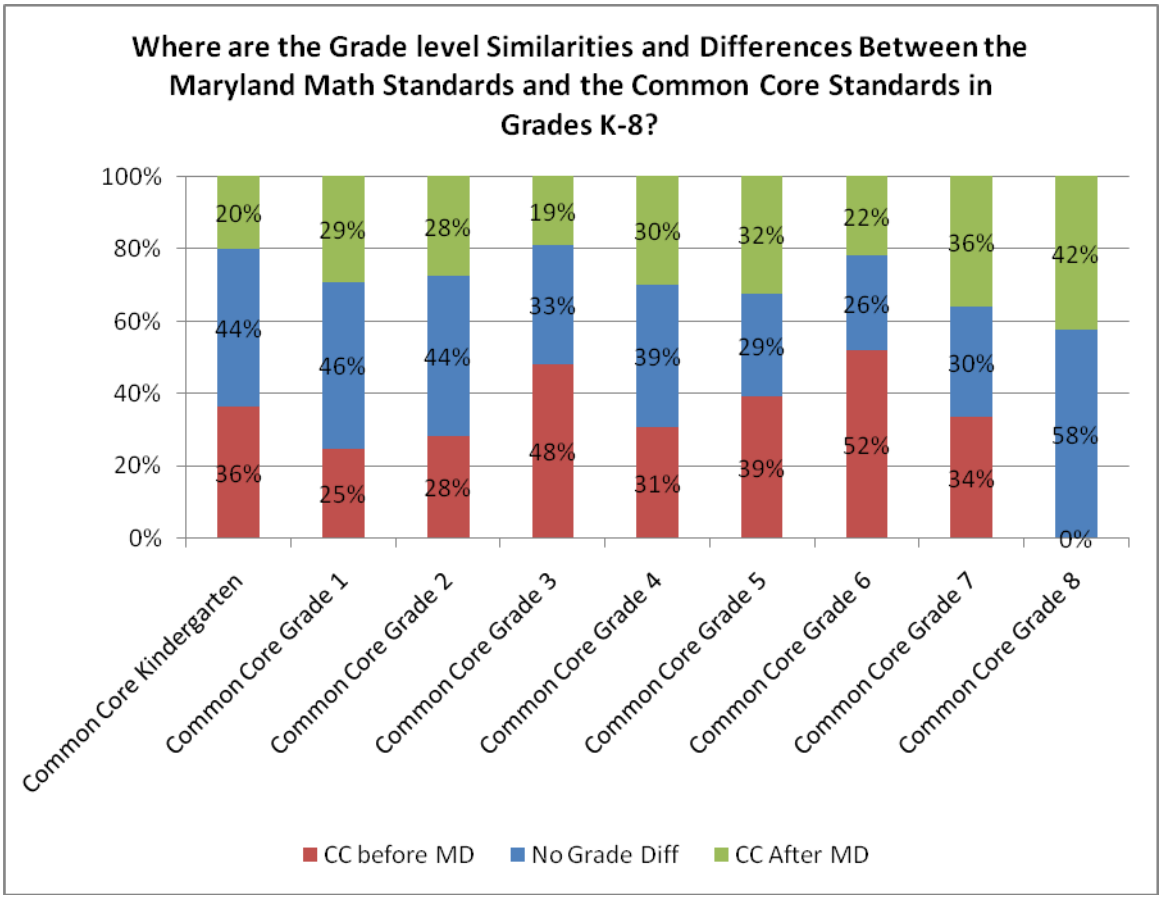
52% (n=258)	Excellent match
21% (n=103)	Good match
15% (n=76)	Weak match
12% (n= 58)	No match

Common Core State Mathematics Standards Frequency Table for Maryland

Grade	Total # of CC standards at grade level	% of Common Core matched	Excellent Match to MD	Good Match to MD	Weak Match to MD	No Match to MD
Grand Total	495	88%	258	103	76	58
K-12 Math Practices	8	100%	2	3	3	0
Kindergarten	25	100%	20	4	1	0
Grade 1	21	100%	13	7	1	0
Grade 2	26	100%	21	4	1	0
Grade 3	35	100%	25	10	0	0
Grade 4	35	100%	30	1	4	0
Grade 5	36	100%	23	6	7	0
Grade 6	43	93%	33	4	3	3
Grade 7	43	84%	21	11	4	7
Grade 8	33	94%	19	7	5	2
Grade 9-12 (Total)	190	76%	51	46	47	46
9-12 non "+"	135	90%	43	43	35	14
9-12 "+" standards	55	42%	8	3	12	32

Grade Level Comparisons

The table below indicates the percentages of matched standards at the same grade levels. However, the number of weak and good matches is significant and requires changes in the Maryland Mathematics Curriculum. These differences in grade level content had implications for the curriculum revision teams for classroom instruction, assessment, professional development, and curriculum materials. The red area indicates that college- and career-standards are taught before they would be taught in the Maryland State Curriculum. The blue area indicates that college- and career-standards are taught at the same time as they would be taught in the Maryland State Curriculum. The green area indicates that college- and career-standards are taught after they would be taught in the Maryland State Curriculum.



English/Language Arts and Literacy in History, Science and Technology

The CCCTool for English/Language Arts (ELA) indicated that 89% of the Common Core

State ELA Standards matched Maryland ELA standards; there are 1019 State Core ELA Standards; this includes the College- and Career-Readiness Anchor Standards and the Literacy in History, Science and Technology Standards.

The strength of the matches is categorized as excellent, good, or weak. Eleven percent of the Common Core State ELA Standards had no match to Maryland ELA standards. The ELA and literacy teams considered the strength of the matched standards as well as those standards that have no match as they developed curricular documents and tools. Grade level differences were also reviewed and appropriate adjustments to the Common Core State Curriculum were completed by May 2011. Most of the ELA matches were on grade level.

The teams reported that writing standards matches presented the most differences because the State Curriculum standards are written as process and the CCSS are written as product.

Overall, Maryland teams identified the strength of the matches in ELA*:

50% (n=433)	Excellent match
22% (n=196)	Good match
17% (n=144)	Weak match
11% (n=95)	No match

*The 32 College- and Career-Readiness Anchor Standards and the Literacy in History, Science and Technology standards are not included in this count.

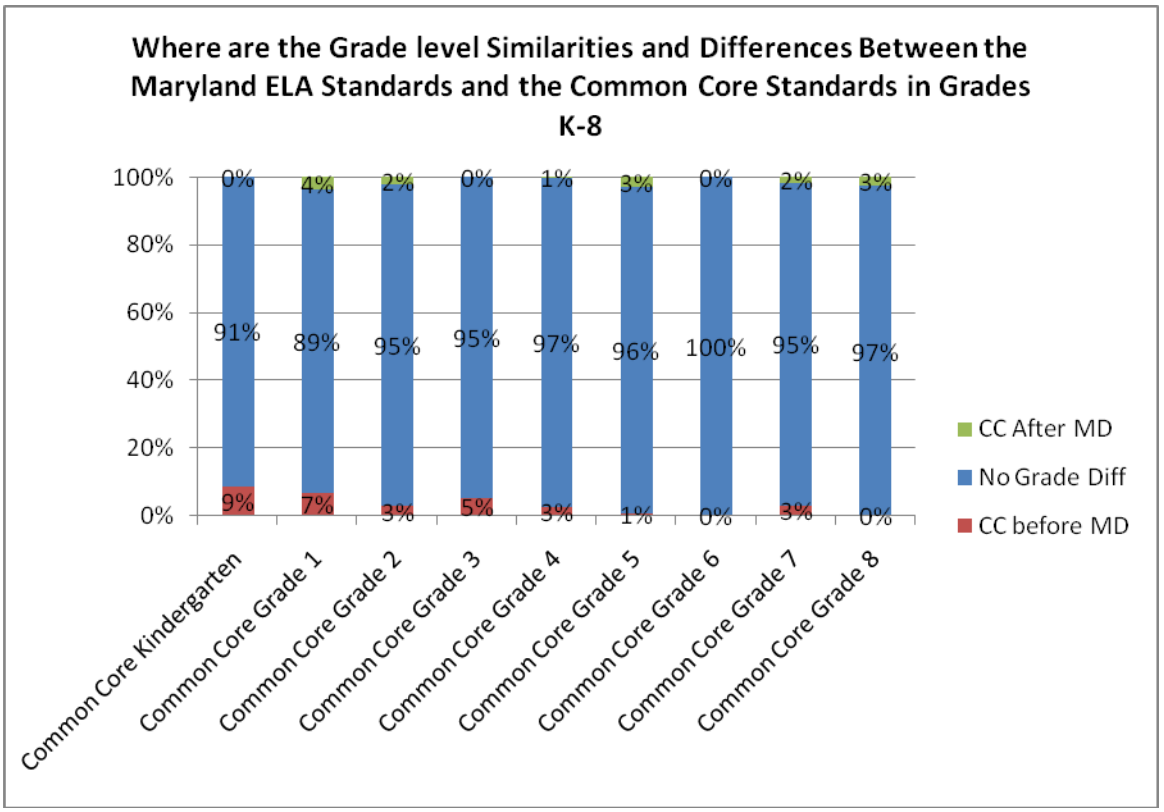
Common Core State ELA Standards Frequency Table for Maryland

Grade/ Grade Band	Total # of Common Core standards at grade level	% of Common Core matched	Excellent Match to Maryland (# of 3s)	Good Match to Maryland (# of 2s)	Weak Match to Maryland (# of 1s)	# of non-matched standards
Total	868	89%	433	196	144	95
Kindergarten	72	88%	35	18	10	9
Grade 1	81	90%	47	20	6	8
Grade 2	71	94%	51	11	5	4

Grade 3	90	93%	54	21	9	6
Grade 4	87	87%	40	24	12	11
Grade 5	85	87%	41	19	14	11
Grade 6-8	79	87%	20	18	31	10
Grade 9-10	76	75%	14	25	18	19
Grade 11-12	78	82%	22	19	23	14

Grade Level Comparisons

The table below indicates the percentages of matched standards at the same grade levels. Differences in grade level content had implications for the curriculum revision teams for classroom instruction, assessment, professional development, and use of curriculum materials. The red area indicates that college- and career-standards are taught before they would be taught in the Maryland State Curriculum. The blue area indicates that college- and career-standards are taught at the same time as they would be taught in the Maryland State Curriculum. The green area indicates that college- and career-standards are taught after they would be taught in the Maryland State Curriculum.



This gap analysis was presented to the State School Board in October 2010. Appendix 1.B.1 contains an excerpt from the minutes of that meeting— the complete minutes can be found at: http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/5D922A58-42B9-420F-997F-11CF4B13DEB4/27202/October262010.pdf).

It is important to note that when teams of Maryland educators developed the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Frameworks (discussed below) during 2010-2011 school year, they specifically identified the excellent matches. The Maryland Curriculum Frameworks include each grade level standard and the "Essential Skills and Knowledge" needed to master that standard. This information was part of the Educator Effectiveness Academy in 2011 (also described below). Additionally, workshops on addressing the transition have targeted specific changes that need to occur which includes addressing standards identified as a low/no match in the CCSS gap analysis or that had a grade misalignment.

IV. Common Core State Curriculum Frameworks

Adopting the world-class expectations embodied in the Common Core State Standards is just the first step Maryland took to ensure that *all* high school graduates are ready for college and careers. The standards are an important foundation. But to meet its ultimate goal of preparing all students for college and careers — including students traditionally not meeting standards — the State had to find and fund more effective strategies for ensuring that these standards make their way into every classroom. The standards had to be: (1) translated into challenging and engaging curriculum, lesson plans, classroom projects, and homework assignments; (2) delivered by effective instructors in schools that are managed by effective principals; and (3) supported by a technology infrastructure and longitudinal data system that can identify achievement gaps among students and help educators intervene in a timely way to close those gaps. Race to the Top has allowed Maryland to re-examine every aspect of its instructional system. The implementation strategies described below and in subsequent sections of this application will ensure that the State closes its persistent achievement gaps and, in the process, lives up to its commitment to transition from national leadership to world-class excellence — and not just for the majority of students who already do well, but also for those who traditionally have lagged behind.

Aligned State Curriculum: After the Maryland State Board of Education approved the Common Core State Standards in June 2010, Maryland began a year-long, Statewide, participatory process to revise its curriculum to align with these new challenging standards. Hundreds of classroom educators, including educators of ELL, SWD, and Gifted and Talented (GTE) students, instructional coaches, LEA curriculum, assessment, and accountability leaders, and members of the higher education community collaborated to refine and align the current Maryland State Curriculum with the Common Core State Standards through the creation of curriculum frameworks. The new Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Frameworks were accepted by the Maryland State Board of Education in June 2011 — an accelerated process made possible by the State's previous work in this area. These frameworks are available at www.mdk12.org.

Online Instructional Toolkit: The State curriculum frameworks, in turn, provided the starting point for the redesign of a widely used and admired online resource for teachers: Maryland's current Online Instructional Toolkit found at the www.mdk12.org website. This content-rich, instantly accessible resource bank was developed in response to teacher requests and links instructional tools, such as curricular objectives, lesson seeds, instructional resources, and annotated publicly released assessment items, to State standards. Maryland teachers, as well as educators across the country, have used this website extensively. For example, in 2009, the website had more than 16 million page views by 1,666,704 unique users. This website is now so ingrained in the culture of Maryland teachers that when the Maryland Business Roundtable hosted teacher focus groups in March 2010 to discuss how teachers wanted to access STEM resources, such as instructional materials and industry externships, teachers said, "The materials must be meta-tagged to the State curriculum and available to us like the mdk12 website."

The items in the toolkit are provided by vendors and MSDE. The review process for vendors is part of the Requests for Proposal that accompany each item. The model units and lessons being developed by Maryland educators and facilitated by curriculum specialists at the Maryland State Department of Education will be reviewed using rubrics.

It is important to note that LEAs in Maryland choose their own instructional materials. However, information from PARCC has been shared and discussed, such as the Publishers'

Criteria for ELA/Literacy, as well as the PARCC Model Content Frameworks. These documents guide educators in criteria for choosing instructional materials. Achieve, Inc., has also developed rubrics for OER (Open Educational Resources) that have been shared and discussed with LEAs. At the 2011 Educator Effectiveness Academies, information on determining text complexity was part of the English/Language Arts/Literacy sessions. This summer (2012), more detailed information on determining text complexity will be included in the Educator Effectiveness Academy. Through all of these options, MSDE is ensuring, where appropriate, that textbooks and other common instructional materials are aligned with the new standards.

Mini Academies for Local Assistant Superintendents of Instruction: As the Maryland Common Core State Standards Curriculum frameworks were created, the local assistant superintendents began developing a structure for the Educator Effectiveness Academies (described below) (Appendix 1.B.2). In these Academies, school district teams began creating their transition plans for the shift from the Maryland State Curriculum to the newly aligned Maryland Common Core State Curriculum. Additionally, the monthly assistant superintendents' meetings, led by the Assistant State Superintendent of the Division of Instruction, have had a dedicated agenda item to transitioning to the Common Core State Standards, including sharing content specific approaches, walking through exercises that can be replicated, analyzing connections with new PARCC assessment information and PARCC content framework information.

V. Individual School Transition Plans— Summer Educator Effectiveness Academies & Professional Development for New Curriculum and Curriculum Resources

Educator Effectiveness Academies 2011: As part of the Race to the Top grant, MSDE conducted 11 regional Educator Effectiveness Academies during the summer 2011. Every school in the State sent a team which consisted of the principal, one ELA teacher, one Mathematics teacher and one STEM teacher. More than 6,000 teachers and principals attended these Academies. The purpose of these Academies was to assist principals and teachers to:

1. Develop knowledge of the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Standards and Framework;

2. Develop an understanding of the relationship between Maryland's vision of STEM and the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Framework;
3. Provide feedback, modifications, and additions to curriculum work completed in 2010-2011;
4. Analyze the Academy content presented to identify prerequisite skills needed and appropriate strategies for scaffolding instruction to build capacity for addressing diverse learning needs; and
5. Create a one-year study plan that will guide school staff in delivering the Academy content.

All schools were given a transition plan template that included how SWD and ELL educators will be trained to support Common Core State Standard implementation, a rubric, and questions to consider as they developed their transition plans (Appendix 1.B.3).

To support educators of Students With Disabilities and English Language Learners, additional briefings on the content of the Educator Effectiveness Academies were held prior to the Academies themselves. This process will continue as the Educator Effectiveness Academies continue.

Academy Participant Responsibilities: Staff members attending the Academies with their principal agreed to plan and organize, in collaboration with the principal, professional development activities during the school year that would assist all staff members, including Special Education and ELL educators, in developing a working knowledge of the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Framework. Members of the school team also agreed to participate in on-line follow-up sessions. In future years, Academy outcomes will expand to include effective use of Maryland's Instructional Improvement System as described in the Race to the Top application. This includes information regarding new summative assessments to be developed by the PARCC consortium, effective use of formative assessment tools, and the Instructional Improvement System. The composition of school teams in future years will also be determined by the principal.

Academy Format: Master teachers facilitated Academy sessions which grouped participants by

content area and grade level (elementary, middle, high) in classes of approximately 25. School principals engaged in activities in collaboration with their teachers in addition to job-alike sessions. Time was provided for school team planning (Appendix 1.B.4).

Selection for the Master Teachers is a collaborative process between the Maryland State Department of Education's (MSDE) Professional Development Team in the Division of Instruction and Maryland's 24 Local Education Agencies. The required qualifications include a Master's degree or Advanced Professional Certificate; successful teaching or co-teaching in Reading, English Language Arts, Math, or STEM related field; A thorough understanding of the existing Maryland State Core Curriculum Frameworks; Evidence of providing professional development at the school, district, state, and/or national level; and evidence of experience/ participation in an online environment. Preferred qualifications include 2011 Educator Effectiveness Academy Master Teacher experience; National Board Certification, Governor's Academy teaching experience; Experience in adult learning theory and practice; Leadership experience; Experience delivering content in an online environment; and participation in curriculum development. Attached are documents that include the qualifications, the application process, the announcement for the application, the application, and rubric (Appendix II- 1). Candidates submit their applications to their local system coordinator and that system forwards their top candidates to MSDE. The MSDE Professional Development Team then works with the selected candidates on placement at the Educator Effectiveness Academy sites.

Academy Evaluation: In June 2011, an MOU was signed by MSDE and University System of Maryland (USM) to evaluate MSDE's Race to the Top work. The Center for Application and Innovation Research in Education (CAIRE) is the USM organization responsible for this program evaluation. Each year of the grant, CAIRE will: evaluate the Educator Effectiveness Academy and related LEA transition plans; review project schedules; conduct a three-phase evaluation – product/process, utilization, and impact— of the 54 RTTT projects; and conduct reviews of LEA goals and initiatives.

The first round of this evaluation just began and CAIRE staff have focused specifically on the Educator Effectiveness Academies from Summer 2011. The very preliminary results suggest a 67% response rate that indicates that there is a valuable partnership between MSDE and the

LEAs in delivering this important content. MSDE is eager to continue to monitor and adjust the future Educator Effectiveness Academies based on this evaluation.

After each summer academy, there are two on-line follow-up sessions; one is posted in the fall and the second is posted in the spring. LEAs submit their transition plans that incorporate their use of academy resources, including on-line follow-up opportunities. The outside evaluation team, CAIRE will evaluate all aspects of the Educator Effectiveness Academies, including follow-up activities. Measureable objectives include identifying the expectations of the academies and whether expectations of the academies are met. Online professional development will continue at the conclusion of the 2013 Summer Effectiveness Academies. There will be twelve online courses for English Language Arts, Mathematics, and STEM. These courses will review content that was presented at the Summer Educator Effectiveness Academies and also provide additional resources and support to educators as they continue implementing the new curriculum aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Educators will be assigned discreet IDs that will enable them to schedule their online professional development. Educators who take the academy online courses will take assessments that will be scored, and will result in grades for each online course. Educators who successfully complete a course will receive a certificate, and a record of their successful completion will become a part of the Educator Information System. This system will allow Maryland to monitor the online professional development.

Educator Effectiveness Academies 2012 and beyond: Ten more regional Educator Effectiveness Academies will be held during the summers of both 2012 and 2013. Academy content will be delivered on-line in 2014 and future years. Evaluation results provided by participants after the 2011 Academies indicated that the structure and activities were highly successful at achieving Academy outcomes. Transition plans produced by school teams to guide professional development activities with school staff members during the 2011-2012 school year demonstrated that Academy activities were highly engaging and focused on implementation of the Common Core State Curriculum and Maryland's STEM initiatives.

Outcomes for the Academy in 2012:

1. Review final version of English/Language Arts and Mathematics Frameworks, identify changes, and introduce content literacy frameworks;

2. Learn STEM standards, practices, processes and skills;
3. Develop knowledge of the format, lessons, and media resources in the English/Language Arts, Mathematics, and STEM curriculum toolkits;
4. Practice navigating curriculum toolkits and develop applications based on curriculum toolkit models;
5. Update participants on PARCC assessment development, design and timeline (and if possible, engage in activities related to innovative item types); and
6. Create a school plan that will guide school staff in delivering content and curriculum toolkit that includes special educators and ELL specialists.

Academy participant responsibilities and the Academy format will remain the same for the 2012 sessions. The MSDE Division of Instruction (DOI) have held in the fall 2011 and will hold in the spring 2012, online follow-up sessions in the fall and spring for school year 2011-2012 which will provide further guidance on the Common Core State Standards and new information provided by PARCC.

In addition, staff from MSDE DOI will make periodic site visits to LEAs requesting assistance with their system planning and/or individual school planning (Appendix 1.B.5). All content discipline supervisory briefings facilitated by members of DOI will have dedicated agenda time for discussing transition guidelines, and sharing system approaches, for the full implementation of the new curriculum targeted for 2013-2014 (Appendix 1.B.6).

Supporting Principals

During the 2011 Educator Effectiveness Academies, principals attended sessions on the Common Core State Standards with their English Language Arts, Mathematics, and STEM teachers. They worked with their school teams to develop the transition plans for implementation of the new standards for the 2011 – 2012 school year. All principals from all school teams attended these academies, which is a total of 1, 490 schools. Online follow-up sessions were provided in the fall and spring. The topics of these sessions included transition issues and integrating Universal Design for Learning Principles into daily instruction.

During the 2011-2012 school year members of the Division of Instruction have presented overviews of the Common Core to both the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals and Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals.

During the 2012 Educator Effectiveness Academies, principals will attend sessions that provide an overview of the curriculum resources that will be available to the teachers, and an introduction to the new Curriculum Management System. They will also attend a session that focuses specifically on the Literacy Standards for Social Studies/History, Science, and Technical Subjects. On the final day of the Academy, the entire school team with the support of the LEA, will develop a transition plan for the 2012 – 2013 school year. Online follow-up sessions will occur in the fall and spring. The topics for these sessions are based on feedback from academy participants, but a follow-up session on the use of the new Curriculum Management System will be included. The Executive Officers' Network (individuals in the LEAs who supervise principals), worked with professional development specialists to create the transition documents and accompanying activities for the 2012 Educator Effectiveness Academy.

In addition to the support provided to principals through the Educator Effectiveness Academies, the Division of Academic Reform and Innovation (DARI) provides a variety of other learning opportunities for principals to assist them in their role as instructional leaders. For example, DARI is creating an Academy for School Turnaround specifically targeting the needs of principals in the 200 schools in school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. This academy's content is research-based and is focused on school turnaround strategies that have proven successful. It will be in place for the summer 2012.

DARI also offers a Leadership Learning Series on specific topical areas that are designed to help principals improve their knowledge and skills in a variety of areas. The *Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework* serves as the foundation for all of these training experiences. Those series include sessions on data-driven decision making, improving school culture, purposeful observation of instruction, effective post-observation conferences, and informal observation of instruction. The sessions have been offered to LEAs for several years, and there has been an extremely positive response across the State.

Finally, DARI is very concerned about building the pipeline to the principalship. In partnership with LEAs, DARI has offered a series of regional learning opportunities for aspiring principals. These too have been based on the *Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework*, and they are very popular around the State. We believe that this focus on principals and those who aspire to be principals has been one of Maryland true strengths over the years and an extremely important factor in increasing student achievement across our State.

Pre-Service Teachers

In addition to training and supporting current teachers to adapt to the Common Core State Standards, Maryland is working with its higher education counterparts to effectively prepare pre-service teachers. Specifically, members of the Divisions of Instruction and Certification and Accreditation have held workshops with IHE faculty to provide an overview of the Common Core State Standards for English/Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics. These workshops were held throughout the State so that higher education faculty members could attend a regional session. One topic addressed in these meetings was "Implications for Teacher Education." Additionally, the English/Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics Teams routinely invite members of IHEs to their unit/lesson plan development sessions, just as they were invited to the sessions where the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Frameworks were developed.

VI. Schools Implement Transition Plans

As mentioned above, transition planning began with the Educator Effectiveness Academies and the assistant superintendent meetings. The thorough and deep engagement of educators in developing and implementing the current Maryland Common Core State Curriculum frameworks illustrates why MSDE and all LEAs will be able to thoughtfully and confidently transition the new curriculum to align with the Common Core State Standards. To begin, MSDE used Achieve's Gap Analysis Tool to analyze the alignment, gaps, and inconsistencies of the Maryland State Standards against the Common Core State Standards. As described above, this work began on June 18, 2010, in a full-day meeting with the Assistant Superintendents for Instruction from all 24 LEAs, who determined the magnitude of needed adjustments. The team then mapped out a yearlong plan for accomplishing the curriculum refinement and transition; the review included identifying where new curriculum units needed to be created and existing ones

augmented (Appendix 1.B.7). It was this expedited process that allowed MSDE to present the new Common Core State Curriculum Frameworks to the State Board of Education for approval in June 2011.

At the same time that the State curriculum is being revised, Maryland is also working to expand the Online Instructional Toolkit mentioned above. It consists of several elements. First, the revised State Curriculum will be posted on the Online Instructional Toolkit website (www.mdk12.org). Second, curricular supports, such as lesson plans, multimedia resources (e.g., videos), and public release summative assessment items with annotated student responses are linked to the State Curricula. Third, the formative assessment item bank and computerized test blueprints will be available at this site. Finally, online and face-to-face opportunities for professional development, available from IHEs, LEAs, and MSDE, which have been reviewed for quality, will be posted in the Online Instructional Toolkit. As described more below, tools are also being designed using UDL principles and guidelines to assist in differentiation for teachers of SWD, ELL and other diverse learners. In addition, MSDE staff from the Division of Special Education and Early Intervention Services and the Division of Instruction are currently drafting proposed regulations for the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) for the use of Universal Design of Learning (UDL) principles and guidelines in the development of curriculum instruction and assessment for all learners.

This Toolkit is an important component of the Instructional Improvement System and is a critical part of the transition process. As teachers access student performance data from the longitudinal data system through the dashboard system supported by the technology infrastructure, they will analyze current levels of student learning, develop lessons aligned to the State Curriculum frameworks, and draw on the curricular resources described above. Teachers can use items from the formative assessment item bank to capture quick information about levels of student mastery or longer-term interim assessments measured at quarterly or semester points of time. Finally, if teachers want or need professional development support in a particular curriculum, or strategies to reach students who are not demonstrating progress they can use the Toolkit. Teachers of ELL and SWD students may also access resources in the professional development section of the Toolkit where these supports will be meta-tagged for alignment with specific sections of the State Curriculum.

Throughout the year, LEAs, IHEs, and other partners will identify instructional materials and digital resources that are focused, coherent, and aligned to the Common Core State Standards and State Curriculum frameworks. In addition, digital resources, course modules, and online courses aligned to the Common Core State Standards will be identified and developed through the Maryland Virtual Learning Opportunities Program.

Additional resources will be identified through Maryland's MDK12 Digital Library. This collaborative purchasing consortium made up of the 24 LEAs and MSDE provides a rich set of resources and ensures equity of availability in all 24 LEAs. Partnerships with the Maryland Business Roundtable (MBRT), Maryland Public Television (MPT), and the College Board will give teachers easy access to quality digital instructional materials. MBRT will identify business partners anxious to contribute their knowledge and time in Maryland classrooms, and will provide additional instructional materials and digital resources, including links to available local, national, and international business, industry, and military partners that are carefully evaluated for quality and alignment. These materials will provide Maryland's teachers with an array of electronic resources carefully mapped to support the effective implementation of the State Curriculum frameworks. Maryland Public Television and MSDE will conduct a technical review of existing resources on the MPT Thinkport website, and then develop new online courses and content resources and provide public outreach programming and public service announcements. Maryland and the College Board have a co-funded liaison position at MSDE. Building on this unique nine-year partnership, MSDE and the College Board will conduct a technical correlation between the State curriculum and College Board public-domain materials, programs, and services to ensure that all teachers and students have easy online access.

Finally, MSDE's Division of Instruction is working with LEAs to create model units for each subject at every grade level and are using UDL guidelines and principles within these modules (Appendix 1.B.8). The curriculum resources include intervention and enrichment modules, on-line courses, and multi-media resources to accelerate student learning opportunities. The model units and lessons will include resources for enrichment and acceleration/intervention. As curriculum resources are developed, specialists who work with students with disabilities and English Language Learners participate in the development of the resources. All curriculum

resources incorporate Universal Design for Learning principles (discussed more below).

All schools implemented their transition plans for school year 2011-2012, which were developed based on the content provided on the Common Core State Standards, the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Frameworks, and presented at the Educator Effectiveness Academies. Additionally, the plans were presented at the superintendents' meeting (Monthly meeting of all Local Superintendents led by the State Interim Superintendent) in December 2011 (Appendix 1.B.9) and remain a consistent agenda item for the monthly assistant superintendents' meetings. Members of the MSDE Division of Instruction have been making periodic site visits to LEAs that request assistance with their system or individual school transition plans. A review of a random sampling of these transition plans will be part of the evaluation of Maryland's RTTT program (Appendix 1.B.10). More specifically, MSDE, in collaboration with the University of Maryland System, developed an evaluation process to be done by CAIRE. This process includes a rubric for evaluating the transition plans. This rubric can be found on the www.mdk12.org website under Educator Effectiveness Academy (and also as part of Appendix 1.B.3). The State has provided support to the LEAs by facilitating "Transition Tools Workshops" to help LEAs identify professional development needs.

VII. Writing new State curriculum based on CCSS and Maryland CCSS Curriculum Framework

As mentioned above, the LEA Assistant Superintendents of Instruction met in October 2011 to develop a timeline for the full implementation of the new Maryland Common Core State Curriculum (Appendix 1.B.11). While the Common Core State Standards provide goals and expectations for student learning, Maryland educators, including ELL and SWD educators, are developing the State Curriculum that will help its students achieve the Standards. Following the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, Maryland launched a broad-based, year-long process to analyze the new Standards and compared the alignment of the existing State Curriculum to the Common Core State Standards (the gap analysis described above). Using only the "excellent" matches in each grade level, development of the new Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Frameworks began.

This was the first iteration of the State Curriculum and was developed as a curricular framework

for each separate content area (e.g., English/Language Arts, mathematics, science, social studies). When the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum is complete it will have two main components, the Curriculum Frameworks and the Online Curriculum Toolkit (also described above).

The State Curriculum is the document that aligns the Maryland Content Standards and the Maryland Assessment Program and will be available in a number of formats for teachers, central office staff, students, parents, and the other stakeholders. The curriculum documents are formatted so that each begins with content standards or broad, measurable statements about what students should know and be able to do. Indicator statements provide the next level of specificity and begin to narrow the focus for teachers. Finally, the objectives provide teachers with very clear information about what specific learning should occur.

Hundreds of classroom educators, instructional leaders, administrators, and higher education representatives continue to assist State officials in developing components of the new State Curriculum based on the Common Core State Standards, and the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Frameworks. This is extensive and substantive professional development. As part of this work, curriculum teams have also been identifying instructional priorities for transition.

The development of the new Maryland Common Core State Curriculum has involved extending the Common Core State Standards down to Pre-K. Since the Common Core State Standards did not include Pre-K, Maryland educators created standards and developed the essential skills and knowledge to serve these students. This work will be further developed with the new federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Fund Grant (RTTT-ELC) that Maryland was recently awarded in December 2011, along with eight other states. The program is designed to narrow the school readiness gap for children in poverty, English Language Learners, and those with disabilities. Maryland developed an ambitious slate of projects in its RTTT-ELC application. These projects range from strengthening the Maryland Excellence Counts in Early Learning and School-Age Child Care (EXCELS) rating system to revising the early learning standards to align with the Common Core State Standards to refining the State's assessment system for pre-school children.

In redesigning the content areas of the State Curriculum to align to Common Core State Standards, MSDE and the LEAs will develop an interdisciplinary STEM-based curriculum. Finally, a cross-curricular team, including educators of SWD and ELL students, will develop curriculum frameworks for the Literacy Standards for Social Studies/History, Science, and Technical Subjects, grades 6 – 12. The Literacy Standards are part of the Common Core State Standards, but Maryland is still in the process of developing the frameworks which will ultimately be incorporated into the new Maryland Common Core State Curriculum. These frameworks will be complete by March 2012.

As the work of writing the curriculum continues, MSDE is also offering continuous opportunities for districts to request assistance in developing their plans and helping teachers and parents understand the new standards, frameworks, and curriculum. This includes regional meetings and presentations by the MSDE Division of Instruction for any requesting LEA and for higher education (Appendix 1.B.12).

Additionally, MSDE is making a concerted effort to inform parents about the new standards in a way that helps engage them in their children's learning. As mentioned in the consultation section above, last spring, five regional briefings, open to the public, were held across the State to introduce the Common Core State Standards. Members of the Division of Instruction have also presented a session on the Common Core State Standards at the State PTA Convention held in the summer 2011. Information on the website also provides information for parents.

VIII. Addressing the Needs of Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners (ELL)

Maryland is developing curriculum resources, including model units and lessons that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. These resources are being developed by teams of Maryland educators from across the state. In addition to identifying specific components to be included in these models, educators are developing the resources based on the guidelines and principles of Universal Design for Learning to ensure that all children have access to the tools and resources needed to master the Common Core State Standards. Please see Appendix 1.B.13 for a description of the State UDL Resources and a flier that contains valuable information about tools that have been developed to help teachers teach all students. These tools include an online

version of an interactive Universal Design for Learning (UDL) resource wheel and links to the two websites where educators can download free apps for their smart-phones. Both tools foster incorporating UDL into instructional practice at every grade level from pre-school through graduation.

PARCC, the consortium developing the assessments for Maryland and 23 other states, has stated that test items will adhere to Universal Design principles, as well. PARCC is committed to providing all students with equitable access to high-quality, 21st-century PARCC assessments. For the assessment system as a whole, PARCC will consider how its assessments will be accessible to all participating students, including English Language Learners (ELL) and students with disabilities (SWD), and then include appropriate accommodations (as defined in the Notice for Inviting Applications) for SWD and ELLs. Accessible assessments will allow all individuals taking the assessments to participate and engage in a meaningful and appropriate manner, with the goal being to ensure that results are valid for each and every student.

Through a combination of Universal Design principles and computer embedded supports, PARCC intends to design an assessment system that is inclusive by considering accessibility from the beginning of initial design through item development, field testing, and implementation, rather than trying to retrofit the assessments for SWD and ELLs. Paper-and-pencil assessments that have been designed without the benefit of Universal Design have focused primarily on promoting accessibility after-the-fact resulting in the need to provide many more accommodations and a consequent need for increased test administration resources at the school level. Additionally, as the number of accommodations increases, so does the possibility of implementation infidelity. While external accommodations may be needed for some students to demonstrate what they know and can do, embedded support accessibility options and procedures need to be addressed during design and item development to minimize the need for accommodations during testing. Embedded accessibility supports at the item level, that do not shift the construct being measured, become a feature of the assessment for potential use by *all* children.

The PARCC assessments will also require all electronic test items and test materials to be compliant with the Accessible Portable Item Profile (APIP) standards. This will require the

provision of accessibility information for text only, graphic only, text and graphic, non-visual audio representation of item content, and Braille representation of item content. Additional optional accessibility information will also be required so long as the construct to be measured is not violated. These will include audio directions, tactile graphics, American Sign Language, signed English, alternate language(s), keyword highlighting and keyword translation.

The results will yield information in order to make valid inferences about the performance of students with diverse characteristics, and that does not mask what students really know and can do. To ensure that students with wide ranging learning characteristics and English proficiency are able to demonstrate their content knowledge and skills on the common assessments, PARCC will eliminate or minimize any features that are irrelevant to measuring Common Core State Standards constructs. The range of complexity of the constructs measured must be such that students are able to demonstrate their knowledge for the intended purpose of each test.

PARCC's Accessibility, Accommodations, and Fairness Operational and Technical Working Groups are guided by the following key principles:

1) Minimize/eliminate features of the assessment that are irrelevant to what is being measured and that measure the full range of complexity of the standards so that students can more accurately demonstrate their knowledge and skills;

2) Design each component of the assessment in a manner that allows ELLs and students with disabilities to demonstrate what they know and can do;

3) Use Universal Design for accessible assessments throughout every stage and component of the assessment, including items/tasks, stimuli, passages, performance tasks, graphics and performance-based tasks; and

4) Use technology for rendering all assessment components in as accessible a manner as possible.

These guiding principles demonstrate PARCC's deep commitment to developing assessments that reach the broadest range of students while maintaining comparability and measurement accuracy.

In addition to addressing the needs of students with disabilities, Maryland is also committed to

ensuring effective and appropriate instruction, support and assessments for English Language Learners. In June 2011, the Maryland State Department of Education joined the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium that provides English language proficiency (ELP) standards and an ELP assessment. As a result, the State is in the process of implementing these standards and the ACCESS for ELLs® ELP assessment. The standards encompass (1) social and instructional language; (2) the language of language arts; (3) the language of mathematics; (4) the language of science; and (5) the language of social studies. The focus of the standards is teaching academic language within the context of content area instruction. Model Performance Indicators have been developed that align with the Common Core State Curriculum across grade levels. The result of this focus on academic language in a content context and the alignment with the Common Core State Curriculum will support English Language Learners in accessing the college- and career-ready standards on the same schedule as all students.

The WIDA Assessment exceeds the requirements stipulated by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 and is used to measure and report growth in a manner consistent with the need for fulfilling these requirements. The program generates results that serve as one criterion to aid in determining when ELLs have attained the language proficiency needed to participate meaningfully in content area classrooms without program support and on State academic content tests without accommodations. Additionally, it provides districts with information that will aid in evaluating the effectiveness of their ESL/bilingual programs, identifies the ELP levels of students with respect to the WIDA ELP Standards' levels 1-6 and provides information that can be used to enhance instruction and learning for ELLs.

Maryland is also working with State's Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) to ensure that teacher preparation programs are incorporating strategies for teaching academic language that aligns with the Common Core State Curriculum to ELLs. One example is a program between MSDE and the University of Maryland Baltimore County to develop an online course for secondary content teachers who have English Language Learners in their classrooms that include the language acquisition process as well as effective instructional strategies that result in the attainment of academic vocabulary and content knowledge across levels of English language proficiency.

In addition, MSDE is issuing sub-grants to LEAs to provide incentives for English, mathematics,

social studies, science, and elementary classroom teachers in low-achieving, high-minority, high-poverty schools with a significant number of ELLs to obtain an additional certification (endorsement) in ESOL. This project is funded by the Race to the Top grant and will last through the 2013-2014 school year. Each LEA that participates in this project can nominate 5 applicants per year. Once selected, teachers must take courses in second language acquisition and ESOL methodology as well as pass the required Praxis II (ESOL) examination. The purpose of this incentive is for classroom teachers to gain an understanding of ESOL and strategies for working with ELLs and to become dual certified in their content and ESOL, not to prepare additional ESOL teachers. Therefore, teachers must pledge to remain in their content area for at least 2 years after receiving the incentive.

Maryland has submitted an amendment to the Race to the Top (RTTT) Application that would increase the funding for the ESOL Certification project in years 3 and 4 of the RTTT grant. After 2014, LEAs may have the option to incorporate this project into their Title III proposals. Throughout this process, Maryland colleges and universities and online universities have created partnerships with local school systems, establishing ESOL certification models and cohorts that will extend beyond the RTTT grant period.

VIII. Providing access to high level courses for all students, especially ELL and SpEd Students

Maryland's new Curriculum Management System will include extensive curriculum resources for educators and students. Universal Design for Learning Principles are imbedded in curriculum resources, including model units, model lessons, intervention modules, enrichment modules, and multi-media resources. These resources are reviewed by educators with an expertise in Special Education and ESOL. Intervention and enrichment modules will be available to students on a learning management system that has 24 hour access.

Maryland enjoys a unique partnership with the College Board to promote access and equity – and to increase the participation of underrepresented groups (ELL and Special Education) in Advanced Placement courses. Two federal APIP (Advanced Placement Incentive Program) grants have enabled Maryland to provide extensive professional development, student

enrichment and support programs, and subsidized AP exam fees for income eligible students.

For the fourth consecutive year, Maryland leads the nation with the largest percentage of all graduates earning a score of 3 or higher on one or more AP exams. Overall, 27.9 percent of the state's graduating seniors scored a 3 or better. The numbers of traditionally underserved students participating and succeeding in AP are increasing:

- Maryland has nearly eliminated the equity and excellence gap in AP achievement for the Hispanic and Latino population. Hispanics accounted for 8 percent of the Maryland graduating class last year, 7.8 percent of the seniors who scored 3 or higher on the AP exam were Hispanic.
- Maryland also has seen a big increase in the percentage of Black/African American students having success on the AP assessments. A record 10.8 percent of students receiving a grade of 3 or better in Maryland were Black/African American. That is the third-highest percentage among states in the nation.
- The number of low-income graduates who took at least one AP exam during high school has nearly tripled over the past five years – from 1,563 in the class of 2006 to 4,581 last year.
- Maryland placed second to Florida in the total percentage of seniors completing an AP exam (46.4 percent to Florida's 47.4). That compares to 32.5 percent from the class of 2006 – just five years earlier – demonstrating the growth, and successful strategies, of Maryland's AP program.
- The program also has provided ongoing professional development to teachers, school counselors, and administrators. The effort has paid enormous dividends: all 24 Maryland school systems have at least 20 percent participation rate among high school seniors, and 16 districts have 30 percent or greater.
- Also, Maryland leads the nation with the largest percentage of all graduates taking AP exams in the mathematics and science disciplines—18 percent and 17.8 percent of the graduating class, respectively.

X. Full Implementation of the CCSS through the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum

Maryland is on track to fully implement the Common Core State Standards integrated into the new Maryland Common Core State Curriculum by school year 2013-2014. All of the work described above has positioned Maryland to transition to the new curriculum a year before the new assessments begin (although Maryland has agreed to field test some of the assessments).

XI. Maryland participation in the ACHIEVE led Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

Maryland has signed a MOU with PARCC, an assessment consortium facilitated by Achieve (Attachment 6). Twenty-four states are in this College- and Career-Readiness consortium, which is focused on summative assessments that will measure each student's readiness for college and careers and will be sufficiently reliable and valid for student and school accountability. The member states currently include Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

As a governing state in this consortium, MSDE staff members are actively engaged in the design and development of the assessments. For example, staff members participate in weekly planning calls with the PARCC consortium and staff from the Division of Instruction and Division of Assessment, Accountability and Data Systems, participate in the consortium's design team. In addition, Maryland is fully committed to engaging IHE staff in the development of a new generation of assessments that fully certify students as college- and career-ready.

Maryland believes that partnering with other states offers multiple benefits: an ability to measure the full range of college- and career-readiness skills, generate comparable student achievement results across states, increase assessment quality, and decrease costs. Several aspects of the PARCC consortium make it an ideal fit for Maryland:

- The design principles of the consortium align with Maryland's vision for an innovative assessment system that enhances classroom instruction and ensures that students become college- and career-ready. In particular, the consortium will measure the full depth, breadth, and rigor of the Common Core State Standards and include assessments given in high school that will measure college- and career-readiness. In

fact, Maryland is encouraging the consortium to develop college- and career-ready anchor assessments in advanced English/Language Arts and mathematics courses and to set a college- and career-ready cut score that will be comparable across state lines.

- The consortium approaches assessment design comprehensively, seeking an aligned system of summative, interim, and formative assessments. The design for each type of assessment will be closely aligned and occur concurrently, with significant collaboration among consortium partners.
- A rapid transition is especially important to Maryland. With the formal adoption of the Common Core State Standards by the State Board of Education in June 2010, educators spent the 2010–11 school year revising the State's curriculum in reading/language arts, mathematics, and STEM to align with the Common Core State Standards. This curriculum framework development was completed by June 2011, and educators working in every school in Maryland will have been trained on the reading/language arts, mathematics, and STEM curriculum by 2013. The PARCC Consortium plans for its summative assessments to be operational no later than spring 2015 and sooner if possible.
- The consortium is committed to developing common summative assessments that are high quality, scalable within a short time, and designed for multiple purposes, including assessing student performance in high school; evaluating school and district performance disaggregated by subgroups of ethnicity, income, and special-needs populations; and determining educator effectiveness by isolating student-learning gains.
- The consortium plans to infuse technically sound innovations in measurement, including online administration (in addition to traditional paper-and-pencil assessment); use of artificial intelligence for scoring certain constructed-response items; a richer range of constructed-response item types that can measure various cognitive skills; and greater teacher involvement in item development. In addition, the consortium will explore computer-adaptive testing that can diagnose how well students are meeting the Common Core State Standards and adjust, in real time, the rigor and content of the items presented to students based on students' previous responses. Maryland has piloted the use of artificial intelligence systems in scoring constructed responses. The State hopes each consortium will fully implement the

goals and recommendations contained in the 2010 draft of the National Educational Technology Plan.

In transitioning to a new system of high-quality assessments, Maryland builds on an impressive legacy of leadership. In the 1980s, Maryland was one of the first states to require students to pass a Statewide minimum competency test, the Maryland Functional Test, as one condition of earning a high school diploma. In the 1990s, the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) pioneered the use of performance-assessment tasks to foster students' problem-solving, critical-thinking, and writing skills. This first iteration of performance assessments provided excellent *school-level data*, which gives Maryland a valuable head start in developing the kinds of multiple measures of performance that provide a more balanced and comprehensive view of achievement. The current criterion-referenced Maryland School Assessments (MSA), begun in 2003, provide even more useful *student-level data* that have helped to drive improvements at the classroom level and reduced achievement gaps.

Maryland's transition plan for the implementation of a new assessment system links seamlessly to professional development initiatives for teachers designed to assist movement from the Maryland State Curriculum to the Common Core State Standards (see above). Maryland's teachers have benefited in the past decade from the existence of a very transparent assessment system supported by the Online Instructional Toolkit on www.mdk12.org. Statewide, teachers already understand the State curriculum and assessment parameters that guide accountability testing. Maryland's transition plan to *new* assessments will build on this existing knowledge base and assist teachers and administrators in understanding changes in the assessment system.

Maryland's past experience transitioning to and implementing the MSPAP provides an experience base across the State that increases the likelihood that teachers can effectively use the results of performance-assessment tasks to improve instruction. Maryland's current assessment system already allows schools to administer tests on the computer, and the State has piloted the use of artificial intelligence systems in scoring constructed responses. The new generation of assessments will be delivered primarily on a technology platform. A purposeful, Statewide plan will assist for all schools to migrate from paper-and-pencil assessments to technology-delivered assessment practices. A Statewide cadre of technology-savvy teachers will ensure there are

educators in every school who can build capacity among staff for effective use of technology in assessment practices.

Maryland's transition plan first ensures that its existing assessment system remains fully operational until new assessments are implemented. Since full implementation of the new assessment system will occur no later than the 2014–15 school year, the Maryland State Board of Education is reviewing the issue of whether the current assessment system needs to be changed in order to ease the transition to the new assessments. They are expected to make a decision in spring 2012.

Upon passage of the Maryland Governor's proposed budget, the last administration of the Mod-MSA in reading and mathematics for grades 3 through 8 will be March 2012. Therefore, Maryland is beginning the transition for the students taking the 2% Mod-MSA in the spring 2012.

Plans for transition are clearly defined in the Memo from Dr. Bernard Sadusky to the Local Superintendents of Schools dated March 2, 2012 (Appendix II- 2); the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Transition Plan for 2% Mod-MSA Students to the Regular MSA School Year 2012-2013 (Appendix II-3); and the Elimination of Modified Maryland School Assessment Questions and Answers Draft Document (note that the Q and A document is still in draft form) (Appendix II-4).Maryland will continue to engage stakeholders to provide input to the multistate consortia and will keep stakeholders up to date as important design decisions are made. Participation of MSDE and LEA content specialists in the assessment design work conducted by multistate consortia will ensure this engagement takes place, and monthly updates to the LEA Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents for Instruction ensure ongoing communication with LEA leadership. Participation by Maryland teachers in the construction of assessment items increases engagement and ownership. In addition, Maryland will support teachers' transitions to new assessments by keeping them fully informed at all stages of assessment design, with particular attention to those areas where the design of new assessments differs from past practice (e.g., computer-adaptive designs).

Maryland believes that student learning advances when student achievement data in various

forms inform teachers' decisions regarding lesson planning and choice of instructional materials. Teachers and administrators will reap the greatest benefit in transitioning to new State summative assessments through their involvement in developing formative assessments. Maryland's plan for developing formative assessments that are aligned with the new summative assessments involves building on existing expertise in the State, including work underway with Response to Intervention and Classroom Focused Improvement Program models, where several LEAs already employ a rich array of formative and interim assessment tools. Initial work has involved creating an item bank constructed from these existing tools including tools specifically designed for ELL and SWD students. This bank will be expanded based on the ongoing assessment development work of the State's consortium partners. Teachers will use high-quality formative assessments that provide Maryland's teachers with real-time data as part of the Instructional Improvement System being implemented through Maryland's Race to the Top Grant. Effective use of formative assessment results to guide instructional decision making will be a major component of face-to-face and online professional development offerings.

Finally, the development and implementation of a new assessment system is meaningless unless that system validly and reliably measures the readiness of students to succeed in college and careers. Thus, a critical transition activity is the active collaboration of MSDE and Maryland's IHE community at all stages of the development of formative, interim, and summative assessment tools. Importantly, to ensure that assessments are fully aligned with the college admissions requirements and employers' hiring criteria, Maryland's higher education faculty have been participating extensively in the multistate consortia's activities, including blueprint design, item development, piloting, field testing, operational administration, range finding, scoring, and reporting. In the process, Maryland is fully implementing a key recommendation from the Governor's College Success Task Force: "Partner with Maryland P–20 discipline-based groups to ensure that the high school assessments of the Common Core State Curriculum build on the rigor of K–8 assessments and serve as college-readiness tests for all students." To this end, Maryland secured letters of intent from *all* IHEs, including those with Special Education programs, to participate in the assessment consortium development of high school summative assessments in Reading/English/Language Arts and mathematics, and to implement policies that place students who meet the consortium-adopted achievement standards for each assessment into credit-bearing college courses. This collaborative work will be reported regularly to

Maryland's P–20 Council.

XII. The Role of the SEA/LEA/School in the Transition to New Standards and Assessments

The Maryland State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards in June 2010. All LEAs will administer the PARCC assessments that are aligned to those standards. MSDE English/Language Arts and Mathematics teams have convened Maryland educators representing all LEAs to develop units and lessons aligned to the standards. Each school has developed its transition plan for the 2011 – 2012 school year. These transition plans will be extended to the 2012-2013 school year at the 2012 Educator Effectiveness Academy, and to the 2013-2014 school year at the 2013 Educator Effectiveness Academy.

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,	☐ 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

	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.	standards to the Department for peer review. (Attachment 7)

For Option B, insert plan here.

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.

In November 2013, Maryland applied for Double Testing and Accountability Determination Flexibility. As a result of the final "Field Test Flexibility" guidelines that were distributed to states in late October, MSDE determined that some of the changes will impact the way in which local school systems report state assessment data after the administration of the field test and the way accountability determinations are made. A review of the previously addressed guidelines along with new guidelines is listed below:

1. States that field test new assessments aligned to college and career ready standards in reading/language arts and mathematics in 2013-2014 can request the flexibility.

2. All students in the chosen classroom for field testing are required to participate. MSDE will be required to report students who participated in both the PARCC field test and the Maryland State Assessment.

3. Students participating in the field test will be REQUIRED to take the "full form of the assessment" (Performance-Based and End of Year) in either reading/language arts or mathematics.

4. A school may get the flexibility as long as it "participates in the field test" of at least one assessment/content. (Reading/language arts or mathematics)

5. The double testing flexibility allows schools that participate in the field tests to administer, for purposes of meeting the assessment requirements in ESEA section 1111 (b) (3) only one reading/language arts assessment and one mathematics assessment in 2013-2014 to any individual student, i.e, either the current State assessment or the field test assessment.

6. ESEA section 1111 (b) (3) (C) (xii) requires individual student interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports that include information regarding achievement on State assessments to be distributed to parents, teachers, and principals as soon as is practically possible after an assessment is given. The double testing flexibility waiver would permit an SEA or LEA to refrain from producing or providing these individual student reports for a student's performance on the field test.

7. All reporting obligations must still be met for performance on the State test. (Because the PARCC field test will NOT be administered at the high school level in Algebra I or English II

(high school students will still take the HSA Algebra/Data Analysis and English II) state assessment data for individual students in high schools will be reported in the same way as previous years.) This means that School Progress and the School Progress Index with newly assigned strands will be calculated for all high school based on the 2013-2014 results.

8. ESEA sections 1111 (h) (1)(C) (ii) and 1111 (h) (2) (B) require an:

    a. SEA and LEA, respectively, to report on performance against AMOs (School Progress and the School Progress Index).

    b. Waivers would permit SEA or LEA to refrain from reporting performance against AMOs for any school or single-school LEA that participates in the field test.

    c. An SEA and its LEAs would still report performance against AMOs for: (1) Subject that is not part of the field test; and (2) All other schools and LEAs.

9. An SEA or LEA need not report results from a field test. It must:

    a. meet all reporting obligations with respect to results on State assessments, including for students who also participate in a field test, and report participation rate: total for the field test and for the State assessments.

    b. report against AMOs for reading/language arts (assessed with the State assessment) if the field test is only for math or mathematics if the field test is only for reading/language arts.

    c. report Federal accountability designation (even if same as the prior year).

10. Strand designation will be assigned to schools that choose to double test (administer both the PARCC field test and both the reading/language arts and mathematics Maryland State Assessments) students.

11. School Progress and School Progress Index will be calculated utilizing the 2013-2014 school year Maryland Assessment results and published on the report card website. Elementary and middle schools that are field testing will retain their 2012-2013 strand assignment.

12. The administration of the PARCC field tests will be a local decision for School Improvement Grant (SIG) schools that must administer the State Assessments. School Progress and the School Progress Index with newly assigned strands will be calculated for all SIG schools based on 2013-2014 results.

Maryland's flexibility proposal permits the State to build on more than two decades of experience with school accountability using systematic enhancements benefitting from an array of technical and policy improvements that continue to evolve. The current flexibility proposal is based on the best accountability tools available to Maryland and now encompasses a broader palate of indicators of school progress. However, the proposal anticipates the continuing evolution of school accountability over the coming years as the State implements PARCC assessments and makes further strides in both policy and data development. As additional tools become available to Maryland, Maryland plans to

continue to evolve the proposed accountability plan to take advantage of tools currently in development and to work toward better reflecting the societal values that Marylanders express regarding their schools.

The Adequate Yearly Progress measures and school report cards of the past decade of No Child Left Behind are increasingly becoming outdated as developments on the research front avail educators with better tools and strategies. The grid of measures mandated by No Child Left Behind may have reflected the state of the art in 2002, but educators now recognize that AYP could tell only a very limited story of achievement for each school. However, through a decade of hard work, leaders have increasingly seen the value of expanding accountability mechanisms to encompass better real-time feedback via the analyses of data features, particularly within student growth and subgroup performance gap data.

The ongoing dialogue in Maryland over the past decade has involved a rich exchange among advocates for students, teachers, and school and school system leaders. By the time the ESEA Flexibility guidance was released by the United States Department of Education, Maryland State leaders had a strong sense of what the educational community and the community at large valued about schools. Through the two-decade school accountability experience in Maryland, school leaders have found the community to be a steadfast partner in the struggle to improve our schools. Unfortunately, the inherent design of No Child Left Behind, with its idealistic drive for one-hundred-percent proficiency by 2014 had the net effect of diluting State and local efforts to improve Maryland's most critically ineffective schools. ESEA Flexibility permits Maryland to reset its focus on the lowest-performing schools and to support those efforts vigorously, with a drive toward rigorous, but more realistic goals.

In Maryland and elsewhere in the nation, the dialogue on schools has become focused more sharply on ensuring that the learning trajectory for every student is aimed more accurately toward college and career goals. Consequently, Maryland invites the opportunity provided by the flexibility guidance to include a focus on that trajectory from preK through the post-secondary experience. It is for this reason that Maryland stakeholders invited the opportunity to recast the school accountability system to begin taking the pulse on College- and Career-Readiness. The initial readiness measures proposed by Maryland are carefully chosen to be ones that are useful in gauging the programmatic trajectory of all high schools and all students in those schools. This shift can now provide a catalytic opportunity for

both SEAs and LEAs to begin looking at their own work with high schools and their own even deeper measures of high school programs. Maryland was cautioned by advisors to ensure that the array of components in its accountability measures was limited to those most reflective of the education community's values and not overload the array with too many discrete measures. Overly robust arrays of school performance often provide too many compensatory opportunities for schools, ultimately permitting schools to hide their challenges in favor of their image. School improvement work must be based on honest reporting and an open understanding of the root causes of failure.

Maryland also approached the data array for its accountability system with an eye toward elegance, credibility, and validity. The past decade of school improvement work has provided a good opportunity to build strong accountability systems at the State level. However, many more additional opportunities lie ahead for states to begin capturing even more meaningful data and analytical tools. College- and career-readiness measures will evolve to take advantage of data from nationally used programs such as that generated by Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs. Because the accountability program is meant to gauge student performance and readiness and not school policies, some work will lie ahead for Maryland to identify ways to incorporate some of the most meaningful data as the accountability system further evolves.

Over the past two decades, work with low-performing schools has been based on relatively limited comparative snapshots of school data. School leaders analyzed their performance against LEA and SEA results in any given year and watched their trend lines over time. Maryland's flexibility proposal will provide leaders with better tools to gauge how schools are addressing the needs of subgroups as well as individual students. The data array will permit leaders to examine how well students are progressing year-to-year. The system will permit leaders to probe further into data to locate the most egregious student performance gaps among subgroups. Both student growth and subgroup gaps data in isolation are of very limited value unless viewed comparatively. The Maryland School Progress Index will be rolled out as part of Maryland's recasting of its accountability system. The annual tracking of a school's aggregated and subgroup performance will continue as reported via www.MDReportCard.org at the school, school system, and state level. The data will be informative to the school improvement progress, particularly as it relates to the Annual Measurable Objectives as calculated using Option A and will assure full disclosure of the year-to-year performance of every Maryland school. However, the Maryland School Progress Index will use the Report Card data and/or derivatives of that data for the

purpose of painting a clear picture of every school's performance on a comparative scale in relation to the school's movement toward the reduction of student non-proficiency within six years.

Maryland has multiple effective channels to communicate and explain the new accountability system and Index. Currently, Maryland is undergoing a redesign of the MarylandReportCard.org website, which will include in depth information of the new reporting system. The website has consistently been the primary source of individual school, system and State accountability data. Screen shots of the initial stage of the preliminary design are attached (Please see Appendix II-5). There are regular monthly meetings with Local School System Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents for Instruction, as well as regular meetings with Local Accountability Coordinators and Public Information Officers.

Maryland has various regular publications that are widely disseminated to system-level and school-based staff and other stakeholders that will address the change. MSDE staff also plan on producing a video that will be promoted to a wide variety of audiences and available on the Maryland website. MSDE will work with Maryland State PTA so that parents can be updated during their regular communication channels and also during their annual statewide convention held in July. Information will also be provided through a Parent's Guide publication that will be widely distributed. MSDE will also work with the Maryland Association of Student Councils to provide information directly to students. Finally, Maryland will utilize a wide variety of media outlets to update the general public.

Additionally, webinars are being developed that describe the calculations for Priority, Focus and Reward schools; Option A AMOs; and the school index. Webinars will be presented to Local Accountability Coordinators, Title I Coordinators and Directors of Special Education. Design and development work with Maryland's vendor for the public website (mdreportcard.org) began for the presentation of the Maryland School Progress Index. Maryland plans to calculate the school index utilizing the 2011-2012 assessment and accountability data for publication in August 2012.
The Index mirrors recent work performed in many other states on similar indices, but it is uniquely a Maryland tool. The Index is the result of work the State has done to dialogue with advocates, leaders, and stakeholders over many months on the future of accountability in Maryland. While Maryland conducted dozens of formal briefings and exchanges with key stakeholders over five months, Maryland's unique geographic and political structure has been conducive for the ongoing dialogue on school accountability for some years. The State Superintendent and key staff meets ten to twelve times

per year with the State's twenty-four local superintendents on critical policy issues, for which school accountability has been an ever-present part of the discussions. Further, Maryland State Department of Education technical, program, and policy staff meet nearly as often with their local counterparts to assure coherence across local school systems and to ensure effective implementation of new policies and programs. All were engaged in dialogues and briefings with these groups in the five months during which the current proposal was developed. Numerous additional meetings were held with teachers, parents, higher education officials, business leaders, and advocates to broaden the dialogue. The ultimate shape and structure of the Index is a direct result of those dialogues.

The discussions often probed routine implementation issues for both State and local staff as well as the data requirements. It also became clear that the State would ultimately need to limit the number of Index components to ones that were meaningful to schools and at the same time would meet the highest tests of integrity. While the mechanisms and structures for measurement were probed, a significant amount of attention was given to the core values that stakeholders held regarding their schools. The core values emerging from those discussions were not unlike those held in other states, but they helped assure that the Index would be rooted in things that most mattered to Marylanders.

The Core Values were articulated in numerous ways, but they ultimately came down to a recognition that schools needed to assure that every student in every school was served well. That meant that at the end of the school year, every student would have progressed at least one year in critical content knowledge and skills. It also meant that no student subgroup would fall behind due to the lack of attention of school leaders to student and/or community problems and needs. The Core Values, in the end, centered around the deeply held belief of so many stakeholders that graduates should graduate on time and be prepared to pursue their life dreams.

By cross-referencing the Core Values strongly articulated by the community and stakeholders as well as educators against the data and data tools currently available in Maryland, the concept of the Maryland School Progress Index was born. A need for simplicity and elegance for both implementation and communication reasons formed the basis for the skeleton structure of the Index with three distinct Core Values areas for each of the elementary, middle school, and high school levels. The elementary and middle school Index looks at Student Achievement, Growth, and Gaps while the high school Index substitutes College- and Career-Readiness for Growth. At some time in the future,

student growth may be incorporated into the high school Index, but the State's data advisors suggested that the current assessment programs at the high school and middle school levels had administrative and timing issues that might confound the production of a high school growth measure and compromise the value of the Index measure. Further study or assessment changes in future years might facilitate the introduction of growth into the high school Index.

In February 2012, Maryland conducted standard setting for the Index using a modified Delphi model similar to the approach used in Maryland over the past two decades for standard setting for assessments, performance reports, graduation rates, and other accountability measures. Approximately 25 stakeholders were invited to participate in the process from local superintendents of both large and small school systems to parent and teacher representatives, local school data technical experts, business representatives, school principals, and advocates for groups such as students with disabilities and students who are English Language Learners. The participants were provided an orientation on the ESEA Flexibility proposal for Maryland and the role the Index will play in the State's school accountability system. The data elements were defined and articulated so that participants would understand both the values and limitations of the measurements included in the Index. However, participants were asked to recognize their own values as they related to schools and to work as a group toward consensus on the weights to be applied to each of the Core Value areas in the Index and the components of each.

By identifying the median position of each participant on each consensus round, standards-setting leaders produced a complete record of proceedings for sharing with the Interim State Superintendent of Schools. Following the State Superintendent's review of the recommendations of the standards-setting group, the State Superintendent produced a set of recommendations for the State Board of Education for inclusion in the ESEA Flexibility application for Maryland. On February 13 and again on February 28, the State Board examined and agreed to the Core Values Areas, their weights, and the weights of their components as reflected in this application.

Annual Measurable Objectives

The proposal begins by incorporating the opportunity under Option A in the Flexibility Guidance to reset Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for the coming six years on a trajectory toward 2017, the time by which each individual school is expected to reduce its percent of non-proficient students for

each of its subgroups and overall by half. The reconfiguration of annual targets and the 2017 goal itself will be instrumental in driving school improvement work for all schools, all students, and all subgroups. The AMOs will be calculated for each school for the "all students" category and for all of the subgroups. The subgroup level AMO in the LEA will be used for any subgroup or "all students" with a 90% or higher baseline. Please see below for the 2010-11 State data (this will not be referred to as an AYP Report in the future) — these AMOs represent the State level AMOs collapsed for all grades K-12. Further, the progress of each school toward the Statewide targets provide valuable information over time on the effectiveness of instructional strategies, the inherent needs of the students and the extent to which the school is fulfilling those needs. Participation will continue to be calculated and included with a 95% AMO for participation.

Maryland will reinforce its expectation that all students participate in assessments by including the non-participants in the Option A Achievement AMOs at the Basic proficiency.

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Division of Accountability, Assessment, and Data Systems

2011 AYP Report

Option A State AMOs

		2011			AMOs					
Subject Title	Subgroup	Proficient Count	Test Taker Count	Baseline	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Math	All Students	342085	423856	80.7	82.3	83.9	85.5	87.1	88.7	90.4
	American Indian	985	1247	79.0	80.7	82.5	84.2	86.0	87.7	89.5
	Asian	22763	24076	94.5	95.0	95.5	95.9	96.4	96.8	97.3
	African American	103002	152001	67.8	70.5	73.1	75.8	78.5	81.2	83.9
	Hispanic/Latino	34592	45186	76.6	78.5	80.5	82.4	84.4	86.3	88.3
	Pacific Islander	292	358	81.6	83.1	84.6	86.2	87.7	89.2	90.8
	White	167781	186287	90.1	90.9	91.7	92.5	93.4	94.2	95.0
	Two or more Races	12665	14669	86.3	87.5	88.6	89.8	90.9	92.0	93.2
	Sp. Ed.	31763	56165	56.6	60.2	63.8	67.4	71.0	74.7	78.3
	LEP	18912	25504	74.2	76.3	78.5	80.6	82.8	84.9	87.1
	FARMS	120671	173972	69.4	71.9	74.5	77.0	79.6	82.1	84.7
Reading	All Students	362434	425562	85.2	86.4	87.6	88.9	90.1	91.3	92.6

	American Indian	1033	1250	82.6	84.1	85.5	87.0	88.4	89.9	91.3
	Asian	22760	24214	94.0	94.5	95.0	95.5	96.0	96.5	97.0
	African American	115296	152505	75.6	77.6	79.7	81.7	83.7	85.8	87.8
	Hispanic/Latino	37231	45332	82.1	83.6	85.1	86.6	88.1	89.6	91.1
	Pacific Islander	308	358	86.0	87.2	88.4	89.5	90.7	91.9	93.0
	White	172480	187167	92.2	92.8	93.5	94.1	94.8	95.4	96.1
	Two or more Races	13324	14720	90.5	91.3	92.1	92.9	93.7	94.5	95.3
	Sp. Ed.	35621	55889	63.7	66.8	69.8	72.8	75.8	78.8	81.9
	LEP	18999	25206	75.4	77.4	79.5	81.5	83.6	85.6	87.7
	FARMS	131638	173897	75.7	77.7	79.7	81.8	83.8	85.8	87.8

Maryland proposes to continue the annual publication of the performance status of each school, school system, and the State in relation to its AMOs and will use its report card website, www.MDReportCard.org as an instrumental vehicle for making that information available to the public, along with other data not mandated by NCLB. Since the passage of ESEA reauthorization in 2001, Maryland has also published annually the names of schools failing to meet all annual targets in any single school year. Following the ESEA Flexibility approval, Maryland will publish all AMO data for the "all students" category and for each individual subgroup for each school. However, Maryland is requesting a waiver of the requirement for identifying schools based on AYP status since the proposal reconfigures accountability to a more accurate methodology, based on the flexibility provided in the Flexibility Guidance.

Maryland School Progress Index

Maryland's collaboration with its partners—parents, educators, legislators, business, and the general public—has produced consensus on a set of Core Values that will drive the identification of schools for intervention and similarly the recognition of schools making exceptional progress and achieving at high levels. Selected components and derivatives from the traditional Adequate Yearly Progress data set will be incorporated into a school appraisal instrument that more comprehensively reflects the Core Values Marylanders have regarding their schools.

The identified Core Values begin with student performance. Certainly, the goal and purpose of each Maryland school is to assure that students receive the best education possible and can demonstrate the acquisition of the skills and knowledge they have acquired. Maryland assessments, built under the

requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act continue to be the benchmarks by which student performance is measured, with proficiency standards (advanced, proficient, basic). These assessments provide an accurate measure of student achievement in critical grade level mathematics and reading/English content. This information contributes directly to the current AYP data set posted for each school and subgroup. The data related to AMO progress for schools will essentially be the same information feeding into the Core Values measurements. Core Values data is principally concerned with the distance a school is from each of its annual performance targets as determined by Option A. It should be noted that the Index will be revised as MSA and HSA are replaced by PARCC Assessments and other measures are developed with the implementation of the Longitudinal Data System.

Ultimately, the Standard Setting Committee on February 8th made recommendations for the value of achievement. If all students are achieving at high levels, then the performance of the school is deemed acceptable and the school assessed as successfully achieving its targets and goals. However, within every school, the spectrum of student performance mirrors an array of student social, developmental, and medical conditions. Standards are set to represent the minimal expectations all students will need to meet if they are to be prepared adequately for the next school year's academic challenges and to eventually be college- and career-ready.

Particularly for students receiving special services (English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and students living in poverty as measured via the Free and Reduced Price Meals Program) and for some students in some traditionally low-performing racial subgroups, the assessment standards and thus the annual performance targets may be challenging to achieve. Consequently, the school's instructional program must include features designed for the primary purpose of accelerating the year-to-year performance growth of low-performing students so that the annual targets are achieved assuring the student can be ready for college or career upon graduation.

Through the MD IDEA scorecard, State and district leaders can compare schools, regions and district performance of all students, including students with disabilities. At the local level, school leaders can analyze local school data to improve school performance and access online professional development to support data analysis and data informed decision making. In addition, schools can monitor fidelity of implementation of targeted interventions and student performance. The Maryland State Department of

Education, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services has a newly launched web portal located at http://marylandlearninglinks.org. This dynamic site has many interactive features and resources for educators and families related to special education and early intervention services in Maryland. The site is constantly being updated and enhanced with new resources and current information. The Maryland Learning Links (MLL) contains multiple channels and among them are the Teaching All Students, Professional Practice, and Leadership channels. The Teaching All Students channel contains multiple methods of presenting information about research-based practices such as Universal Design for Learning and Differentiated Instruction. There are media clips, enhanced podcasts, narrative information, professional development segments, articles, interactive practice activities, and links to learn more that can all be used to support professional development and growth for addressing the needs of diverse learners. The Professional Practice channel has information that can support a teacher in developing their own professional growth plan throughout their career that will enhance their skills in meeting diverse student needs. There is also media and information about mentoring. The Leadership channel was developed to support leaders and school administrators who are the instructional leaders that lay the foundation for establishing a collaborative school culture in order to promote high levels of achievement for all students.

School improvement is by definition a long term but constantly changing process. Good planning based on the analyses of targeted data should keep the necessary changes to a minimum. Any change should be directly driven by the changing needs of the students and often takes several years to institutionalize. Meanwhile, students who are not performing at the standards levels often need extraordinary intervention to fuel their performance acceleration, regardless of the overall condition of the school. Recognizing that greater incentive and accountability is needed to assure that kind of acceleration, Maryland constituents indicated a need for direct measurements of the acceleration of individual student performance and for the closing of gaps for student subgroups. Consequently, the proposed Maryland School Progress Index incorporates two additional related, but separate Core Values—Gap Closing and Annual Individual Student Growth. The Standard Setting Committee made further recommendations for the weights of gap and growth.

A fourth Core Value is College- and Career-Readiness. While no satisfactory elementary or middle school measures currently exist, several existing high school measures permit a reasonably satisfactory assessment of the measure. Maryland looks forward to the addition of further elements as the data

become available with the development of the Longitudinal Data System and as Maryland administers the PARCC assessments. Additionally, Maryland will continue to revise the School Progress Index as the data components are analyzed and reviewed. Since the Standard Setting process was conducted on February 8, 2012, as discussed below, Maryland will need to review the data runs and will submit any revisions to USDE prior to implementation.

Ultimately, the Index will be used to group schools with similar challenges so that targeted supports and resources can be offered by both the State Education Agency (SEA) and the Local Education Agency (LEA).

Maryland School Progress Index Components

Theory of Action

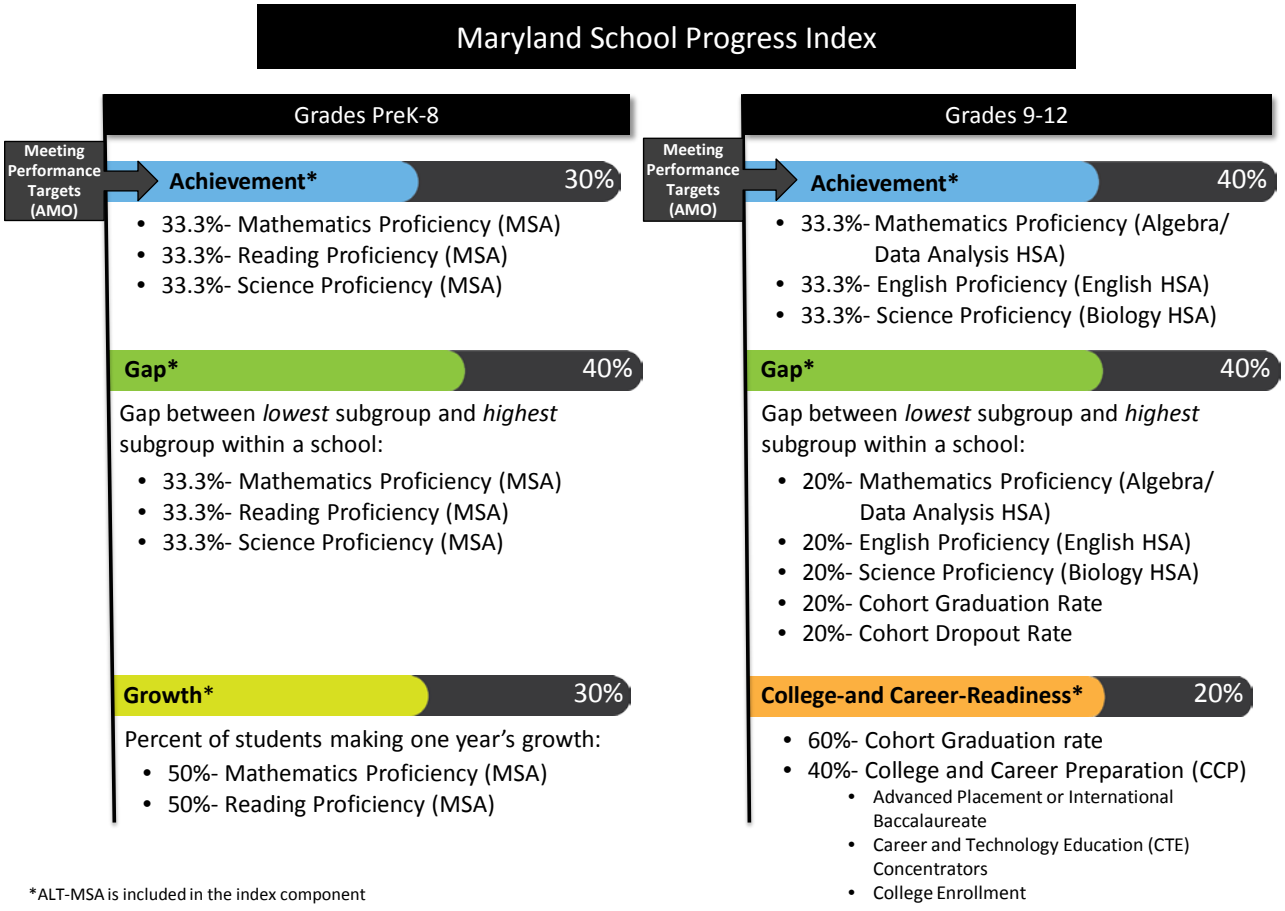
The premise of an Index is that schools are evaluated on a continuous scale based on variables Maryland State Department of Education deems important indicators of adequacy: Achievement, Growth, College- and Career-Readiness, and Reducing Gaps. A proportional index measures the location of a school relative to a target (O/T) where O is the observed value and T is the target. Proportions less than one indicate the observed performance is less than the target. Proportions one or greater indicate the observed performance is greater than or equal to the target. The measure is continuous in that the value conveys how far above or below the target the observed result falls. The index for the sample has a minimum value of 0 and a theoretical value greater than 1. The index can be rescaled by multiplying the index value by the maximum value of the desired scale. For example, to convert the values to a 100-point scale, multiply the index value by 100.

To simplify matters, targets for each component of the Index were created using the logic of Option A: a 50% reduction by 2017 in students at basic, not graduating, etc. Annual targets were set according to Option A as well. The amount of improvement needed to reach the 2017 target is equally distributed across 6 years.

Unlike the discreet model used for AYP decisions (Met or Not Met), combining values within and between categories results in a composite Index that is compensatory where a low value on one component can be balanced by a high value on another component. It is possible that a school not meeting the AYP criteria could have a relatively higher composite Index value and very likely be

judged as adequate. Unlike the AYP model in which all components are equally weighted, each of the components and categories comprising the Index can be differentially weighted based on their perceived importance in assessing overall school performance.

Under No Child Left Behind, a school could achieve Adequate Yearly Progress only if each of the groups and subgroup performance levels met or exceeded the same Annual Measurable Objective. Consequently, the school failing to achieve the AMO for one of the subject areas for one of the subgroups would necessarily fail to achieve AYP for the year and failing to meet AMOs for two consecutive years would result in the school entering school improvement. An examination of schools not achieving AYP then produces a mixture of schools and consequently helps little in appraising a school's overall performance. The compensatory nature of the Index reveals better how the school is performing and incorporates vitally important information about improvement and growth in addition to achievement. (The draft of the Index is below with full size copies in Appendix 2.A)



Core Value Definitions

The Core Values related to the Maryland School Progress Index include the following:

Achievement (elementary, middle, and high school) based on percentage of the "all students" group scoring proficient or advanced on the Maryland School Assessments (MSA) (which includes and will continue to include student performance on the Alt-MSA) in Mathematics, Reading, and Science for Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, and on the High School Assessments in Algebra, Biology, and English. Non-participants will be included at basic proficiency to reinforce Maryland's expectation that all students participate in the assessments.

Growth (elementary and middle) or *Annual Individual Student Performance Growth* is based on the percentage of the "all students" group and in specific subgroups demonstrating growth in performance over the previous year. Annual targets set for each content area separately are based on the percent of students that would yield a 50% reduction in the percentage of students by 2017 demonstrating less

than one year's growth from the prior year for the "all students" group.

Gap Reduction (elementary, middle, and high school) is defined as a decrease in the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups. The calculations include an adjustment for reductions resulting from declines in performance of highest-performing subgroup.

College- and Career-Readiness for high schools includes cohort graduation rate (60%), and college and career preparation (CCP) (40%). The college and career preparation component is made up of three elements: Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate, Career and Technology Education Concentrators, and college enrollment. Since the goal is to prepare students for both college and/or careers, Maryland sought to identify a way to capture both pathways. The CCP component considers having a student in any one of the three elements as a student success factor. Students who take an Advanced Placement exam and score a three or better OR take an International Baccalaureate exam and score a 4 or better, OR are a career and technology education concentrator, OR enroll in college within 16 months after graduation would be counted as a CCP student for that individual school. The formula for CCP is Success Factor = (AP Score 3 or better OR IB Score 4 or better => +1 OR CTE concentrator +1 OR Enrolled in Post Secondary + 1). A student is only counted once in the numerator even if they meet two or more of the three question criteria in CCP.

Maryland's School Progress Index (Grades 9-12) includes College- and Career-Readiness Indicators because they are important early predictors of whether a student will be positioned for successful first steps in college and a career. In the first iteration of the Index, only indicators for which there are established data elements are included. These indicators will be adjusted/replaced as the Index is refined and expanded with the assistance of the Maryland Longitudinal Data Systems (LDS). (Note: Once Maryland's LDS is fully operational, the career and technology education concentrators' element for the CCP metric in the School Progress Index can be replaced by the percentage of graduates achieving program completion status or the percentage of graduates earning industry certifications.) While these indicators are less than perfect, each can be viewed as a predictor of college and career success. Moreover, they currently constitute the measures for which reliable data is available. Over time, it is expected that more measures will be added with the Longitudinal Data System (LDS).

Cohort Graduation Rate and Definition

Maryland began using the cohort graduation rate for accountability in 2011, one year ahead of the

requirement for all states due to State Legislation. Maryland has previously used and continues to report the Leaver Graduation Rate. The Leaver Graduation Rate is 87.0% for 2011, up from 85.2% in 2007, demonstrating continuing growth in overall graduation rate for all Maryland students. The goal and respective targets for both 4-year and 5-year cohort graduation rate for the "all students" group were established in February 2011 and approved by the State Board. For 2012, all states must report cohort graduation rate for the "all students" group and for each subgroup.

Through the Standard Setting process, a group of stakeholders recommended that the cohort graduation goal be 95% in 2020 (submitted and approved by USDE in Maryland's Consolidated State Application in 2011). Based on data analysis it is clear that there are subgroups that continue to struggle with graduation and a number of subgroups have far greater distances to improve and reach this 95% 2020 goal than others.

To ensure that Maryland's process and targets are both rigorous and attainable, Maryland has calculated the targets for subgroups utilizing the target approved by USDE in 2011 and adapting the "Option A" for assessment AMOs as provided in the ESEA Flexibility Application. The procedure is: Set annual equal increments toward the goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in each subgroup who are not meeting the 95% in 2020 graduation goal, as approved by USDE, within nine years (number of years between the present and 2020). By using option A to reach a grad rate using a goal of 95% by 2020, we want to reduce the percentage of non grads by 50% (one-half) in relation to the 95% goal based on the base year. The formula for gain per year is as follows:

$$\text{Gain per year} = (((0.95 - (0.95 - \text{baseline grad rate})/2) - \text{baseline grad rate}) / 9)$$

The formula above is used for the 4-year and 5- year cohort graduation rate.

State Graduation targets by subgroup are provided below. The first table is the 4-year cohort graduation data and the second table is the 5-year cohort graduation data.

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Option A State AMOs - 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate

Subject Title	Subgroup	*Baseline	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Grad. Rate	All Students	81.97	82.70	83.42	84.14	84.87	85.59	86.32	87.04	87.76	88.49
	American Indian	75.93	76.99	78.05	79.11	80.17	81.23	82.29	83.35	84.41	85.47
	Asian	93.04	93.15	93.25	93.36	93.47	93.58	93.69	93.80	93.91	94.02
	African American	74.02	75.18	76.35	77.51	78.68	79.85	81.01	82.18	83.34	84.51
	Hispanic/Latino	73.44	74.63	75.83	77.03	78.23	79.43	80.62	81.82	83.02	84.22
	Pacific Islander	90.24	90.51	90.77	91.04	91.30	91.57	91.83	92.09	92.36	92.62
	White	88.27	88.65	89.02	89.39	89.77	90.14	90.52	90.89	91.26	91.64
	Two or more Races	93.42	93.51	93.59	93.68	93.77	93.86	93.95	94.03	94.12	94.21
	Sp. Ed.	54.72	56.95	59.19	61.43	63.67	65.91	68.14	70.38	72.62	74.86
	LEP	56.98	59.09	61.21	63.32	65.43	67.54	69.65	71.77	73.88	75.99
	FARMS	74.11	75.27	76.43	77.59	78.75	79.91	81.07	82.23	83.39	84.55

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Option A State AMOs - 5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate

Subject Title	Subgroup	*Baseline	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Grad. Rate	All Students	84.57	85.15	85.72	86.30	86.88	87.46	88.04	88.62	89.20	89.78
	American Indian	78.01	78.95	79.90	80.84	81.78	82.73	83.67	84.62	85.56	86.50
	Asian	94.53	94.56	94.58	94.61	94.63	94.66	94.69	94.71	94.74	94.77
	African American	77.86	78.82	79.77	80.72	81.67	82.62	83.58	84.53	85.48	86.43
	Hispanic/Latino	78.15	79.09	80.02	80.96	81.90	82.83	83.77	84.70	85.64	86.58
	Pacific Islander	95.12	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00
	White	89.65	89.94	90.24	90.54	90.84	91.13	91.43	91.73	92.03	92.32
	Two or more Races	94.73	94.75	94.76	94.78	94.79	94.81	94.82	94.84	94.85	94.87
	Sp. Ed.	60.94	62.83	64.73	66.62	68.51	70.40	72.29	74.19	76.08	77.97
	LEP	66.64	68.21	69.79	71.37	72.94	74.52	76.09	77.67	79.24	80.82
	FARMS	80.24	81.06	81.88	82.70	83.52	84.34	85.16	85.98	86.80	87.62

Attendance Rate and Definition

Maryland has published on its website (mdreportcard.org) attendance rates for all schools beginning in 1993 and began using the attendance rate for Maryland's accountability program in 1990 as the baseline year. Since 2003, the attendance rate has been utilized in the accountability program as the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools The Attendance Rate for high schools in 2011 is 92.3%, up from the 1993 attendance rate of 90.6%.

Through a Standard Setting process, a group of stakeholders recommended that the attendance rate target be 94% which has been part of the Accountability Workbook since 2003.

To ensure that Maryland's process and targets are both rigorous and attainable, Maryland has calculated the targets for high schools utilizing the 94% goal using the "Option A" procedures for the attendance AMOs as provided in the ESEA Flexibility Application. The procedure is: Set annual equal increments toward the goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in each subgroup who are not meeting the 94% in 2017 attendance rate goal within six years. By using option A to reach an attendance rate using a goal of 94% by 2017, we want to reduce the percentage of absentees by 50% (one-half) in relation to the 94% goal based on the base year. The formula for gain per year is as follows:

Gain per year = (((0.94 – (0.94 – baseline attendance rate)/2) – baseline attendance rate) / 6)

Career Attainment Definition

Maryland gives students the option of earning a standard high school diploma with a career concentration if they complete a State-approved career and technology education (CTE) program of study. The Career Attainment rate represents the percentage of graduating students who attained advanced standing in a State-approved CTE program of study, i.e. enrollment in the "concentrator" or third course in the program sequence. (Note: CTE Concentrator data are included in Maryland's CTE Accountability System and are part of the data reported annually to the USDE.) CTE programs of study provide students with academic and technical knowledge and skills, include a work-based learning component, and culminate in an industry certification and/or early college credit.

Standard Setting

On February 8, MSDE invited 25 representatives of Maryland's Statewide pre-K through 12 school

community to participate in a standard setting discussion on the new Maryland School Progress Index. The group was identified to represent both school and school system leadership from among the State's twenty-four school systems as well parents and advocates for teachers and students. Groups such as the Maryland State Educators Association (the NEA affiliate for Maryland) and the Baltimore Teachers Union (the AFT affiliate) were invited to be at the table as well as advocates for students with disabilities, Title I students, and ELL students. The Maryland State Department of Education provided technical and policy experts and consultants to assist with the process.

The February 8 meeting followed dozens of prior meetings on the ESEA flexibility application with individuals and groups, including those represented in the preliminary standard setting, with the understanding that the standard setting would be inclusive and thoughtful and would be carefully designed to elicit the most viable outcomes for students.

The standard setting procedure for the Index is patterned after the model that has been used in Maryland since 1993, when the State first developed standards in its initial school accountability system. The procedure has been used for measures as diverse as attendance rates and test scores. However, the development of the component weights for the Index presented special problems for State policy makers in that the Index was designed to convey a broad interpretation of the performance of a school from an array of diverse factors. Educators recognized all as important indicators of success or progress, but they have never been consolidated under the same umbrella with traditional achievement measures such as test results.

The standard setting procedure used for the Maryland School Progress Index was patterned after the modified Delphi process that Maryland has used since 1993. Consequently, the standard setting process was modified to produce an Index value for each school that most accurately reflects the critical core values of educators, advocates, and parents. The standard setting process is outlined below:

Steps	Activity	Outcome
November-December Framework Structure Development	Who: MSDE staff with consultants and stakeholders via multiple engagements What: Identify core values and the most viable component measures for inclusion in the Index;	Identification of Index Core values used to organize viable Index components.

December-January Framework Research	Who: MSDE staff and consultants What: conduct preliminary statistical studies of all possible component measures to identify most technically feasible component design for Maryland.	Draft framework developed to include most viable components.
February 8 Preliminary Determination of Index Weights	Who: Stakeholder standard setting group, assisted by key MSDE staff and consultants. What: Study the Draft Index framework and the outcome of MSDE studies of component viability and determine alignment with core values.	Preliminary recommendations on the weighting of components for the Index.
February 10 State Superintendent Review	Who: State Superintendent of Schools and appropriate MSDE staff What: Review the preliminary recommendations of the Stakeholder standard setting group	Recommendation of Index framework and component weights for State Board of Education
February 13 State Board Action	Who: State Board of Education What: Considers the recommendations of the State Superintendent of Schools on the School Progress Index framework for action.	The determination of the Index component weights for submission to USDE February 28 in the ESEA waiver application.
February 28 USDE Review	Who: USDE staff and experts What: Review of the complete Maryland ESEA waiver application	Approval/recommendations or both for Maryland on the implementation of the ESEA waiver plan.
March-May Further Technical Studies	Who: MSDE staff and consultants What: Conduct statistical studies of the draft framework and fine-tune the implementation steps necessary.	Studies based on the design to identify possible adjustments necessary to assure the Index functions as intended.
April-May Second Standard Setting Process	Who: MSDE staff and consultants What: Review data on the Index to determine cuts of schools.	Determination of schools in each of 5 strands as described in process.

February 8 Standard Setting Procedure

Development of Standards Recommendations:

HIGH SCHOOL STANDARDS

1. **Relative weights for three core values areas (Achievement, Gaps, College- and Career-Ready.**

a. Develop an understanding of the terms used for components:

i. Core Values Areas

ii. Components

iii. Recommendations

b. Conduct table discussions on the core value areas and how these areas might help paint a good picture of a school's performance.

c. Conduct consensus vote on the possible relative weights of the core values areas.

d. Discussion of the preliminary vote and range of votes.

e. Second table discussion on the weighting

f. Conduct second consensus vote on the possible relative weights of the core values areas.

g. Sharing of the outcome of vote 2, with explanation of the range of votes.

2. Relative weights for High School Achievement (English, Mathematics, Science)

a. Develop an understanding of the terms used for the achievement components.

i. English (English HSA)

ii. Mathematics (Algebra/Data Analysis HSA)

iii. Science (Biology HSA)

b. Conduct table discussion on the Achievement components and how these areas might help paint a good picture of a school's performance.

c. Conduct consensus vote on the possible relative weights of the Achievement components.

d. Discussion of the consensus vote and range of votes.

e. Second table discussion on the Achievement weighting

f. Conduct second consensus vote on the possible relative Achievement component weights.

g. Sharing of the outcome of vote 2, with explanation of the range of votes.

3. Relative weights for High School Gaps components. The Gaps components consist of the gaps for each of the five measures between the school's highest- and lowest-performing group.

a. Develop an understanding of the terms used for the Gaps components.

i. English (English HSA)

ii. Mathematics (Algebra/Data Analysis HSA)
iii. Science (Biology HSA)
iv. Cohort Graduation Rate
v. Cohort Dropout Rate

b. Conduct table discussion on the Gaps components and how these areas might help paint a good picture of a school's performance.
c. Conduct consensus vote on the possible relative weights of the Gaps components.
d. Discussion of the consensus vote and range of votes.
e. Second table discussion on the Gaps weighting
f. Conduct second consensus vote on the possible relative Gaps component weights.
g. Sharing of the outcome of vote 2, with explanation of the range of votes.

4. Relative weights for High School College- and Career-Ready

a. Develop an understanding of the terms used for the College- and Career-Ready components.
i. Cohort Graduation Rate
ii. Career Attainment
iii. Attendance
b. Conduct table discussion on the College- and Career-Ready components and how these components might help paint a good picture of a school's performance.
c. Conduct consensus vote on the possible relative weights of the College- and Career-Ready components.
d. Discussion of the consensus vote and range of votes.
e. Second table discussion on the College- and Career-Ready weighting
f. Conduct second consensus vote on the possible relative College- and Career-Ready component weights.
g. Sharing of the outcome of vote 2, with explanation of the range of votes.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STANDARDS

1. Relative weights for Elementary and Middle School Core Values Areas (Achievement, Growth, Gaps)

a. Review the terms used for components:

i. Core Values Areas
ii. Components
iii. Recommendations

b. Conduct table discussion on the Elementary and Middle School core values areas and how these areas might help paint a good picture of a school's performance.
c. Conduct consensus vote on the possible relative weights of the core values areas.
d. Discussion of the consensus vote and range of votes.
e. Second table discussion on the weighting
f. Conduct second consensus vote on the possible relative weights of the core values areas.
g. Sharing of the outcome of vote 2, with explanation of the range of votes.

2. **Relative weights for Elementary/Middle School Achievement (Reading, Mathematics, Science)**
   a. Develop an understanding of the terms used for the achievement components.
      i. Reading (Reading MSA)
      ii. Mathematics (Mathematics MSA)
      iii. Science (Science MSA)
   b. Conduct table discussion on the Achievement components and how these components might help paint a good picture of a school's performance. Discuss whether the elementary and middle school achievement weighting should different from high school achievement
   c. Conduct preliminary vote on the possible relative weights of the Achievement components.
   d. Discussion of the preliminary vote and range of votes.
   e. Second table discussion on the Achievement weighting (if necessary)
   f. Conduct second vote on the possible relative Achievement component weights (if necessary).
   g. Sharing of the outcome of vote 2, if necessary, with explanation of the range of votes.

3. **Relative weights for Elementary/Middle School Gaps components.** The Gaps components come from the gaps between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups within the school.
   a. Develop an understanding of the terms used for the Gaps components.

i. Reading (Reading MSA)
ii. Mathematics (Mathematics MSA)
iii. Science (Science MSA)

b. Conduct table discussion on the Gaps components and how these components might help paint a good picture of a school's performance. Discuss whether the weighting should be different from or the same as the highs school gaps weighting recommendations.
c. Conduct consensus vote on the possible relative weights of the Gaps components.
d. Discussion of the consensus vote and range of votes.
e. Second table discussion on the Gaps weighting (if necessary)
f. Conduct second consensus vote on the possible relative Gaps component weights (if necessary).
g. Sharing of the outcome of vote 2, with explanation of the range of votes (if necessary).

4. **Relative weights for Elementary/Middle Growth components**. For Growth, the Index uses the percent of students making one year's growth or more in the three Maryland School Assessments.
   a. Develop an understanding of the terms used for the Growth components.
      i. Reading (Reading MSA)
      ii. Mathematics (Mathematics MSA)
   b. Conduct table discussion on the Growth components and how these components might help paint a good picture of a school's performance. Discuss whether the weighting should be different from or the same as the highs school gaps weighting recommendations.
   c. Conduct consensus vote on the possible relative weights of the Growth components.
   d. Discussion of the consensus vote and range of votes.
   e. Second table discussion on the Growth weighting (if necessary)
   f. Conduct second vote on the possible relative Growth component weights (if necessary).
   g. Sharing of the outcome of vote 2, with explanation of the range of votes (if necessary).

Following compilation of the results of the standard setting procedure, the State Superintendent received a complete briefing on the process and the results. The State Superintendent reviewed all the

summary discussion notes and the votes, with particular attention to the range and median for each of the votes. The State Superintendent submitted the information to the State Board on February 13 for presentation and action.

Subsequent to the February 13 vote, the Maryland State Department of Education will complete statistical and process studies to determine a detailed implementation plan as well as adjustments to the procedures and Index itself necessary for full implementation with the 2011-2012 school performance data. Annually the Index will be reviewed and updated as needed.

Example of the School Progress Index Calculation for Elementary and Middle Schools

Elementary Schools
Grades K-5

School Index	1.010

	Achievement			Growth			Gap Reduction		
Weight-1	***0.300***			***0.300***			***0.400***		
Working weight-1	0.300			0.300			0.400		
Weighted Contribution	0.293			0.286			0.431		
	Assessments			Assessments			Assessments		
	Math	Read	Science	Math	Read		Math	Reading	Science
Weighted Proportion	0.321	0.328	0.329	0.520	0.434		0.342	0.356	0.379
Target	0.954	0.945	0.872	0.597	0.945		0.927	0.927	0.863
Weight-2	***0.333***	***0.333***	***0.333***	***0.500***	***0.500***		***0.333***	***0.333***	***0.333***
Working Weight-2	0.333	0.333	0.333	0.500	0.500		0.333	0.333	0.333
Proportional Measure	0.964	0.984	0.987	1.039	0.868		1.025	1.068	1.136
All Students current Yr	0.920	0.930	0.860	0.620	0.820		High-Low Current Yr	0.050	0.010	0.020
All Students Base Yr	0.950	0.940	0.860	0.560	0.940		High-Low Base Yr	0.080	0.080	0.150

Maryland will reinforce its expectation that all students participate in assessments by including the non-participant students at basic proficiency in the Achievement area of the School Progress Index.

The **School Progress Index** for each elementary / middle school is calculated by summing the weighted contribution from Achievement, Growth, and Gap Reduction. After weighted proportions are calculated by content in each section, the weighted contributions are calculated by multiplying the sum of the weighted proportions in each section by the value of **weight-1** in each section. **Weight-1** is

distributed across all three sections (Achievement, Growth, and Gap Reduction) and the sum of these three weights must be equal to 1.0.

In the example above, this calculation would lead to the following:

- ((.321 + .312 + .329) * 0.30) + ((.520+ .412) * 0.30) + ((.325 +.338 + .379) * 0.40 = 0.985 which is our School Progress Index

On the next page is a brief description of each section that leads up to how the weighted proportions are calculated in that section.

Note: This is a sample with sample given weights. Final weights were decided through the standard setting process that included a representative group of stakeholders on February 8, 2012.

School Achievement

Achievement is based on the percentage of the students in the "all students" group scoring proficient or advanced in Mathematics, Reading, and Science for each elementary and middle school. The performance percent for each school and content (values highlighted in blue in the achievement section) is the combined result of all three elementary / middle test types (Alt-MSA, Mod-MSA, and MSA) and is calculated for the current and baseline (prior) school year.

School Growth

Growth is based on the percentage of students in the "all students" group demonstrating growth in Mathematics or Reading performance over the previous year for each elementary and middle school. The growth percent for each school and content (values highlighted in blue in the growth section) is the combined result of all three elementary / middle test types (Alt-MSA, Mod-MSA, and MSA) and is calculated for the current and baseline (prior) school year.

The following steps are taken to determine the growth percentage by content:

- Determine a student's scale score cut for the current and prior school year. The scale score cut is derived from a standardized table and ranges from 1 to 9 with 9 being the highest. Each proficiency level is broken into three ranges:
  - 1 - 3 for basic scale scores
  - 4 - 6 for proficient scale scores
  - 7 - 9 for advanced scale scores.

- Determine a student's growth score by subtracting the prior year scale score cut from the current year scale score cut. The growth score ranges from -8 to 8 with 8 being the highest.
- For a growth score to be calculated for a student, the student must have matching test types in both the prior and current school year, and the student's grade must progress by a one grade increment (i.e. if a student was in grade 3 in the prior year then they must be in grade 4 in the current year).
- The student will then be placed into one of the following three categories based on their growth score
    - Decline: Growth Score: -8 to -1
    - Same: Growth Score: 0
    - Improve: Growth Score: 1 to 8
- Sum the students by school and content for the same and improve categories, which become the number of students demonstrating growth.
- Sum the students by school and content for the decline, same, and improve categories, which becomes the number of test takers.
- The growth percent by content is then the number of students demonstrating growth divided by the number of test takers.
- The current year growth percent is determined by looking at changes from SY2010-11 to SY2011-12. The baseline year growth percent is determined by looking at changes from SY2009-10 to SY2010-11.

School Gap Reduction

Gap reduction is based on a gap score that is calculated for each school which shows the gap between the highest-achieving subgroup and the lowest-achieving subgroup in Mathematics, Reading, and Science for each elementary and middle school. The gap percent for each school and content (values highlighted in blue in the gap reduction section) is the combined result of all three elementary / middle test types (Alt-MSA, Mod-MSA, and MSA) and is calculated for the current and baseline (prior) school year.

The following steps are taken to determine the gap score by content:

- The subgroups here are defined as the seven racial categories along with special education, limited English proficiency, and free and reduced meal status.

- For each school, the above subgroups are evaluated by content and the highest- and lowest-achieving subgroups (based on the percentage of the students in the "all students" group scoring proficient or advanced) are flagged for both the current and baseline years (SY2010-11 and SY2011-12). Note that a minimum n of 5 test takers was used per content and subgroup, so any subgroups under that were eliminated from the process. A content-specific gap score is then calculated as the percentage of all students scoring proficient or advanced in the highest-achieving subgroup minus the percentage of all students scoring proficient or advanced in the lowest-achieving subgroup. Since these gap scores are year-specific, there was no requirement that the subgroup had to exist in both years.
- To help ensure that gap reductions reflect improved performance of the lowest-performing subgroup and not a decline in the performance of the highest-performing subgroup, the percent proficient value used to calculate the gap for the highest-performing subgroup was the larger of the prior and current year.

Calculating the Weighted Proportions

The **weighted proportion** calculation is similar across all three sections. The only difference is in the formula used for the proportional measure and target calculations for gap reduction. Also, growth only looks at Mathematics and Reading whereas achievement and gap reduction look at all three contents.

You can follow along by using the example in the beginning of this section.

- **Weight-2** is distributed across the contents independently within each section; the sum of the weights in the section must be equal to 1.0.
- **Target** is calculated by taking a school's percentage for the baseline school year and determining annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students who are not proficient within six years. The target is calculated separately by content within a school. The targets were computed with the convention that larger values are indicative of higher performance levels. Annual targets represent the annual increase in performance required to achieve a 50% reduction in the number of students not meeting the desired outcome by 2017. For the Achievement, Growth, Cohort Graduation Rate, and CTE Concentrators measures the targets are computed as:

  All Students Base Yr + (((1 - ((1 - All Students Base Yr) / 2)) - All Students Base Yr) / 6)

For Gap reduction and Cohort Dropout Rate, where larger values are indicative of lower (less desirable) performance level, calculations were based on the complements (1-Gap and 1-Cohort Dropout Rate) for consistency.

- **Proportional Measure** is a school's percentage for the current year divided by the target for achievement and growth; it is 1 divided by a school's percentage for the current year divided by the target for gap reduction. The proportional measure is calculated by content within a school.

  The formula for proportional measure is:
  All Students current Yr / Target
- **Weighted Proportion** is the proportional measure multiplied by weight-2. The weighted proportion is calculated separately by content within a school.
- As stated in the beginning, **Weighted Contribution** is the sum of the school's weighted proportions for Mathematics, Reading, and Science multiplied by Achievement Weight-1 for each section.

Maryland's Accountability Plan

Maryland remains committed to addressing significant gains and progress, in addition to proficiency, for all students. Maryland's new accountability structure has three prongs. The first is the identification of Priority, Focus, and Reward schools. The second is driven by the results of each subgroup's performance on the "ambitious, but achievable, annual measureable objectives (AMOs)." The third is the development of the School Progress Index. Every school, whether high or low-performing, must address the needs of any subgroup of students that fails to make the AMOs. The vehicle for the description of this support should be the School Improvement Plan (SIP). The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR 13A.01.04.07) presently states that "A school identified for improvement (1) Annually, before the beginning of the school year following a failure to make adequate yearly progress, each local school system shall identify for school improvement each elementary or secondary school that has not made AYP because that school did not make the annual measurable objective in the same reported area for 2 consecutive years. The reported areas are reading, mathematics, or as applicable, attendance rate or graduation rate. (2) To insure that all students reach the State's proficient level in reading, mathematics, and science by 2013 —14, within 3 months or sooner after identification, each

identified school shall develop a 2-year school improvement plan that: (a) Focuses on strengthening core academic subjects; (b) Incorporates strategies based on scientifically based research that will strengthen core academic subjects; (c) Includes funds for high quality professional development; and (d) Has specific measurable objectives for each student subgroup. Furthermore, (3) Each local school system within 45 days of receiving a plan shall: (a) Establish a peer review process to assist with review of the plan; (b) Promptly review the plan; c) Work with the schools as necessary; and (d) Approve the school plan if the plan meets the requirements of all applicable federal and State laws and regulations." This COMAR regulation will be reviewed and revised as necessary.

Once the data has been reported and analyzed and the support is in place, the school's efforts for improvement should address any subgroup needs and allow the school to track the improvement efforts by subgroup as well as intervention. Most all schools in Maryland currently use a very robust school improvement plan process and may be best served by continuing along a path for improvement that is already in place. If all school data is being considered and the current direction for the school indicates that all targets are being met and the school continues to improve then no change should be made just for this process. However, if the school and/or LEA examine the data and come to a new analysis for change then this process can be an opportune moment to implement necessary changes. The format for school improvement plans will not be specified by MSDE. However, it will be expected that all schools have a SIP which is available to the public. Priority schools will be required to incorporate the seven turnaround principles into the SIP or adopt one of the four USDE approved 1003(g) SIG models.

<u>School Improvement Plans:</u>

Master Plans are the umbrella for monitoring and accountability of LEAs as they implement support to Priority and Focus Schools and School Improvement Planning. MSDE is currently revising the guidance document for the 2012 Master Plan to prompt LEAs with Priority and/or Focus Schools to describe their overall approach and the challenges and successes that they may be having. In the case of challenges, LEAs will be expected to explain how they plan to alter direction to address the deficiencies. As with all other aspects of Master Planning, the explanations will be data-driven.

For School Improvement Plans (SIP), Maryland has chosen to create a reporting mechanism by Strand that will be included as part of the Master Plan for ALL LEAs. The description of this graduated reporting can be found in Maryland's ESEA Flexibility Proposal (see pages 86-90) in the final

paragraph of each Strand.

Please note: Maryland does not have separate "district plans". LEAs district specific plans are part of the Master Plan each district completes.

Building District Capacity

The structure of Maryland, with only 24 school districts, is very conducive to a collegial process. Maryland's state Superintendent meets monthly with the 24 LEA superintendents. These meetings are extremely important to all involved for problem solving, in depth discussion of major issues and as an essential communication tool throughout the state. In addition to these meetings, the Assistant Superintendents for Instruction meet monthly with the Assistant State Superintendent for Instruction. Other liaisons meet regularly to discuss all initiatives that require LEA and state action. Maryland works as a community with a clear goal of high achievement for all students through the cooperation of families, teachers, administrators and students.

MSDE and the local school systems use these regular meetings to examine both State and local issues and impending policy changes to ensure local school systems and the State work in concert on implementation. Further, with only 24 school systems within a geographically close proximity, technical exchanges on an ad hoc basis are frequently scheduled both with individual school systems and with clusters of systems with similar issues.

As described above, once standard setting is complete for the School Progress Index, a scale will be created from 0-1+. For directing support and interventions to schools with similar conditions, the scale will be broken into five strands with Strand 1 the highest-performing and Strand 5 the lowest. Although schools will, as always, have very unique profiles, MSDE will group the schools based on a measure of the magnitude of the issues these schools face. Thus, if a school falls into Strand 5, it joins other schools with pervasive, school-wide, systemic problems. Schools in Strand 1 are meeting the challenges brought to school by their students. This is not to say that schools in Strand 1 cannot achieve more but that the schools overall and by subgroup are meeting and exceeding the academic standards currently set for the school. This Strand categorization allows the SEA and LEA to differentiate resources to schools by magnitude of need while precise diagnosis occurs at the school.

STRAND 1

If schools fall into Strand 1, the schools usually meet and exceed the academic standards for all students. Although, it will be possible to be in the top Strand and still miss the AMOs for one subgroup, most of the Reward Schools identified below will fall into Strand 1. Schools that score in this Strand may have met the minimum standards set by the State for closing the achievement gaps but will, through development of the School Improvement Plan, set higher standards. Additionally, schools will examine the data they have that indicate any need whether academic, physical, emotional or cultural and develop intervention plans which will be monitored.

Since data for the School Progress Index will be published annually, to maintain the status of a Strand I school, focused and intense interventions for students not showing growth will be necessary. Although the Maryland School Assessments (MSAs) are meant to assess the most important academic content instructed in all Maryland classrooms, teachers/leaders understand that they are responsible for the whole child. That means that at times Social Studies activities, tools to keep students organized or addressing intense personal needs will intervene and be partnered with the ongoing support for the content of Science, English/Language Arts and Mathematics.

Support to these schools beyond the SIP may take different forms. The school should be able to identify the professional development and training that can lead to additional improvement in achievement. The LEA may provide this resource or schools may leverage other sources of funding to seek training beyond the current staff within the LEA.

Monitoring for these schools on the part of the LEA is left totally to the LEA and its theory of action. MSDE will intervene in a very small way. Each year a random sample of 1-3% of the schools in Strand I will submit their School Improvement Plans for review by LEA experts. The LEA Superintendent will report on the examination of these plans through the Master Plan process and assure that any omissions or inadequacies will be addressed in these and all other SIPs. This will allow MSDE to have insight into the School Improvement Plan process from the school's perspective and the school will receive feedback that will assist with the continued improvement of the school's ability to diagnose and prescribe interventions.

STRAND 2

When schools are categorized as Strand 2 they are expected to be among the top 50% of schools in the State. The successes and challenges in this Strand will be varied. Schools may excel at Mathematics but lag in reading or the reverse. In this case, the balance of Achievement, Growth, Gap Reduction and College- and Career-Ready Goals can yield relatively high-performing schools with targeted needs that, when addressed, could lead them to enter Strand I. Schools in this Strand could also be struggling to stay in Strand 2.

More than one area of need may drive the school to focus on one and then another intervention sequentially or consider a quasi-systemic plan that would embrace all of the needs at once. The SIP process will again ensure that each subgroup is addressed and identified needs drive professional development for teachers and appropriate interventions for the students. MSDE will dictate no specific support for schools in Strand 2. However, it is expected that LEAs will take particular interest in the needs in these schools. Although an individual school's assessment of data is recommended for sustained improvement, it will additionally serve as an excellent source for the LEA to determine system-wide professional development.

State monitoring for Strand 2 schools will be identical to the random inspection of SIPs as described for Strand 1, with a larger sample of 4-5%. MSDE will also require the LEA with Strand 2 schools to describe in the annual Master Plan Update the overall process for addressing the production of useful, focused SIPs; the commonalities discovered through this analyses and syntheses of data; and the system-wide professional development plan that emerges from that work. There will be specific language in the Master Plan guidance developed by the BTE External Advisory Panel.

STRAND 3

Strand 3 schools bring the same variety as Strand 2 but an increase in the intensity of needs identified by the School Improvement Process. Schools in Strand 3 may have multiple subgroups struggling to achieve standards or may have intensive, pervasive problems for one very low-performing subgroup. More often than for schools in Strand 2, LEAs and schools may determine the need for a systemic solution rather than or in addition to continued support to individual subgroups. Title I schools that fall in this Strand will be eligible to apply for 1003(a) School Improvement Grant funds to support the direction toward improvement detailed in the SIP.

LEAs are directed to oversee the School Improvement Process for Strand 3 schools. Many configurations may be used for the delivery of professional development or training but LEAs must be closely in touch with these schools and regularly checking on progress. Additionally, LEAs will have a section of the Master Plan to address Strand 3 activities separately. Commonalities of the school concerns should be addressed. Successes and challenges will be addressed through monitoring questions developed by the BTE External Advisory Panel.

STRAND 4

Strand 4 schools are those with serious needs. These schools fall in the close to the bottom of achievement for schools in the State. They are not identified as falling into the very bottom but they are near that point. Rarely will these schools have focused problems with one specific subgroup. Most often, a systemic change will be necessary to address all instruction as well as those ancillary supports, like classroom management training, that can prevent other problems from interfering with instruction.

Support for the improvement of instruction, the replacement or the retraining of the leadership staff, and intensified outreach to families to become involved with their child's school should be addressed by all schools in this strand and always with LEA oversight. LEAs should look carefully to the existing supports in the schools to determine effectiveness of the current path to improvement. Schools with serious needs require the attention and support of the whole community and Strand 4 schools must have intentional activities to create community involvement.

For monitoring, LEAs must include in their Master Plan Update, the process that is used to assure that each Strand 4 school has the most effective school improvement plan possible. Additionally, specific guiding questions will ask for a description of any differentiation of supports to these schools with very low scores on the School Progress Index. It is possible for Focus schools to fall into this strand. When this occurs, certain Title I Focus schools will be eligible to apply for 1003(a) school improvement funds to support the path for improvement stated in their school improvement plans.

STRAND 5

The lowest-achieving schools in the State will fall into Strand 5. It is probable that all Priority Schools will fall in this category but there will be others, not receiving Title I services, that will present with serious, school-wide issues that require additional, differentiated services from the LEA. These schools

are also going to present the most need from the student services. These schools will typically be of higher poverty, more diverse and in communities of need.

Required supports for Strand 5 schools that are not Title I are described in Section 2.G. Those Title I schools in this Strand will either be Priority, Focus or another low-performing Title I school so each category will afford access to additional school improvement dollars. All schools, Title I or non-Title I schools should receive differentiated support from the LEA.

Monitoring of these schools will be covered by the LEA and MSDE if they are Priority or Focus. The other schools will be required to provide assurances within the Master Plan to the State Superintendent of Schools that all required interventions, reporting, and monitoring are being supplied by the LEA.

Maryland will identify schools in each strand in early May 2012. Simulations of the school index utilizing the AYP data from 2010 for the baseline year and 2011 for the current year have been calculated (Please see the School Index Excel File attached. Because of its large size, the Excel Spreadsheet document is attached electronically to this application and cannot be included as part of the appendix). A full analysis of the ranking of the schools has not been completed. The first step in this process was the running of the data that took place with the submission of the ESEA Flexibility Proposal in February 2012. Maryland is now analyzing those data runs, which were based on 2010 and 2011 data, to determine cut points for each strand. The final identification of schools will then be run using 2011-2012 data. This ranking will be completed in May 2012.

FIXED STANDARDS

Detailed in other sections of this document is the description of how schools may exit the categories of Priority and Focus. Because that is an important concept within Maryland's support and incentives to schools, MSDE will take the following steps to make this a demanding, attainable goal. Upon analysis of the data from the Index, cut scores will be established to differentiate strands. Following the identification of the cut scores, the number of schools in each strand will be identified for the school year 2012-2013. After that first year, the SPI scale will be held constant so that, should an SPI of .73, for example, be necessary to move a school from Strand 3 to Strand 2 in 2013, it will also be necessary in 2015 should this flexibility continue.

This allows the school to continue to work toward AMOs that will change each year, moving the standard higher but allows the school to have a fixed standard to target. To exit improvement schools must move upward at least two Strands. This standard is not moveable such that an increased performance would be necessary to keep schools in their current Strand. The stability in the standard not only allows schools to exit Priority and Focus status but provides an incentive for all schools to improve.

The chart below describes an overview of supports and monitoring for Maryland's School Progress Index.

Maryland's School Progress Index—Overview of Supports and Monitoring

Strand	Additional Financial Support	Academic Standards	Sub-groups	SEA Support	LEA Support	Monitoring
1		Meets and/or exceeds	Minimal subgroups missing AMOs	Feedback from all monitoring visits.	Oversee process for completion of SIPs assuring that low-performing subgroups are addressed	Random sample of 1-3% of schools submit plan to LEA for review. Results of review reported in Master Plan. MSDE on-site monitoring of LEA Title I annually and random visit to one or more Title I schools.
2		Meets	Some subgroups missing AMOs	Feedback from all monitoring visits.	Oversee process for completion of SIPs assuring that low-performing subgroups are addressed	Random sample of 4-5% of schools submit plan to LEA for review. Results of review reported in Master Plan. MSDE on-site monitoring of LEA Title I annually and random visit to one or more Title I schools.
3		Minimally meets or does not meet	Multiple subgroups missing AMOs	Feedback from all monitoring visits.	Oversee the actual completion of SIPs assuring that low-performing subgroups are addressed	In Master Plan, LEAs report on overall plans to address school needs. MSDE on-site monitoring of LEA Title I annually and random visit to one or more Title I schools.
4		Usually does not meet	Multiple subgroups Missing AMOs;	Feedback from all monitoring visits.	Oversee the actual completion of SIPs assuring that low-	In Master Plan, LEAs report on overall plans to address school needs.

Strand	Additional Financial Support	Academic Standards	Sub-groups	SEA Support	LEA Support	Monitoring
			Systemic whole school reform may be needed		performing subgroups are addressed	MSDE on-site monitoring of LEA Title I annually and random visit to one or more Title I schools.
5	Low-Performing Title I Schools have access to 1003(a) SIG funds	Does not meet	Multiple subgroups Missing AMOs; Systemic whole school reform may be needed	Feedback from all monitoring visits. Title I Office will Review and Approve use of 1003(a) grant application.	Oversee the actual completion of SIPs assuring that low-performing subgroups are addressed	In Master Plan, LEAs report on overall plans to address school needs. MSDE on-site monitoring of LEA Title I annually and random visit to one or more Title I schools.
Priority Schools	Priority Schools have access to 1003(g), or LEA will reserve up to 20% off the top of its annual Title I, Part A Allocation as a reservation in Attachment 7, Table 7-8, Line 6 of Master Plan, formerly used to provide SES/PSC.		Multiple subgroups Missing AMOs; Systemic whole school reform may be needed	SIG Monitoring Teams; Breakthrough Center New Priority Schools Monitoring Teams	Oversee the actual completion of SIPs assuring that low-performing subgroups are addressed. Sign MOU with Breakthrough Center and commit to support agreements; Until the SIG grants expire, LEA must fund an intervention model for any new Priority School with Title I money previously reserved for SES.	In Master Plan, LEAs report on overall plans to address school needs. Title I Office will monitor Fiscal and Programmatic activities reserved in Table 7-8, Line 6 Attachment 7, Master Plan
Focus Schools	Focus Schools, regardless of what Strand they fall in, have access to 1003(a) SIG funds.		Need to focus on subgroups not meeting AMOs and the gap in	MSDE on-site monitoring of LEA Title I annually and random visit to	Oversee the actual completion of SIPs assuring that low-performing subgroups	In Master Plan, LEAs report on overall plans to address school needs. MSDE on-site monitoring

Strand	Additional Financial Support	Academic Standards	Sub-groups	SEA Support	LEA Support	Monitoring
	LEA should consider differential support to address needs using Title I money previously reserved for SES		subgroup performance	one or more Title I schools. Breakthrough Center to work with LEA Title I Office will Review and Approve use of 1003(a) grant application.	are addressed. Monitoring of SIP implementation by the LEA. Sign MOU with Breakthrough Center and commit to support agreements;	of LEA Title I annually and random visit to one or more Title I schools.

Upon analysis of the data from the Index, cut scores will be established to differentiate strands. As data is analyzed for schools and strands, more specificity will be established under the headings in the chart above. 2.A.ii Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding information, if any.

Option A	**Option B**
☐ The SEA only includes student achievement on reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools.	☒ If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools, it must: 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.

Please find the data for B (a) - number of "all students" proficient in Science Assessments by grade level- below:

Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Accountability, Assessment, and Data Systems

2011 Science Proficiency - State

Grade	Number Proficient / Advanced	Number Tested	Percent Proficient / Advanced
05	41465	61853	67.04
08	43042	61757	69.70
HS	49601	61071	81.22

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)

The AMOs will be developed using the process in Option A above for every school and every subgroup. Data for State, all students, and subgroups is included in Section 2.A (Annual Measurable Objectives) above.

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.

Title I schools are identified because of the enormous challenge that poverty brings for families, students and schools. Students and families are steeped in the basic needs for employment, food and shelter. These needs and those additional ones of health care, mental health care and childcare come into the schools with the children. Education is one of the keys to overcoming poverty and the devastating effects it is having on our state's youth. Because of this basic reason for the existence of Title I, Maryland seeks to reward all schools that are high achieving but to offer an additional recognition for those schools that do this with additional challenges. As will all aspects of this application, the definitions and recognitions of Reward Schools were shared with LEAs and all comments were taken into consideration.

One of the most effective aspects of NCLB has been the increased attention to subgroups. In Maryland, the most frequently low-performing subgroup is the students with disabilities subgroup. This is, at times, due to their disability. The English Language Learner subgroup also struggles with low performance. For these students, the language barrier can affect their academic progress. Maryland remains concerned for the struggle of students in other cultural and racial subgroups. By requiring Reward schools to keep the achievement gap between "all students" and any lower performing subgroup at or below 10%, Maryland keeps the spotlight on students with disabilities, students with cultural and language barriers, and on other subgroups facing challenges. This allows schools, parents and advocates to have a clearer picture of performance and need.

The methodology will have multiple steps. First, any Title I school will be designated a Highest Performing Reward School if the school has met AYP for "all students" and all subgroups for two consecutive years AND has a 10% or less gap between the performance of "all students" and that of any lower performing subgroup.

Of the identified Highest Performing Reward Schools, those that additionally appear in the top 10% of Title I schools showing the most improvement in performance between the 2007 MSA and the 2011 MSA will be designated Distinguished Highest Performing Reward Schools.

If a Highest Performing Reward School has additionally improved its "all students" performance by at least eighteen percentage points between the 2007 MSA and the 2011 MSA, AND have 50% or more economically disadvantaged students it will be designated as a Superlative Highest Performing Reward School.

The second category of Reward schools will be those that have shown significant improvement in performance but may not have yet reached the current mark for Adequate Yearly Progress. These schools must have made at least a gain of eighteen percentage points between the 2007 MSA and the 2011 MSA for "all students" and have a 10% or less gap between the performance of "all students" and that of any lower performing subgroup. These schools will be designated as Highest Progress Reward Schools.

Maryland's Highest Performing Reward Schools will receive additional endorsements for additional accomplishments in progress and with high poverty. The Highest Progress schools will have made significant improvement for all students over the past five years. In both cases these schools have met and exceeded very high standards.

This method will apply only to this initial year of recognition. After the 2012-2013 school year, Reward Schools will also be expected to achieve one of the top two categories on the newly developed School Index for two consecutive years.

Starting with the 2013-14 school year, Reward Schools will be identified in the following way: First, any Title I school will be designated a Highest Performing Reward School if the school has met all AMOs in School Progress for "all students" and all subgroups for two consecutive years AND has a 10% or less gap between the performance of "all students" and that of any lower performing subgroup AND the school is designated in Strand 1 or 2 for two consecutive years.

Of the identified Highest Performing Reward Schools, those that additionally appear in the top 10% of Title I schools showing the most improvement in performance in the last five years on State Assessments will be designated Distinguished Highest Performing Reward Schools.

If a Highest Performing Reward School has additionally improved its "all students" performance by at least ten percentage points in the last five years on the State Assessments, AND have 50% or more economically disadvantaged students it will be designated as a Superlative Highest Performing Reward School.

The second category of Reward schools will be those that have shown significant improvement in performance but may not have yet reached the current AMOs for School Progress. These schools must have made at least a gain of ten percentage points in the last five years on the State Assessments for "all students" and have a 10% or less gap between the performance of "all students" and that of any lower performing subgroup. These schools will be designated as Highest Progress Reward Schools.

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

The 30 schools to be recognized in all four categories of reward are attached in Table 2.

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

Maryland will recognize all ***Title I Highest Performing Reward Schools*** and the **Highest Progress Reward Schools** by sending out a Maryland State Department of Education press release listing all schools in this category and actively promoting the announcement with Statewide media. The State will provide a Special Certificate of Recognition that applauds their accomplishment. Schools in this category will also be encouraged to celebrate their success and prominently display the certificate in a highly visible location in the school. The

State will also provide a template for local school systems and encourage them to release their own press announcement and work with their own local media to highlight their successful schools. All information will be prominently displayed on the MSDE website.

In addition to the State and local media recognition detailed above, ***Title I Distinguished Highest Performing Reward Schools*** will receive a Special Plaque of Recognition that applauds the accomplishment. Schools in this category will also be encouraged to celebrate their success and display the plaque in a highly visible location in the school. n.

In addition to the recognition detailed above, the ***Superlative Highest Performing Reward Schools*** will also be recognized by the State Board of Education and the Governor's Office at a State Board meeting. In addition, the State Superintendent and other State dignitaries will visit every school to applaud success and highlight best practices. A special publication and a video highlighting Best Practices in every ***Superlative Highest Performing Reward School*** will be produced and shared with other schools throughout the State. Finally, the ***Superlative Highest Performing Reward Schools*** will be featured and afforded the opportunity to present their Best Practices at our yearly Title I administrative meetings.

Additionally, all LEAs will be encouraged to identify strategies to recognize these schools within their local districts in addition to the Statewide recognition. Maryland is also exploring ways to expand its very prestigious Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence Program to an Honorable Mention Blue Ribbon Schools Program that would encompass Reward Schools that have made exemplary progress for all students. These schools would be recognized, honored, and rewarded in a program that could lead them to Maryland and National Blue Ribbon School status.

It should be noted that it is a result of the input of the LEA Superintendents that there are multiple categories of reward schools. Additionally, LEAs will be expected to recognize these schools as well.

The table below displays the types of Reward Schools and their recognition.
See Appendix II-6 for the full ranking of the Reward Schools

Maryland Reward Schools 2012-2013

Type	Definition for Identification for 2012-2013	Number of Schools	Recognition
Highest Performing Reward Schools	All Title I schools that met AYP for 2009-10 and 2010-11 AND the Gap between "All Students" and any lower performing subgroup is at or below 10%	4/22 Schools	• MSDE Press Release • Promotion of Announcement with Statewide media • Special Certificate of Recognition • Template for LEA Recognition • Prominent Display on MSDE Website
Distinguished Highest Performing Reward Schools	Met requirements above AND school is in top 10% of Title I schools showing the most improvement in performance between 2007 MSA and 2011 MSA	10/22 schools	• All of the above • Special Plaque of Recognition
Superlative Highest Performing Reward School	Met all requirements above AND improved its "All Students" performance by at least 18 percentage points between 2007 MSA and 2011 MSA AND has 50% or more economically disadvantaged students	8/22 schools	• All of the Above • Recognition by the State Board and the Governor's Office at a State Board Meeting • Visit from the State Superintendent & Other State Dignitaries • Special Publication and Video of Best Practices • Featured and offered opportunity to present at the yearly Title I Administrative Meeting
Highest Progress Reward Schools	School that made at least a gain of 18 percentage points for "All Students" AND has a 10% or less gap between the performance of "All Students" and that of any performing subgroup (School does not have to have made AYP)	8 Schools	• MSDE Press Release • Promotion of Announcement with Statewide media • Special Certificate of Recognition • Template for LEA Recognition • Prominent Display on MSDE Website

Maryland Reward Schools 2013-2014 and beyond

Type	Definition for Identification for 2012-2013	Recognition
Highest Performing Reward Schools	Met all AMOs in School Progress for "all students" and all subgroups for two consecutive years **AND** has a 10% or less gap between the performance of "all students" and that of any lower performing subgroup **AND** the school is designated in Strand 1 or 2 for two consecutive years.	• MSDE Press Release • Promotion of Announcement with Statewide media • Special Certificate of Recognition • Template for LEA Recognition • Prominent Display on MSDE Website
Distinguished Highest Performing Reward Schools	Met requirements above **AND** school is in top 10% of Title I schools showing the most improvement in performance for the last five years on State Assessments.	• All of the above • Special Plaque of Recognition
Superlative Highest Performing Reward School	Met all requirements above **AND** improved its "All Students" performance by at least 10 percentage points in the last five years on State Assessments **AND** has 50% or more economically disadvantaged students.	• All of the Above • Recognition by the State Board and the Governor's Office at a State Board Meeting • Visit from the State Superintendent & Other State Dignitaries • Special Publication and Video of Best Practices • Select Schools will be featured and offered an opportunity to present at the yearly Title I Administrative Meeting
Highest Progress Reward Schools	School that made at least a gain of 10 percentage points in the last 5 years on State Assessments for "All Students" **AND** has a 10% or less gap between the performance of "All Students" and that of any performing subgroup (School does not have to have met all its AMOs in School Progress.)	• MSDE Press Release • Promotion of Announcement with Statewide media • Special Certificate of Recognition • Template for LEA Recognition • Prominent Display on MSDE Website

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 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.

Maryland views Priority Schools as not only those schools with the most obvious need and challenge but as test cases for the interventions and support brought by the federal dollars and direction; the State vision and policy; the district attention and resources; and the school's dedication to change. Maryland is coordinating enormous resources and efforts across all levels of government in a way that is unprecedented in recent times to make real differences in schools that have struggled for years under the challenges of low expectations and high poverty and all of the additional baggage that brings. Maryland is ready to meet this challenge and believes that there is a structure in place with Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant (SIG) Schools that can be extended to the additional schools that we will need to identify as Priority. Maryland will use the same definition of Persistently Lowest-Performing Schools to identify Priority schools as it used to identify "Tier I" 2010 SIG schools.

<u>2010 Definition of Persistently Lowest-Performing Schools</u>

Maryland defines "persistently lowest-performing Tier I schools" as those Title I schools (elementary school grade levels Pre-K through five, and middle school grade levels 6-8, and combination schools, PreK-8 at the LEA's discretion) that are the five lowest-achieving (or five percent) of all Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State.

Based on the 2010 Spring administration of the Maryland School Assessment, Maryland identified 76 operating Title I schools in improvement, corrective action or restructuring for school year 2010-2011. The five identified Title I schools have not met performance standards in combined reading and mathematics in the "all students" subgroup for the full academic year 2009-2010. There are 4 Title I high schools (grades 9-12 or combination K-12) in Maryland. No combination high schools have a graduation rate of 60% or less. The process

below was used to identify Tier I schools.

Annual Performance Ranking

1. School's AYP Proficiency calculated based on all assessed grades
2. Schools Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) based on all assessed grades
3. Ranking for Reading and Mathematics are calculated separately by subtracting the AMO from the AYP Proficiency
4. Reading and Mathematics Rankings are summed to calculate the School's annual Overall Performance Rank

Annual Performance Rank = (AYP % proficient for Reading – AMO for Reading) + (AYP % proficient for Mathematics – AMO for Mathematics)

- **Overall Rank** – is the School's Annual Performance Rank summed for 2008 through 2010
- **Overall Average Rank** - is the School's Annual Performance Ranks averaged based on the summed Annual Performance Ranks for 2008 through 2010
- **Overall Weighted Rank** – is the School's Annual Performance Rank weighted for each school year
    1. 2008 Performance Rank multiplied by a weight of 1.0
    2. 2009 Performance Rank multiplied by a weight of 1.0
    3. 2010 Performance Rank multiplied by a weight of 1.25
    4. Sum the weighted Performance Ranks for 2009 through 2010
    5. Divide the sum of the Performance Ranks by the sum of the weights, which is 3.25 when a Performance Rank is present for all three school years

Graduation Rate Criteria:

Graduation Rate

- Graduation Rate is less than 60% for the past 3 school years
- School must be Title I eligible
- School measured for AYP

Notes:

- Schools that did not have three years of AYP data were excluded from Tier I

and Tier II. (lacking trend data)

- Schools where 100% of the students are not working towards a Maryland Diploma were excluded from Tier I and Tier II. The populations of these schools receive a certificate of participation. (certificate program only)
- Schools that did not have graduation data for three consecutive years were excluded from Tier II. (lacking trend data)
- Schools where the participation rate is below the minimum "n" for the "all students" group are excluded from Tier I and Tier II. Participation rate will be computed for each subgroup, and in the aggregate, for each of the reading and mathematics assessments by dividing the number of students present in each testing group by the number of enrolled students in that group. The rate will be calculated for each subgroup and for aggregate separately in each of reading and mathematics assessments where a group includes at least a) 30 students for schools with one grade tested, b) 60 students for schools with two or more grades tested c) Groups not meeting the minimum criteria listed above will not be checked for participation rate. MSDE submitted a waiver request with the 2010 1003(g) SIG Application.

Under the ESEA section of support to low-performing schools, Maryland has dedicated its 1003(g) funding to 16 schools. Eleven (11) were identified for the 2010-2011 school year when 2009 ARRA funding was added to the basic 1003(g) funds. This allowed, with a waiver, for the funding of the 11 schools for three school years until the summer of 2013. An additional five (5) schools were identified for the 2011-2012 school year (2009 SIG) and will be funded for three years with the annual allocation for 1003(g) funds. Each of these 16 schools is implementing one of the four allowable interventions. In Maryland, only the turnaround and restart models are currently in place.

Since the definition offered by USDE for Priority schools mandates 5% of ALL Title I schools to be identified, Maryland has added five additional schools to meet the target of 21 Priority Schools. These schools were drawn from the same list that was generated for the selection of 2010 SIG schools. All five newly identified Priority schools are in the Baltimore City Public School System.

The following table (taken from USDE's guidance on completing the ESEA Flexibility application) demonstrates that MSDE has identified the required number of priority schools that meet the definition of priority schools in ESEA Flexibility. Maryland has 214 Title I schools. Five percent of 214 is 20.6 or 21 schools. Since Maryland already had 16 school currently served as SIG schools, Maryland added five more schools.

USDE Steps	**State: Maryland**	
	Category of Priority Schools	**Number of Schools**
Step 1	Total Number of Title I Schools SY 2010-2011	214
Step 1	Total Number of Priority Schools required to be identified- 214 x .5= 20.6	21
step 2	Total Number of Schools on list generated based on overall rating "F") that are curently-served Tier I or Tier II SIG schools	16
step 3	Total Number of Schools on list generated based on overall rating "F") that are Title I-eligible or Title I participating high schools with a graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years.	11
step 7	Total number of schools on list generated based on overall rating(e.g. schools graded "F" that are among the lowest-achieving 5% of Title I schools-21-16=5	5

Eleven high schools on the list. 5 schools disqualified based on our guidelines for Trend Data. 5 schools did not have a large enough "n" size. 1 eligible school. MSDE elected not to serve the one HS with graduation rate <60%.

See Appendix II-7 for the full ranking of the Priority Schools

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

During the 2010-2011 school year, Maryland served 412 Title I schools. Table 2 of the ESEA Flexibility Request identifies 21 schools as Priority, 16 of which are currently being served under 1003(g) SIG. Maryland's newly identified Priority schools are located in Baltimore City. All 21 identified schools are from two of Maryland's 24 districts: Baltimore City Public Schools and Prince George's County Public Schools. Maryland is currently not serving any Title I high schools with a graduation rate of <60%. Maryland identified 11 Title I eligible high schools. Of the 11 schools, five do not have trend data for three or more years and four were excluded using Maryland's Tier I, and Tier II SIG 2010 Definition of Lowest Performing Schools: Where the participation rate is below the minimum "n" for the all students group are excluded from Tier I and Tier II. Participation rate will be computed for each subgroup, and in the aggregate, for each of the reading and mathematics assessments by dividing the number of students present in each testing group by the number of enrolled students in that group. The rate will be calculated for each subgroup and for aggregate separately in each of reading and mathematics assessments where a group includes at least a) 30 students for schools with one grade tested, b) 60 students for schools with two or more grades tested c) Groups not meeting the minimum criteria listed above will not be checked for participation rate. The remaining two Title I eligible schools will not be designated as Priority as Maryland has chosen to not serve alternative schools as explained in Section C-23 of the ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions document.

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

The Breakthrough Center, Maryland's Statewide system of support for low-achieving schools, serves as the interface between MSDE and the LEAs in the adoption of one of the federal intervention models. Based on the turnaround principles, the Breakthrough Center's work places strong emphasis on building capacity in the identified school districts and SIG schools so that turnaround is not just achieved, but sustained. As described above, the 16 SIG schools are currently implementing either the restart or turnaround models from the four identified by USDE. It is important to note that all 16 schools are in only two of Maryland's 24 LEAs. Intensive work is ongoing, not just with the schools but also with the personnel and structures in the LEAs. Both LEAs have redesigned their infrastructures to better support these schools. They each have a Turnaround Office with dedicated staff to work directly with the schools and facilitate the changes necessary to meet the demands of these grants. The five additional Priority Schools are also in Baltimore City. Thus, through the Breakthrough Center's tremendous partnership work done with the LEAs, new schools begin on a firm basis.

Maryland's newly awarded RTTT Early Childhood grant will also include an Early Childhood Breakthrough Center. The Early Childhood Breakthrough Center is an internal MSDE operation dedicated to coordinating, brokering, and delivering support to early learning and development programs located in low-income neighborhoods across Maryland. It aims to maximize the State's comparative advantage by partnering with regional child care resource centers (CCRC) to determine needs and necessary supports; identify, target, and maximize resources from education, business, government, and research agencies; and to create access to these resources for early learning and development programs with large numbers of children with high needs. More information can be found at http://marylandpublicschools.org/NR/exeres/DAD6D845-93F5-4EB6-9AD6-6EB1CB7B7A8A,frameless.htm

Appendix 2.B contains the template that Baltimore City Public Schools must complete for each additional Priority School. The LEA can choose to implement one of the four models currently allowed for the SIG schools or it can detail a different model of intervention that meets the seven principals of turnaround. The template will be used to structure the LEA description of this choice. MSDE expects the LEA to use all or a portion of the amount of Title I dollars that are currently set

aside for Supplemental Education Services (SES) and Parental Choice to provide between $50,000 and $2 million per school per year for the next three years in order to implement the chosen intervention. In 2011-2012, Baltimore City Public Schools reserved $6,954,799 for Supplemental Educational Services and Public School Choice. MSDE believes this amount, coupled with its regular Title I A funds, will allow the five Priority schools to implement a model or interventions sufficient to address the needs of its schools and students. It should be noted that the LEA may choose to continue to work with SES providers to support these schools and may choose to allocate Title I or other funding sources to hire SES providers to support these schools.

Appendix 2.B contains the Priority Schools Template that Maryland will require each newly identified Priority school to complete. The LEA and/or school can opt to implement one of the four USDE approved turnaround models or can develop their own models for intervention that meet the seven principals of turnaround. The template will be used to structure and ensure that all turnaround principles below have been addressed.

1. Providing strong leadership
2. Ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction
3. Redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and support
4. Strengthening the school's instructional program
5. Using data to inform instruction for continuous improvement
6. Establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline
7. Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement

The MSDE applications and templates (for Priority and Focus schools) will be placed online on the Title I website. These templates will be accessible electronically, can be completed electronically and submitted to MSDE. Hard copies of signed assurances and budgets are submitted to MSDE with their applications and templates.

Financial Resources

MSDE expects each LEA with Priority schools to set aside and use all or a portion of the amount of Title I, Part A dollars that they would set aside for Supplemental Education Services (SES) and Public School Choice to implement their chosen interventions. Each school is eligible to receive between

$50,000 and $2 million per school, per year for the next three years to implement the chosen interventions in order to make substantial student progress towards meeting Maryland's performance targets by 2017.

Maryland understands that under ESEA section 9401(a)(5), the U.S. Secretary of Education may not waive any statutory or regulatory requirement related to the equitable participation of private school students, teachers, and families. As such, Maryland has and will continue to expect LEAs to engage in timely and meaningful consultation before making any decision that affects the opportunities of eligible private school children, teachers, and other educational personnel, if applicable, to participate in the programs affected by the transfer of funds, and provide private school students and teachers equitable services under the program to which the funds are transferred (if applicable) based on the total amount of funds available to each program after the transfer. Maryland consulted with private school stakeholders on February 7, 2012.

Should an LEA transfer funds from Title II, Part A, Section 9501 (b)(3)(B) the LEA is required to provide, at a minimum, equitable services to private school teachers based on an amount of the LEA's allocation under Title II, Part A, that is not less than the aggregate amount of FY2001 funds that an LEA used for professional development under the Eisenhower and Class Size Reduction Program.

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.

Because of the existing infrastructure for the current 16 SIG schools, Maryland expects the LEAs to commence pre-implementation activities beginning July 2012 with full implementation of the plan beginning July 1, 2013. This allows for a full year of planning (assuming approval of the flexibility package by the end of May 2012) to slowly introduce those programs or policies that will be in full effect beginning July 2013. The Priority Schools will use the Maryland Priority Schools Intervention Template or Adopt one of the four USDE approved SIG models. An LEA may use up to 20% of the federal FY 2012 Title I, Part A funds in its Priority schools. An LEA may reserve from $50, 000- $2, 000,000 per school from this reservation annually to implement its schools' plans. The list of the Priority schools will be refreshed after the three-year period.

Maryland's Timeline for Priority School Implementation of Meaningful Interventions

May/June 2012	Maryland's ESEA Flexibility Plan approved by USDE
July 2012-August 2012	Technical Assistance Meetings for LEAs with Priority and Focus Schools. Ongoing TA by SEA for plan approval.
July 2012-June 2015	Partnership Meetings held monthly with MSDE Title I, MSDE Breakthrough Center and LEA Office of Turnaround and Central Support Team.
September 2012	Pre-implementation Activities developed and submitted to MSDE for approval. Pre-implementation Plans will address: **Pre-Implementation Activities** Pre-Implementation allows the LEA to prepare for full implementation of a Priority school intervention at the start of the 2012-2013 school year. Below is a list of allowable pre-implementation activities. **Family and Community Engagement:** Hold community meetings to review school performance, discuss the school interventions to be implemented, and complete school improvement plans in line with the intervention model selected; survey students and parents to gauge needs of students, families, and the community; communicate with parents and the community about school status, improvement plans, choice options, and local service providers for health, nutrition, or social services through press releases, newsletters, newspaper announcements, parent outreach coordinators, hotlines, and direct mail; assist families in transitioning to new schools if their current school is implementing the closure model by providing counseling or holding meetings specifically regarding their choices; or hold open houses or orientation activities specifically for students attending a new school if their prior school is implementing the closure model. **Rigorous Review of External Providers:** Conduct the required rigorous review process to select a charter school operator, a CMO, or an EMO and contract with that entity (see C-5); or properly recruit, screen, and select any external providers that may be necessary to assist in planning for the implementation of the interventions. **Staffing:** Recruit and hire the incoming principal, leadership team, instructional staff, and administrative support; or evaluate the strengths and areas of need of current staff. **Instructional Programs:** Provide interventions for

	acceleration and enrichment opportunities to students in schools that will implement an intervention model at the start of the 2013-2014 school year through programs with evidence of raising achievement; use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) tenets to identify and purchase instructional materials that are research-based, aligned with State academic standards, and have data-based evidence of raising student achievement; or compensate staff for universally designed instructional planning, such as examining student data, developing a curriculum that is aligned to State standards and aligned vertically from one grade level to another, collaborating within and across disciplines, and devising UDL student assessments. **Professional Development and Support:** Train staff, including special educators and ELL specialists on the implementation of new or revised universally designed instructional programs and policies that are aligned with the school's comprehensive instructional plan and the school's intervention model; provide instructional support for returning staff members, such as classroom coaching, structured common planning time, mentoring, consultation with outside experts, and observation of classroom practice, that is aligned with the school's comprehensive instructional plan and the school's intervention model; or train staff on the new evaluation system and locally adopted competencies. **Preparation for Accountability Measures:** Develop and pilot a data system for use in Priority schools; analyze data on leading baseline indicators; or develop and adopt universally designed interim assessments for use in Priority schools.
October 2012-June 2013	Online progress reports on pre-implementation activities submitted to MSDE via web-survey.
October 2012	Restructuring Implementation Technical Assistance (RITA) Initiative administered to all Priority Schools by MSDE. See Appendix 2.C for an explanation of RITA.
November-December 2012	MSDE shares RITA feedback with school and LEA.
January 2013- June 30, 2013	Intervention Plans Developed by Schools and LEAs: 1. Priority Schools conduct needs assessment and complete Maryland's Priority Schools Intervention Template containing the 7 turnaround principles or adopt one of the 4 USDE approved SIG models. 2. Develop budgets, hire consultants, engage families and community, schedule professional development, etc. Draft 1 due: March 1, 2013

	Draft 2 due: April 15, 2013 Final Submission due: May 30, 2013
February 2013	MSDE onsite monitoring of pre-implementation activities. MSDE shares monitoring feedback during the monthly technical assistance Partnership Meeting in March 2013. Monitoring tool will be customized for each school.
July 1, 2013- June 30, 2014	Full Implementation of approved Priority School Implementation plan.
July 1, 2013- June 30, 2014	MSDE onsite Monitoring of the Approved Priority School Implementation Plan September/October 2013 February/March 2014 May/June 2014 Monitoring tools will be customized to each approved Priority School plan and budgets.
July 1, 2014	MSDE and LEA review of Performance Data and revise plans based on data.
July 1, 2014- June 30, 2015	MSDE onsite Monitoring of the Approved Priority School Implementation Plan September/October 2014 February/March 2015 May/June 2015 Monitoring tools will be customized to each approved Priority School plan and budgets.
July 1, 2015	MSDE and LEA review of Performance Data and revise plans based on data.

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.

The sustained support to Priority Schools is designed to fundamentally alter their current direction or performance. Because of this and the discussion in Section 2.A.i., a Priority school will exit Priority status when it demonstrates that it is making significant progress in improving student achievement on the Maryland State Assessment. In order to exit priority status, a Priority school must 1) advance two (2) strands or more on the Maryland School Progress Index or fall within Strand 2 on the School Progress Index and maintain that status for two consecutive years*; and, 2) May not be in the bottom 5% of Title I schools or Title I eligible schools . Should Maryland identify Title I high schools or Title I eligible high schools in the future, an additional exit component would include a graduation rate of 70% or

above for two consecutive years. A school may also exit priority status if it is no longer a Title I school.

Maryland has implemented a process to provide direct support to LEAs with SIG Schools in Tier I and Tier II as well as RTTT feeder schools. Maryland's position is to work with the LEA on a regular basis to insure there is improvement in these lowest performing schools. This process includes monthly internal MSDE meetings via the Breakthrough Center. One key feature of the Breakthrough Center calls for MSDE to convene a cross functional team comprised of experts within the Department from Title I and Divisions of Instruction, Student, Family and School Support, Career and Technology Education, etc. The cross functional team is charged with providing direct support to schools and LEAs by brokering services or providing direct services related to academics, scheduling, safe schools, leadership, data and professional development among others. The cross functional team meets monthly. In addition, MSDE's Breakthrough Center staff and Title I staff meet monthly with the LEA Turnaround offices to discuss services and interventions and assist with implementation. LEAs are required to submit quarterly data to MSDE. MSDE analyzes the data and provides feedback and strategies that the LEA may implement.

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.

Maryland has a history of identifying Focus schools under the piloted Differentiated Accountability structure. These are schools that do not require a school-wide, systemic change but rather need to focus on the services to only one or two subgroups. Because performance in the other subgroups and at the "all students" level are maintaining and improving, the low achievement of one subgroup contributes to the overall gap within the school, the LEA and the SEA.

Analysis: In order to be considered for this analysis, a school had to be a Title I school in 2011 and had to have been measured for AYP for Reading and Mathematics in both 2010 and 2011 since Maryland is using matched AYP proficiency data. Out of 412 schools flagged as Title I in 2011, there were 408 such schools (three schools only had students in grades Pre-K, K, or 1 and one school was new in 2011).

There were seven Title I schools in 2011 that had a High School component, all in Baltimore City. However, since all of these schools also had a Middle School component and had a significant number of test takers, this analysis looked at the achievement subgroups (the seven race code levels, SPED, LEP, and FARMS) and not the graduation rates.

Sample 2.e.i.1.

LEA	School	School Name	Reading Prof	Reading Takers	Math Prof	Math Takers
XX	XXX	XXX	120	178	68	175
XX	XXX	XXX	172	237	140	237
XXX	XXX	XXX	105	210	75	210
XX	XXX	XXX	119	206	58	204
XX	XXX	XXX	43	111	30	107
XXX	XXX	XXX	100	150	113	149
XXX	XXX	XXX	93	229	66	230

Any subgroups (by content – reading or mathematics) that had less than the minimum n test takers (n = 5) were removed from the analysis. Since gap scores are calculated within an academic year, there was no requirement that the subgroup had to exist in both years. Samples of one school's analysis records are shown below (note that a school may not have all 10 subgroups). Overall proficiency for each year was then calculated as the sum of reading and mathematics proficient students divided by the sum of reading and mathematics test takers. Note that the empty cells for the Asian subgroup are cells where the test taker count was less than the minimum n = 5.

LEA	School	Subgroup	read_prof_count_2011	read_test_takers_2011	read_prof_count_2010	read_test_takers_2010	math_prof_count_2011	math_test_takers_2011	math_prof_count_2010	math_test_takers_2010	overall_prof_pct_2011	overall_prof_pct_2010
XX	XXXX	Asian	4	5			5	5			0.9	
XX	XXXX	Black or African American	89	111	69	85	90	111	71	85	0.806	0.824
XX	XXXX	Hispanic/Latino of any race	18	20	13	17	19	20	14	17	0.925	0.794
XX	XXXX	White	52	59	38	41	56	59	40	41	0.915	0.951
XX	XXXX	Two or more races	18	20	20	24	19	20	20	24	0.925	0.833
XX	XXXX	Special Education	25	34	15	23	23	34	13	23	0.706	0.609
XX	XXXX	Limited English Proficiency	18	20	5	8	20	20	7	8	0.95	0.75
XX	XXXX	FARMS	120	146	90	108	128	146	92	108	0.849	0.843

At this point the lowest- and highest-achieving subgroups for each year were determined. For the above school, the highest-achieving in 2011 was LEP (.95) and the lowest-achieving was SPED (.706). In 2010, it was White (.951) and SPED (.609). From here, a gap score was calculated (the distance from highest to lowest each year):

- .95 - .706 = .244 for 2011
- .951 - .609 = .342 for 2010

These gap scores for each year were then used to create a weighted gap score for ranking, weighting the 2010 score with a weight of 1 and the 2011 score with a weight of 1.25. Thus, the weighted gap score for ranking for this school is:

- ((.244 * 1.25) + (.342 * 1)) / (1.25 + 1) = .288

There was concern over the possibility that gap reduction could be the result of declines in the highest-performing subgroup. The proposed solution is to compute a corrected gap score for the current year using the higher of the percent proficient for the current year and prior year for the highest-performing subgroup before applying the weight for the current year. For example, the LEP subgroup was 0.95 in 2011 but suppose it would have been 0.975 in 2010. Since 0.975 is greater than 0.95 (the 2011 value), the 2011 gap is computed by the difference between 0.975 and 0.706 (SPED 2011). Thus, the 2011 gap would be 0.269 instead of 0.244. The gap score for 2010 remains the same. But the weighted rank gap score would increase: ((.269 * 1.25) + (.342 * 1)) / (1.25 + 1) = .301 instead of .288.

After MSDE submitted the first draft of the ESEA Application in February 2012, some of the

LEAs alerted MSDE that a few schools on the focus list were no longer Title I schools. In this submission (May 2012), Maryland revised the list indicating the schools that were no longer Title I. This is labeled in the first column of the full ranking of the Focus Schools found in Appendix II-8.

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

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

Maryland's experience with schools that have performance deficits in only one or two subgroups, through the Restructuring Planning and Implementation phases under No Child Left Behind is that examining the needs and resources dedicated to the low-performing subgroup often reveals work necessary to turnaround the low performance. MSDE currently distributes the school improvement dollars provided through 1003(a) funding to all Title I schools in improvement. In SY 2011-2012, 150 Title I schools were in improvement. To apply for these funds a school or LEA must complete an application that details its Priority needs and the interventions the school will put in place to address the identified needs. Maryland proposes to use the same process for identifying the needs in Focus Schools and for ensuring that these schools have a viable plan for improvement. MSDE will ask that each LEA, after funding any Priority Schools, use up to the current amount used for SES or Choice to support the work necessary in these schools. After that, MSDE will target these 41 schools for a differentiated amount of the 1003(a) funds (Appendix 2.D). Maryland's 1003(a) funds are currently used for 150 Title I schools in improvement. At the time this application was submitted, Maryland does not have any Title I high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent. With a differentiation that weights support to Focus schools, LEAs and schools will be able to craft effective interventions to address specific needs, describe them in the application for 1003(a) funds and implement them under the direction and monitoring of the SEA and the LEAs. Maryland will use 1003(a) funds to provide base funding of $30,000 + (enrollment x $50.00 PPA) for each Focus school. These funds, coupled with the schools' regular Title I, Part A allocations will provide adequate resources to address the schools' needs. The difference will be the availability of additional dollars and support from The Breakthrough Center. See Appendix 2.E for a fuller explanation of Maryland's Breakthrough

Center.

With the 1003(a) application process in place, the LEAs should be able to augment and support additional focus to these schools by the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year. Maryland's application includes the following: Title I 1003(a) School Improvement Funds shall be used in accordance with the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I, Part A, Subpart 1, Section 1116 (b)(4).* Federal funds shall not be used for administrative purposes.

The LEA will provide technical assistance to schools identified as Focus schools as they develop and implement their school improvement plans. Technical assistance includes, but is not limited to:

- Providing assistance in analyzing data from assessments and other examples of student work;
- Providing assistance to identify and address problems in instruction;
- Providing assistance to identify and address problems implementing parental involvement and professional development requirements described in NCLB Sections 1118 and 1119;
- Providing assistance to identify and address problems implementing the responsibilities of the school and the local school system under the school plan;
- Providing assistance to identify and implement professional development, instructional strategies, and methods of instruction that are based on scientifically-based research and that have proven effective in addressing the specific instructional issues related to lack of progress; and
- Providing assistance in analyzing and revising the school's budget so that the school's resources are more effectively allocated to the activities most likely to increase student academic achievement.

Technical assistance *may* be provided by school support teams (i.e. The Breakthrough Center) authorized in Section 1117 (B)(i)(ii)(iv). Each school support team assigned to a school will:

- Review and analyze all facets of the school's operation, including the design and operation of the instructional program;

- Assist the school in developing recommendations for improving student performance in the school;
- Collaborate with parents and school staff and the local educational agency in the design, implementation, and monitoring of a plan that can reasonably be expected to improve student performance and help the school meet its goals for improvement; and
- Make additional recommendations as the school implements that plan.

Each school receiving funds under 1003(a) must complete a needs assessment. Schools will summarize the results of the data analysis, including the data sources, used to identify the Priority need(s). The Required Strategies are described below. Each school will select one or more strategies that will meet the Priority identified need(s).

- Schools will coordinate with the LEA to develop a professional development plan that is designed to build the capacity of the school staff and is informed by student achievement and outcome-related measures.

  Each school will work with the LEA to create a professional development plan that takes into consideration the various needs of the instructional staff. The plan must be systemic in behavior-changing approaches that foster collaboration and increase teacher knowledge of best practices. The plan must:

  - Include instructional teams that meet regularly to examine student work, collaborate on lesson design, and implement instruction based on proven effective strategies;
  - Align with the Maryland Professional Development Standards for Staff Development that focus on context, process, and content standards: (http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/instruction/prof_standards); and
  - Provide time for all staff to collaborate and plan strategy implementation.

- Schools will target research-based strategies to change instructional practice in order to address the academic achievement gaps and other challenges that led to the school not making the AMOs.

- Each school will develop a plan that clearly identifies the expected outcomes for students. Plans will include but not be limited to data retreats, professional learning communities, and continual self-monitoring of individually targeted student progress.

  Additionally, each school will explore tools that identify the local alignment of curricula, curriculum mapping, or other tools that align with Maryland's State Curriculum. This will provide the school with research-based data to focus on the curriculum areas that need improvement. From the curriculum gap analysis, the school will need to write strategies that support these efforts. The school and the district must approach educating targeted students using progress-monitoring instruments, data analysis, collaborative decision-making, tiered and/or differentiated instruction, parental involvement, and access to a standards-aligned core curriculum.

- Schools may create partnerships among external entities to obtain technical assistance, professional development, and management advice. Grantees are encouraged to create partnerships that can be cultivated to leverage assistance in meeting the individual needs of each school.

- Schools may consider strengthening the parental involvement component of the school improvement plan and may work with other technical assistance providers to provide opportunities for parents to become more involved in the educational process.

- Schools may implement other strategies determined by the school district, as appropriate, for which data indicate the strategy is likely to result in improved teaching and learning. Schools will be required to plan for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting individualized student data in order to adjust the daily instruction to promote student outcomes.

Additionally, the MSDE Division of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (DSE/EIS) has a compiled list of reading and math interventions (Appendix 2.F) currently based in local school systems to support achievement of children with disabilities that we could provide you upon request if you think it would enhance this section. This document was

developed to provide local school systems with a list of Reading and Math Interventions that are frequently used in the field. The document was developed by staff members from DSE/EIS and the Division of Accountability and Assessment (DAA), in collaboration with the Modified Assessment Facilitators from each local school system. This document may be used to supplement any Reading or Math Intervention document currently used in a local school system. Local school systems may have an approved list of Reading and/or Math Interventions. Local and State contacts are available should additional information be needed.

Maryland's Timeline for Focus School Implementation of Meaningful Interventions

May/June 2012	Maryland's ESEA Flexibility Plan approved by USED
July 2012-August 2012	Technical Assistance Meetings for LEAs with Priority and Focus Schools. Ongoing TA by SEA for plan approval.
July 2012-June 2015	Partnership Meetings held monthly with MSDE Title I, MSDE Breakthrough Center and LEA Office of Turnaround and Central Support Team.
July 2012- September 30, 2012	Intervention Plans Developed by Schools and LEAs: 1. Focus Schools conduct needs assessment and complete Maryland's Focus Schools Intervention Template. 2. Develop budgets, hire consultants, engage families and community, schedule professional development, etc. Draft due: August 1, 2012 Final Submission due: September 30, 2012
October 1, 2012- September 30, 2013	Full Implementation of approved Focus School Implementation plan.
October 30, 2012	MSDE desk monitoring of intervention activities. MSDE shares monitoring feedback during the monthly technical assistance Partnership Meeting in November 2012.
January 2013	MSDE desk monitoring of intervention activities. MSDE shares monitoring feedback during the monthly technical assistance Partnership Meeting in February-March 2013.
May 2013	MSDE onsite Monitoring of the Focus Schools
June, 2013	MSDE and LEA review of Performance Data and revise plans for year 2 based on data.
July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014	Repeat cycle for year 2.
July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015	Repeat cycle for year 3.

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.

The support to Focus Schools is designed to address poor performance in targeted subgroups. Because of this and the discussion in Section 2.A.i., a Focus school will exit Focus status when it (1) demonstrates that it is making progress in improving student achievement on the Maryland State Assessment in the area(s) that caused that status originally; (2) advance two (2) Strands or fall within Strand 2 on the Maryland School Progress Index and maintain that status for two consecutive years*; and (3) For a school to exit Focus status, the school must no longer be in the top 10% of schools with a gap. Rather than create a broad goal of just "making progress", the gap must in fact be reduced to exit Focus status.

Maryland is currently not serving any Title I high schools with a graduation rate of <60%. Should Maryland identify Title I high schools as Focus schools in the future, an additional exit component would include a graduation rate of 70% or above for two (2) or more consecutive years. If a school is no longer a Title I school they would also be exited from focus school status.

TABLE 2: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS

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

TABLE 2: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS

Maryland's focus school updated list of schools provided to USED in May 2012 included the following changes:

- Removal of six schools identified as Title I, that were determined to no longer be Title I schools, in the original calculation and ranking.

- Programming changes:

  No subgroup is included when the number of test takers in the group is less than 5.
  A corrected weighted gap score and rank was calculated to mitigate the concern over the possibility that the gap reduction could be the result of declines in the highest performing subgroup.

Both programming changes are documented in the narrative for Focus Schools on pages 123 and 124.

The programming changes and the adjustment in the Title I schools contributed to the change in the rank. The rank column is the original rank that was utilized to determine the focus schools submitted in the original ESEA Flexibility application. The corrected rank column was based on the changes provided above.

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	Reward School	Priority School	Focus School
Allegany	Cash Valley ES	240003001338	A*		
	Flintstone ES	240003000014	A*		
Anne Arundel	Georgetown East ES	240006000073			F

	Marley ES	240006000093	A		
Baltimore City	Augusta Fells Savage Institute Of Visual Arts	240009001387		E	
	Baltimore Civitas	240009001666		C	
	Baltimore Freedom Academy	240009001560		C	
	Baltimore IT Academy	240009000174		E	
	Baltimore Rising Star Academy	240009001664		C	
	Booker T. Washington MS	240009000160		E	
	Calverton Elem/ MS	240009000164		E	
	Charles Carroll Barrister ES	240009000153	B		
	Cherry Hill ES/MS	240009000171		E	
	Coldstream Park ES	240009000178	B		
	Commodore John Rogers	240009000180		E	
	Dallas F. Nicholas Sr. Elementary				F
	Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson PreK	240009000167	B		
	Empowerment Academy	240009001558	A		
	Francis Scott Key ES/MS	240009000205			F
	Frederick Douglass High	240009000209		E	
	Garrison MS	240009000228		E	
	Glenmount ES/MS	240009000222			F
	Graceland Park/O'Donnel Heights ES	240009000224			F
	Hampstead Hill Academy	240009000234			F
	Hazelwood ES/MS	240009000241			F
	Highlandtown ES #215	240009000243			F
	Inner Harbor East Academy	240009001528	B		
	Langston Hughes ES	240009000266			F
	Margaret Brent ES	240009000276			F
	Mary Ann Winterling ES At Bentalou	240009000158	A**		
	Benjamin Franklin High School @ Masonville Cove	240009000157		E	
	Moravia Park	240009000282			F

	Northeast MS	240009000289			F
	Patapsco ES/MS	240009000296		C	
	Robert W. Coleman	240009000303			F
	Southwest Baltimore Charter School	240009001527			F
	Steuart Hill Academic Academy	240009000319		C	
	The Crossroads School	240009001291	B		
	Westport Academy	240009000331	B		
	William C. March MS	240051001568		E	
Baltimore County	Berkshire ES	240012000349	A*		
	Chadwick ES	240012000357	A*		
	Deer Park ES	240012000371	A		
	Dogwood ES	240012002945	A**		
	Featherbed Lane ES	240012000385			F
	Powhatan ES	240012000455	A*		
	Randallstown ES	240012000457	A		
	Riverview Elementary	240012000464			F
	Sandy Plains ES	240012000470			F
	Sussex Elementary	240012000482	B		
	Winfield ES	240012000498			F
Carroll	Robert Moton ES	240021000544			F
Charles	C. Paul Barnhart ES	240027000380			F
	Dr. Samuel A. Mudd ES	240027000585			F
	Mt Hope/Nanjemoy ES	240027001492			F
Dorchester	Choptank ES	240030000841			F
Garrett	Crellin ES	240036000665	A*		
Harford	William Paca/Old Post Road ES	240039000716			F
Howard	Bryant Woods ES	240042000720			F
	Guilford ES	240042000733			F
	Laurel Woods ES	240042000761			F
	Swansfield ES	240042000755			F
Kent	Kent County MS	240045000766			F
Montgomery	Brookhaven ES	240048000789			F

	Kemp Mill ES	240048000858			F
Prince George's	Adelphi ES	240051000965	A**		
	Andrew Jackson Academy	240051001683			F
	Benjamin Stoddert MS	240051001464		E	
	Carrollton ES	240051001000			F
	Charles Carroll MS	240051001004			F
	Concord ES	240051001013	A**		
	Drew Freeman MS	240051001034		E	
	G. James Gholson MS	240051001211		E	
	Gaywood ES	240051001041			F
	Lewisdale ES	240051001093	A**		
	Oxon Hill MS	240051001471		E	
	Robert Frost ES	240051001142	A**		
	Robert R. Gray ES	240051001183	B		
	Seat Pleasant ES	240051001155	A**		
	Thomas Johnson MS	240051001175		E	
	Thurgood Marshall MS	240051001465		E	
	William Wirt MS	240051001186			F
Somerset	Greenwood ES	240057001373	A*		
St. Mary's	George Washington Carver ES	240060001483			F
	Park Hall ES	240060001234			F
Talbot	Easton ES	240063001244			F
Washington	Eastern ES	240066000418			F
Wicomico	Prince Street School	240069001314			F
	West Salisbury Elementary	240069001322	A*		
Worcester	Buckingham ES	240072001325	A*		
	Pocomoke ES	240072001328	A**		
	Snow Hill ES	240072001332	A*		

Total # of Reward Schools: 30
Total # of Priority Schools: 21
Total # of Title I schools in the State: 412
Total # of Title I-participating high schools in the State with graduation rates less than 60%: 0

Key

Reward School Criteria:

A. Highest-performing school (See definition below)

B. High-progress school (See definition below)

Highest Performing Title I Reward Schools- A (4)

1. Title I School making AYP or AMOs for the "all students" group and all subgroups
2. Highest absolute performance over 2 years for the " all students" group and for all subgroups
3. If applicable be among Title I high schools with graduation rates greater than 60%
4. Not have significant achievement gaps across subgroups that are not closing

Distinguished Highest Performing Title I Reward Schools - A*(10)

1. Title I School making AYP or AMOs for the "all students" group and all subgroups
2. Highest absolute performance over 2 years for the " all students" group and for all subgroups
3. If applicable be among Title I high schools with graduation rates greater than 60%
4. Not have significant achievement gaps across subgroups that are not closing
5. Be among the top ten percent of Title I schools in the State in improving the performance of the "all students" group over 5 years or be among the Title I high schools in the state making the most progress in increasing graduation rates.

Superlative Highest Performing Title I Reward Schools -A (8)**

1. Title I School making AYP or AMOs foe the "all students" group and all subgroups
2. Highest absolute performance over 2 years for the " all students" group and for all subgroups
3. If applicable be among Title I high schools with graduation rates greater than 60%
4. Not have significant achievement gaps across subgroups that are not closing
5. Be among the top ten percent of Title I schools in the State in improving the performance of the "all students" group by at least 18 percentage points* over 5 years or be among the Title I high schools in the state making the most progress in increasing graduation rates.
6. Have a FARMs rate of 50% or higher.

High Progress Title I Schools-B (8)

1. Title I school among the top 10% of Title I schools in the State in improving the performance of the "all students" group over 5 years.
2. A Title I high school making the most progress in increasing graduation rates.
3. No significant achievement gaps across subgroups that are not closing.

Note: In Maryland, Increased gap closure by 18% points* or more

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

*The 18 percentage points for gap closure was amended for the 2013-2014 school year to 10 percentage points and will remain at 10 percentage points moving forward.

2.F PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS FOR OTHER TITLE 1 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.

With the Maryland plan of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system described above, Maryland will provide the incentives for excellent and improved performance by publically recognizing Reward Schools and all additional endorsement schools. The Breakthrough Center is the leading edge of Maryland's school turnaround work. The Center gives high visibility and priority to support dramatic improvement in the Priority Schools and in LEAs that have Focus Schools.

Priority Schools will each implement full interventions that include all of the seven principles of turnaround, either through adoption of one of the current four interventions available to SIG schools or through the crafting of a unique intervention for one of the newly identified Priority Schools. The interventions will be funded by the money made available by the removal of the requirements for SES and Choice and the current SIG grants. Focus Schools will receive increased fiscal support for programs under the differentiated 1003(a) plans and LEAs that have Focus Schools will receive differentiated support from The Breakthrough Center.

Maryland has a long history of support to low-performing schools. This application allows LEAs and schools to shed some of the debilitating aspects of NCLB and focus improvement on fiscal and human capital support to fewer schools with more emphasis. The State's performance nationally, Education Week's identification as #1 for the fourth year in a row, is not based on relying on high-performing school success but on constantly building the infrastructure and resources for our lowest-performing schools and for those that have very targeted needs. To maintain this position, Maryland and its 24 schools systems rely on close communications, shared vision planning, responsible allocation of resources, and an enormous pool of talented educators that are dedicated to constant, sustained improvement.

Maryland will annually assess school and student performance using Annual Measurable Objectives as described in Option A and Maryland's School Progress Index. A new list of schools will be generated annually based on school performance. If a Title I school (that is not a Focus or Priority school) should fail to meet an Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) for any subgroup, including the "all students" group, the school shall be required to submit a school improvement plan to its Local Education Agency (LEA) that describes the strategies the school will use to improve achievement in the specific subgroup. Both MSDE and the LEA will provide technical assistance in developing and implementing the appropriate strategies.

Maryland will annually assess school and student performance of all schools, including those not identified as Priority or Focus schools, using Annual Measurable Objectives as described in Option A and Maryland's Progress Index. A new list of schools will be generated annually based on school performance. Support to Title I schools, (not identified as Priority or Focus schools) that have not made the AMOs in all subgroups will be identified for support and will be eligible for Title I 1003(a) funds.

With a differentiation that weights support to Focus schools, LEAs and schools will be able to craft effective interventions to address specific needs, describe them in the application for 1003(a) funds and implement them under the direction and monitoring of the LEAs through the Annual Master Plan Update. Maryland will use 1003(a) funds to provide base funding of $20,000 + (enrollment x $30.00 PPA) for each Title I school that is not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps (Appendix 2.G). These funds, coupled with the schools' regular Title I, Part A allocation will provide adequate resources to address the schools' needs. The Maryland State Department of Education's Title I Office will be available to provide technical support and monitoring of all fiscal and programmatic aspects associated with the use of 1003(a) funds in these schools. Maryland will perform an onsite monitoring of LEAs annually and randomly select 1-5 schools from each LEA to monitor onsite annually.

With the 1003(a) application process in place, the LEAs should be able to augment and support

additional focus to these schools by the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year. Maryland's application includes the following: Title I 1003(a) School Improvement Funds shall be used in accordance with the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I, Part A, Subpart 1, Section 1116 (b)(4).* These Federal funds shall not be used for administrative purposes.

With approval, Maryland plans to use 1003(a) School Improvement funds to help Title I schools that are not Focus or Priority schools but which require intervention based on the failure to meet AMOs in any subgroup. Maryland is aware that this use of 1003(a) funds is not a part of Waiver #6 in the ESEA Flexibility Request. However, Maryland requests the ability to use the funds in this way because all Title I schools that have been in improvement had access to these funds before the flexibility process. Maryland feels it would be unfair and detrimental to these schools to remove all the 1003(a) funding, Maryland requests reducing the amount while still offering some support, these schools will have the opportunity to adjust to the decrease in funding and begin to find other funding streams for the necessary resources.

The LEA will provide technical assistance to Title I schools that have not met the AMOs or have large gaps in achievement as they develop and implement their school improvement plans. Technical assistance includes, but is not limited to:

- Providing assistance in analyzing data from assessments and other examples of student work;
- Providing assistance to identify and address problems in instruction;
- Providing assistance to identify and address problems implementing parental involvement and professional development requirements described in NCLB Sections 1118 and 1119;
- Providing assistance to identify and address problems implementing the responsibilities of the school and the local school system under the school plan;
- Providing assistance to identify and implement professional development, instructional strategies, and methods of instruction that are based on scientifically-based research and that have proven effective in addressing the specific instructional issues; and

- Providing assistance in analyzing and revising the school's budget so that the school's resources are more effectively allocated to the activities most likely to increase student academic achievement and remove the school from school improvement status.

Technical assistance *may* be provided by school support teams upon request, (i.e. The Breakthrough Center) authorized in Section 1117 (B)(i)(ii)(iv). Each school support team assigned to a school will:

- Review and analyze all facets of the school's operation, including the design and operation of the instructional program;
- Assist the school in developing recommendations for improving student performance in the school;
- Collaborate with parents and school staff and the local educational agency in the design, implementation, and monitoring of a plan that can reasonably be expected to improve student performance and help the school meet its goals for improvement; and
- Make additional recommendations as the school implements that plan.

Each school receiving funds under 1003(a) must complete a needs assessment. Schools will summarize the results of the data analysis, including the data sources, used to identify the priority need(s). The Required Strategies are described below. Each school will select one or more strategies that will meet the priority identified need(s).

- Schools will coordinate with the LEA to develop a professional development plan that is designed to build the capacity of the school staff and is informed by student achievement and outcome-related measures. Each school will work with the LEA to create a professional development plan that takes into consideration the various needs of the instructional staff. The plan must be systemic in behavior-changing approaches that foster collaboration and increase teacher knowledge of best practices. The plan must:
  - Include instructional teams that meet regularly to examine student work, collaborate on lesson design, and implement instruction based on proven effective strategies;
  - Align with the Maryland Professional Development Standards for Staff

Development that focus on context, process, and content standards: (http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/instruction/prof_standards); and

- Provide time for all staff to collaborate and plan strategy implementation.

- Schools will target research-based strategies to change instructional practice in order to address the academic achievement challenges that led to the school not making the AMOs.

- Each school will develop a plan that clearly identifies the expected outcomes for students. Plans will include but not be limited to data retreats, professional learning communities, and continual self-monitoring of individually targeted student progress.

  Additionally, each school will explore tools that identify the local alignment of curricula, curriculum mapping, or other tools that align with Maryland's State Curriculum. This will provide the school with research-based data to focus on the curriculum areas that need improvement. From the curriculum gap analysis, the school will need to write strategies that support these efforts. The school and the district must approach educating targeted students using progress-monitoring instruments, data analysis, collaborative decision-making, tiered and/or differentiated instruction, parental involvement, and access to a standards-aligned core curriculum.

- Schools may create partnerships among external entities to obtain technical assistance, professional development, and management advice. Grantees are encouraged to create partnerships that can be cultivated to leverage assistance in meeting the individual needs of each school.

- Schools may consider strengthening the parental involvement component of the school improvement plan and may work with other technical assistance providers to provide opportunities for parents to become more involved in the educational process.

- Schools may implement other strategies determined by the school district, as appropriate, for which data indicate the strategy is likely to result in improved teaching and learning. Schools will be required to plan for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting individualized student data in order to adjust the daily instruction to promote student outcomes.

Maryland's Annual Timeline for Implementation of Meaningful Interventions in Title I Schools that are Not Making Progress in Improving Student Achievement and Narrowing the Achievement Gaps (Title I 1003(a) Grant)

May/June 2012	Maryland's ESEA Flexibility Plan approved by USDE
July-August, Annually	Technical Assistance Meetings for LEAs with Priority and Focus Schools. Ongoing TA by SEA for plan approval.
July 1 - September 30, Annually	Intervention Plans Developed by Schools and LEAs: 1. Title I Schools conduct needs assessment and complete Maryland's RFP for 1003(a) grant. 2. Develop budgets, hire consultants, engage families and community, schedule professional development, etc. Draft due: August 1, annually Final Submission due: September 30, annually
October 1, 2012- September 30th annually	Full Implementation of approved Title I 1003(a) Grant School Implementation plan.
March-May Annually	MSDE onsite Monitoring of the LEA and Randomly Selected Title I Schools
July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014	Repeat cycle for year 2.
July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015	Repeat cycle for year 3.

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.

2.G.i Maryland has distinguished itself with its overall monitoring of performance and standard attainment for all 24 LEAs. Since 2003, the Maryland General Assembly has required all 24 LEAs to submit a Master Plan detailing strategies for meeting ESEA and Maryland education goals. Data for each standard or program is tracked and each year, in an Update to the Master Plan, each LEA must describe the progress to date. If the data indicates success, an explanation for what the LEA believes has worked is included. If the LEA is not making adequate progress on any standard, it must detail what steps will be taken to correct the course. The Master Plan guidance documents officially called the Bridge to Excellence Guidance Document Part I can be found at http://docushare.msde.state.md.us/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-147467/BTE%20RTTT%20Guidance%202011_6_20_11.docx . The Guidance Part 2 (Federal Grant Applications and Other State Reporting Requirements can be found at http://docushare.msde.state.md.us/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-146666/BTE%20Guidance%20Part%202%20FINAL_6-20-11.docx

The existence of the Master Plan offers an ideal vehicle for monitoring progress by LEAs with their Focus and Priority Schools. Maryland has used this process to incorporate ARRA spending and activities and RTT Scopes of Work for each participating LEA.
The Master Plan clearly includes fiscal reporting, however, Title I monitoring of expenditures of federal dollars will offer more targeted, more detailed inspection of the spending in Focus and Priority Schools. The monitoring of the specific programs in each school is described below.

Maryland's monitoring and support for SIG schools has been cited as a model for the nation. In fact, staff that developed this process was asked to present to the newly formed School Improvement office at USDE. For Priority Schools this process will continue for SIG schools and be developed in a commensurate way for the newly identified schools. This oversight

includes three visits a year that require SIG teams to closely inspect any indicators that have been provided since the last visit so that targeted questions can be posed to the school and LEA staff at a face-to-face meeting. The follow up to each visit includes a written report with recommendations for the school and/or LEA with a recommended timeline for meeting the recommendations.

Maryland does not maintain an approved list of outside providers. Each LEA that chooses to contract with an outside provider, such as a charter management organization (CMO) or an education management organization (EMO), must utilize a rigorous review process which follows state and local procurement laws. The LEA must have conducted a comprehensive needs assessment to ensure the Request for Proposals (RFP) contains an accurate description of the services and programs that meet the needs of the school(s) to be served and that are aligned to the Turnaround Principles. Each LEA must demonstrate, in their application, that the selected provider is able to address the identified needs of the school. In addition, the LEA must submit to MSDE, the steps it completed with regard to recruiting, screening and selecting an external provider to ensure quality. The LEA must also describe how relevant stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, and their respective unions (as appropriate), parents, students and/or members of the community were consulted during the needs assessment, intervention selection and design process to serve its Priority schools. MSDE will monitor both the providers and the LEA according to the previously stated timelines as other Priority schools not working with an external provider(s).

As referenced above in section 2.G.i., the 5% lowest-achieving non-Title I schools will also undergo periodic monitoring which will be focused on teachers' individual professional development plans. Each teacher will be required at the beginning of each school year to develop a Professional Growth Plan that is based on the teachers' needs in addressing student achievement gaps. The required components of the plan will be, but not limited to, the Type of Learning Experience, Description of Relevance to School, System, and SEA goals, Timing of Experiences, and Expected Impact on Student Learning. These plans must be approved by the principal and kept on file for periodic review by the LEA and SEA. A mid-year update on the plan must include a section describing ongoing growth opportunities and connecting those

to specific interventions needed for the teachers' students. Technical assistance both online and face to face will have a focus on assisting the teacher in identifying appropriate learning experiences within the parameters of the stated teachers' goals.

2.G.ii Through the Breakthrough Center's partnerships, Maryland has established a close, constructive relationship with its LEAs. Regular meetings are held with the two LEAs that include the Priority Schools; SEA and LEA Superintendent, SEA and LEA Assistant Superintendents for Instruction, and the SEA Breakthrough Center and LEA School Turnaround staff. At the monthly Breakthrough Center meetings with the two LEAs, the Priority Schools and their progress are always agenda items and receive special attention. As described earlier, ongoing work for the SIG schools includes clear needs assessment and a detailed list of recommendations for each school and for the LEA for each school. The work already underway will support the addition of five more schools. The new Turnaround Offices in each LEA have staff dedicated to support for SIG schools and MSDE has provided direction for diversion of funding from SES and Choice funds to provide the resources to augment supports as needed for the new schools. Maryland is a small community and takes very seriously the admonition to improve.

Focus Schools

The Breakthrough Center will collaborate with the LEAs that have Focus schools to assess needs, streamline and differentiate the services and supports consistent with school capacity and need, and develop structures and strategies to build and sustain their capacity to improve and successfully turnaround their pattern of underperformance.

The SEA will hold the system accountable for providing assistance to its principals of the 5% lowest-performing non-Title I schools in the system through a process that both mirrors and supports the teachers' professional growth plans. Each LEA will submit prior to November 1 of each school year the Professional Growth Plan (PGP) for each principal in these identified schools. The PGP will include, but not be limited to, the School, Principal, Date of Conference with Executive Officer, Targeted Growth Experiences for the year, Connection of Experience to Identified Student Achievement Needs, and Expected Outcomes. Mid-year

corrections based on emerging student and teacher needs will be made and on file for periodic review by the LEA Executive Officer and SEA staff.

2.G.iii Funding for each of the Priority and Focus Schools as well as those Title I schools that are also low-performing but do not fall into the new categorization of schools has been explained within the description of support to each category. In Summary,

1. Priority Schools must be funded with SIG grants (already) in place or with $50,000 to $2 million dollars per year per school for the next three years from funds leveraged from dollars currently required under ESEA section 1116 (b)(10). These funds must be sufficient to implement the Turnaround plans designed to address the needs identified by the school and LEA.

2. Focus Schools will receive a differentiated amount of the 1003(a) funding based on their completion of an approved application. This process is currently in use and has proven a valid vehicle for delivery of targeted funds. LEAs and schools must cite needs assessments that document that the needs that will be addressed with these funds are the ones that are contributing to the achievement gaps in the school.

    a. Maryland will follow the implementation of strategies identified by the LEA and the progress of the Focus Schools in the 2012-2013 school year. Should progress towards improvement not be made with the Focus Schools in the first year, MSDE will require the LEA to set aside some amount of funds (could be $50,000 per school) in the 2013-2014 school year to support instructional strategies for each of the Focus Schools.

3. Other low-performing Title I schools will receive the balance of 1003(a) funds upon completion of the application that specifies the particular needs of the school and approval by MSDE teams of specialists. The schools will be encouraged to use their own Title I, Part A funding for staff development to address these needs as well.

SEA support for the development of the teacher and principal Professional Growth Plan (PGP) will be twofold. The major responsibility will be (a) to provide ongoing opportunities for professional growth in both online and face-to-face experiences and (b) periodic reviews and

discussions that are focused on classroom and school application of skills and content that constituted the learning experiences. With the advent of a new universally designed Maryland curriculum in all disciplines, support for teachers to learn, teach, and assess these new curricula will be a major outcome of the growth experiences. For principals, ongoing observation and effective feedback in the context of a new State curriculum will be a major focus, thus, placing teachers and principals on a parallel track for improvement and school reform.

LEA Accountability and MSDE's Authority

Maryland has no clear legal mandate to intervene directly in chronically low-performing schools. The Maryland State Department of Education operates from both state statute and an extensive array of regulations set by the State Board of Education. Maryland law currently has no direct authority for intervention. However, with more than two decades of school accountability in place, intervention work in low performing schools through NCLB and ESEA have been generally successful without a legal expectation for State takeovers.

The unique structure of Maryland's education system, with only 24 school jurisdictional level districts, is very conducive to cooperative work with local school systems, both independently and occasionally in clusters. Maryland's State Superintendent meets monthly with the 24 LEA superintendents and regularly with individual local superintendents—particularly with those attempting to resolve local performance issues. These unique collegial exchanges typically are intimate and provide an opportunity for very frank and honest exchange on issues.

In addition to these meetings, the Assistant Superintendents for Instruction meet monthly and these meetings provide an important opportunity to explore and resolve the more specific issues related to policy implementations since these local leaders are most often the individuals charged with the day-to-day implementation of LEA and state action. Because these staff members are charged with the operational work, their briefings most often take on the quality of work sessions.

The Master Plan is also a very critical means for accountability for LEAs. If a local Master Plan, after a rigorous review, is deemed "not approvable" there is legal authority supporting the withholding of future funding. A great deal of work goes into the process to make the Master Plans fully "approvable," but Maryland State Department of Education is positioned to take even stronger action if necessary. In the past, Local Superintendent have been asked to meet with MSDE staff to explain the course of action outlined in the Master Plans, and local superintendents were often asked by MSDE to strengthen and rework plans when responses were not strong enough. These unique tools have served to provide good technical exchanges for local school systems and have set a standard for local policies that prevents token responses to the plight of low performing schools.

Maryland's Theory of Action for Principle 2

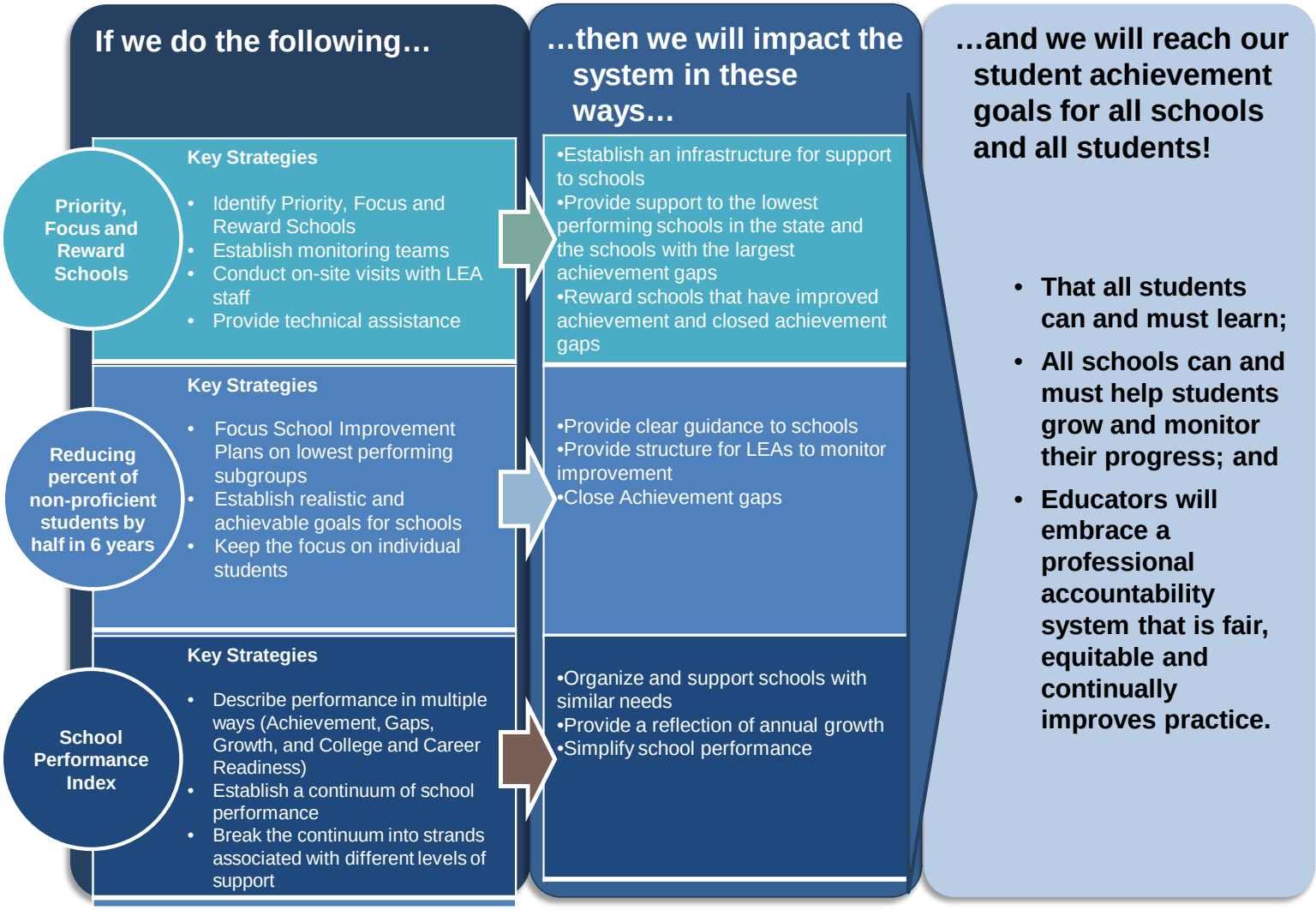
In summary, Maryland's overall theory of action regarding differentiated recognition, accountability, and support is based on a fundamental belief that all schools and all subgroups can improve. Through methods that have been described, Maryland endeavors to recognize accomplishments where appropriate, identify schools that are in need of assistance, and provide support as needed. Maryland believes that such support includes one-on-one assistance with classroom teachers in the most challenging schools, direct involvement with principals of those schools, and building the capacity of the LEA to sustain the improvement effort beyond the time of MSDE's involvement. The Breakthrough Center serves as the vehicle to coordinate these services, and its work is informed by an internal cross-functional team with representatives of various divisions throughout MSDE that meet regularly to provide direction and coherence to the effort.

The theory of change is described in a PowerPoint presentation which is included as Appendix II-9. The graphics in this Power Point were developed to illustrate how the State works directly with LEAs and schools identified as the lowest performing SIG schools. MSDE will continue to follow this protocol as school support is expanded to include Priority schools. Focus schools will be organized into networks whereby the state will be able to cluster schools according to region and specific needs. MSDE is in the planning phase and has scheduled an internal meeting

in May. Focus Schools will also fall under the Breakthrough Center umbrella. The first LEA Focus schools network meeting will be scheduled in May and will include both Title I directors and other high level LEA administrators such as assistant superintendents and supervisors.

The following graphic illustrates Maryland's Theory of Action:

Theory of Action Principle 2



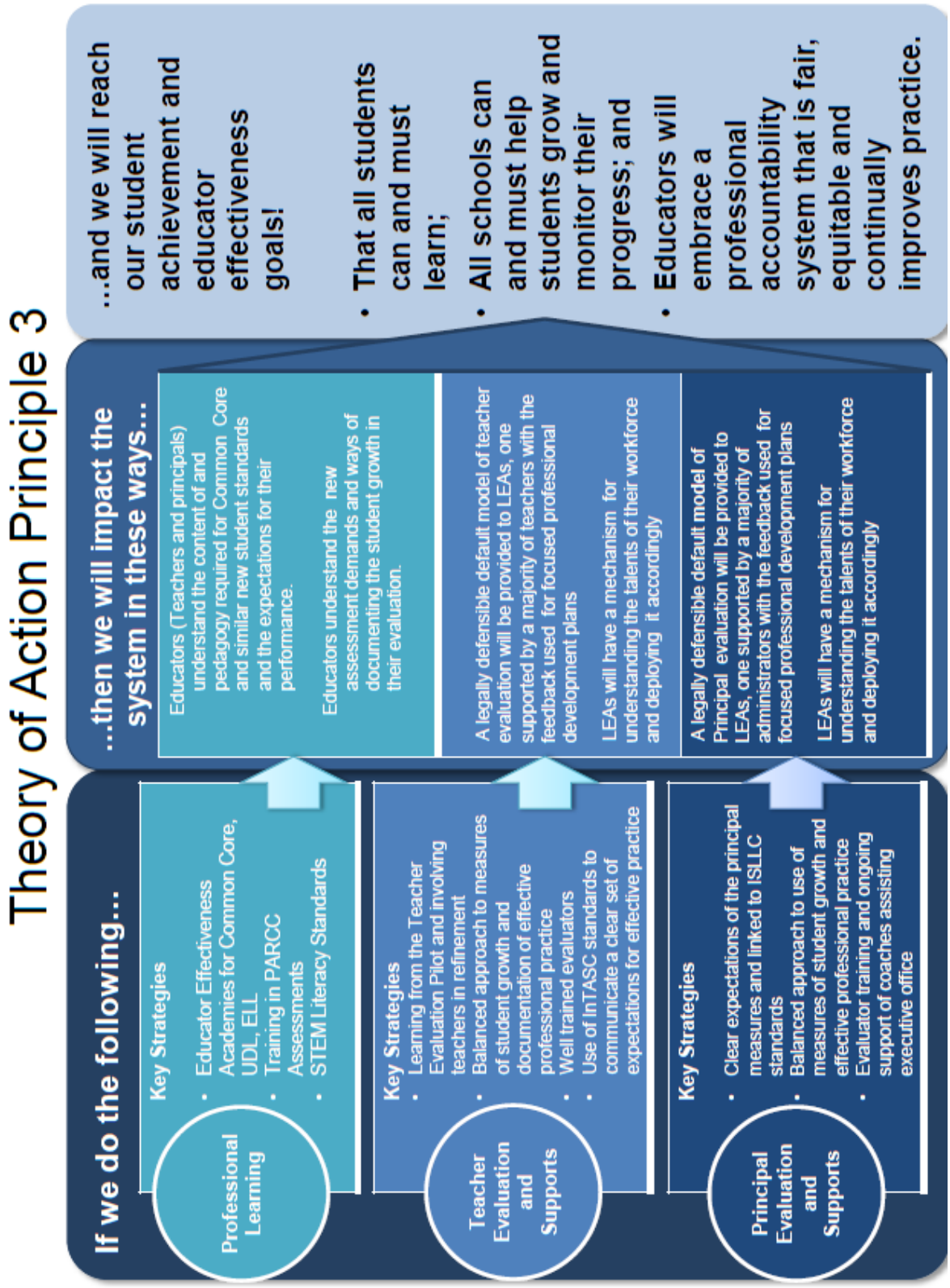
PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

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.

The graphic below is Maryland's Theory of Action for Teacher/Principal Evaluation


Theory of Action Principle 3
If we do the following…
Professional Learning
Key Strategies
Educator Effectiveness Academies for Common Core, UDL, ELL
Training in PARCC Assessments
STEM Literacy Standards
Teacher Evaluation and Supports
Key Strategies
Learning from the Teacher Evaluation Pilot and involving teachers in refinement
Balanced approach to measures of student growth and documentation of effective professional practice
Well trained evaluators
Use of InTASC standards to communicate a clear set of expectations for effective practice
Principal Evaluation and Supports
Key Strategies
Clear expectations of the principal measures and linked to ISLLC standards
Balanced approach to use of measures of student growth and effective professional practice
Evaluator training and ongoing support of coaches assisting executive office
…then we will impact the system in these ways…
Educators (Teachers and principals) understand the content of and pedagogy required for Common Core and similar new student standards and the expectations for their performance.
Educators understand the new assessment demands and ways of documenting the student growth in their evaluation.
A legally defensible default model of teacher evaluation will be provided to LEAs, one supported by a majority of teachers with the feedback used for focused professional development plans
LEAs will have a mechanism for understanding the talents of their workforce and deploying it accordingly
A legally defensible default model of Principal evaluation will be provided to LEAs, one supported by a majority of administrators with the feedback used for focused professional development plans
LEAs will have a mechanism for understanding the talents of their workforce and deploying it accordingly
…and we will reach our student achievement and educator effectiveness goals!
That all students can and must learn;
All schools can and must help students grow and monitor their progress; and
Educators will embrace a professional accountability system that is fair, equitable and continually improves practice.

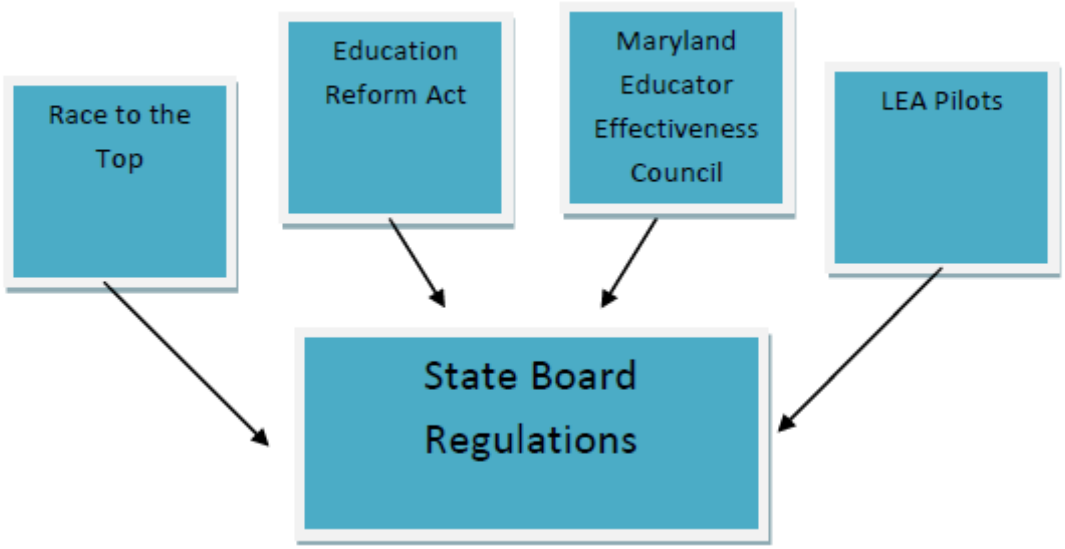
3.B ENSURE LEAS IMPLEMENT TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

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

As part of its ESEA Extension Request in March 2014, Maryland requested an amendment to the Teacher/Principal Evaluation (TPE) to change the models to further increase the alignment between the state framework and the local models. Additionally, the amendment clarifies which years the student growth state assessment measure will inform personnel decision. The changes to the models are a direct result of the Field Test year (2012-13) and are reflected in TPE Addendum #2. The models in this addendum would replace the ones throughout the chapter below.

As a note, TPE Addendum #1 is Maryland's responses to the peer review questions submitted September 7, 2012 and that were accepted by USDE on January 9, 2013. These responses complete Maryland's plan for Principle 3.

Introduction: Improving Educator Effectiveness Based on Performance:



The work of Race to Top, the Education Reform Act 2010, the Maryland Educator Effectiveness Council, and the LEA pilots will inform the State Board Regulations to be promulgated March 2012. Maryland will provide USDE a copy of the Regulations following presentation to the State Board on March 27, 2012. Maryland's Plan for complete implementation is provided in table form in Appendix 3.A – a narrative of the work is below:

In order for Maryland to achieve its goal of ensuring that all students are prepared for success in college and the 21st century workplace, every student in every school must be able to benefit every day from effective teachers and principals. Effectiveness requires that all teachers and principals understand the content and practice the pedagogy required for all students to master rigorous Common Core Standards and demonstrate their learning on the assessment system under development. The strategy set out in the ESEA Flexibility Proposal is designed to improve and maintain educator effectiveness through (1) clearly articulated curriculum standards and expectations for student learning, (2) high-quality professional development focused on the delivery of rigorous instruction, (3) ongoing access to an array of instructional resources and supports, and (4) an evaluation system which holds teachers and principals accountable for both effective professional practice and student learning and growth. The professional practice components of the teacher and principal evaluation models are aligned with Maryland's research-supported beliefs about effective leadership and instruction and will provide valuable feedback to improve performance. The student growth components reflect Maryland's commitment to the use of multiple measures, the focus on student growth and change under the direction of the teacher and independent of the student's entering status, the use of multiple measures, and an acknowledgement of shared accountability, represented by the Maryland School Progress Index.

Maryland's goals are to improve the performance of all students and close the achievement gap. Maryland strongly believes that the way to accomplish this goal is through thorough, effective, meaningful and consistent professional development. Maryland firmly believes that professional development is the foundation of all aspects of education and is effective in improving instruction, understanding curriculum, learning to work with data, and the other many components that make a strong and effective education system. In addition, the strong Core

Values expressed by Marylanders, around achievement, growth, achievement gaps and college- and career-readiness, which were incorporated into the Maryland School Progress Index indicate that the goals of the State and its citizens are well aligned.

Maryland's Race to the Top Application

If Maryland is going to ensure that all students are college- and career-ready, every school — especially those where students need the most support — must have teachers and principals who are effective at increasing student achievement. Although Maryland has worked diligently and successfully over the past decade to increase the number of Maryland teachers designated as Highly Qualified under federal definitions, State leaders also understand that this measurement is imprecise and considers only inputs into good teaching and not actual performance. Maryland is committed to taking bolder, more aggressive steps to develop an evaluation process for teachers and principals and using that information to help develop the strongest educator corps in the country.

Signaling its serious commitment to this new approach, when Maryland submitted its Race to the Top (RTTT) Application in May 2010, a revision of the teacher and principal evaluation system was central to the work Maryland agreed to do. The application offered guidelines (Attachment 10) for a new system to be piloted in seven school districts in 2011-2012 and fully implemented Statewide by school year 2012-2013. The dates for full implementation were later revised through an amendment that was submitted to and approved by USDE to 2013-2014; one year before the ESEA flexibility requirements call for full implementation. The application outlined the plan for pilots in seven districts to build the new model in a collective fashion. The application was signed by the Governor and the President of the Maryland State Board of Education (Attachment 11).

Education Reform Act of 2010

Maryland has already adopted needed policies to anchor and guide next steps. Signed by Governor O'Malley on May 3, 2010, the Education Reform Act of 2010 created a new expectation for Maryland educators: To be effective, teachers and principals must show they can successfully improve student learning. The law established that changes in student growth will

become a significant factor in the evaluation of teachers and principals (see Appendix 3-B). This legislation created the foundation for a new evaluation system that will more consistently and fairly identify, support, and reward educators who are effective; and identify, develop, or exit those who are ineffective.

Supporting the transition to this new system, the General Assembly also extended the timeline for granting tenure from two years to three years, allowing new teachers to receive both the support and oversight they need in their early years to become effective or leave the profession.

Comprehensive Teacher Induction Program

The State Board of Education developed Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.07.00-.09 that calls for a Comprehensive Teacher Induction Program. The purpose of the regulation is to provide guidance for local school systems to establish a high quality induction program that addresses critical professional learning needs of new teachers, improves instructional quality and helps inductees achieve success in their initial assignments, resulting in improved student learning and high retention in the profession. The induction program that each local school system designs shall reflect coherence in structure and consistency in focus to ensure an integrated, seamless system of support. Recognizing that "one-size-fits-all" induction programs do not meet the needs of new teachers, this regulation establishes the components of an induction program, allowing local school systems to build on their current programs. More information can be found at http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/SubtitleSearch.aspx?search=13A.07.01.

Maryland Educator Effectiveness Council

To help guide the design and refinement of the pilots and resolve outstanding issues, the Governor created, through an Executive Order in June 2010, the Maryland Educator Effectiveness Council (MEEC) (Appendix 3-C). Membership of this Council and stakeholders that support the work of this council are broad-based and include representation from individuals/groups such as: State Superintendent; Members of the General Assembly; Governor's Policy Director; State Board of Education; Local Boards of Education; LEA Superintendents; Maryland State Education Association; Baltimore Teachers Union; LEA Assistant Superintendents for Instruction; LEA School Business Officials; LEA Executive

Officers; Local Accountability Coordinators; LEA Human Resources Directors; Title I coordinators; Principals; MSDE/LEA identified teachers; Institutions of Higher Education (University System of Maryland (USM) system, private colleges and community colleges); Community/Business; PTA; National Psychometric Council; Maryland Assessment Research Center for Education Success (MARCES); and students. The council is chaired by the Maryland State Superintendent and Maryland State Educators Association Vice President. The specific membership of the Maryland Council for Educator Effectiveness can be found at http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/race_to_the_top/eecm.

The Maryland Educator Effectiveness Council was charged with submitting recommendations for the development of the model evaluation system that was legislatively mandated by the Education Reform Act. The recommendations must include a definition for effective teachers and principals, a definition for highly effective teachers and principals, an explanation of the relationship between the student learning component of educator evaluations and the other components of the evaluations.

The Council met 17 times from August 2010 to June 2011 and continues to monitor the progress of the pilot programs being conducted in seven LEAs (described below) with the intention to provide recommendations to the Governor, State Board of Education, and State Superintendent. Once these recommendations, informed by the pilots, are made, procedures and policies will be developed to address the following areas:

- Appropriate levels of student growth for a teacher or principal to be rated Effective or Highly Effective; Maryland believes that to be rated Effective, a teacher or principal must show appropriate levels of growth among their students to help them successfully transition and progress from grade to grade; to be rated Highly Effective, a teacher or principal must show exceptional talent in increasing student growth well beyond one grade level in one year or exceptional success educating high-poverty, minority, English Language Learners (ELL), Students with Disabilities (SWD), or other high-needs students;
- Definition of Ineffective for a teacher or principal receiving an Ineffective rating,

including what supports should be offered and what additional evaluations are needed;

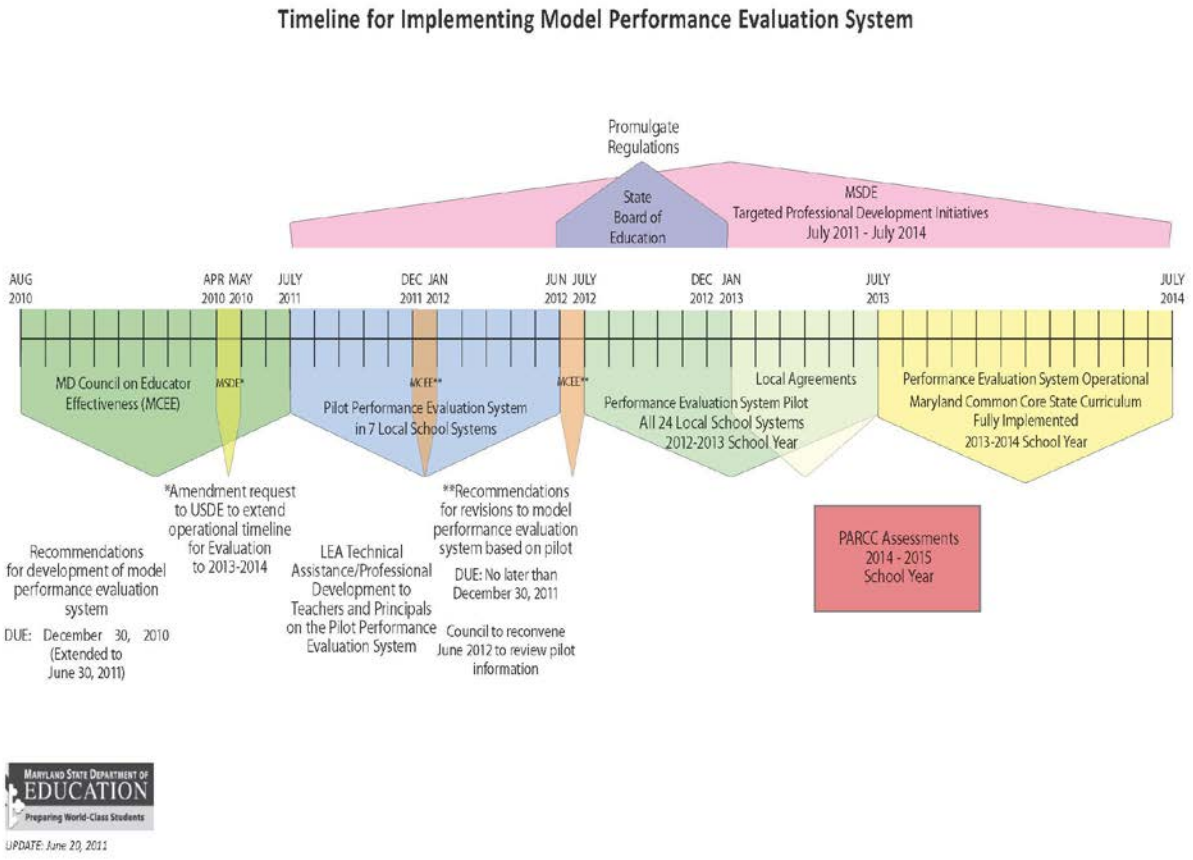
- Whether an additional rating category (e.g., "Developing," for educators whose performance falls between Ineffective and Effective) beyond the minimum three categories established in State Board of Education regulations is needed;
- Model scoring rubrics for classroom observations of teachers that measure the four other domains and are based on best practices, such as the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teacher Performance Assessment System;
- Model scoring rubrics for measuring the eight outcomes of the *Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework* (See Appendix 3-D);
- Matrix for determining how different rating criteria received in any individual domain combine to form an overall summative rating for the teacher or principal;
- Reviews of current LEA evaluation tools, protocols, and processes to determine potential applicability to other counties; and
- Propose revisions to Maryland Teaching Standards to reflect current INTASC standards research, best practices, the new evaluation system, and to inform teacher preparation and professional development.

In April 2012, the Governor signed a new Executive Order extending the life of the Council through December 2013 to continue to monitor the pilots and the statewide field testing. The new order can be found in Appendix II- 10.

Race to the Top Amendment

As the Council began its work, it became evident that it needed more time to complete its charge than originally conceived. As such, the Council requested of the Governor an extension to the original timeline (December 2010) to June 2011 to present its recommendations for the new model system (Appendix 3.E). Built into this revised timeline is a professional development component for teachers and principals. The new timeline also provides for a 24 month (SY 2011-2012 and SY 2012-2013) pilot project for the new Statewide system of evaluation instead of the original 18 month (second semester of SY 2010-2011 and SY 2011-2012) pilot.

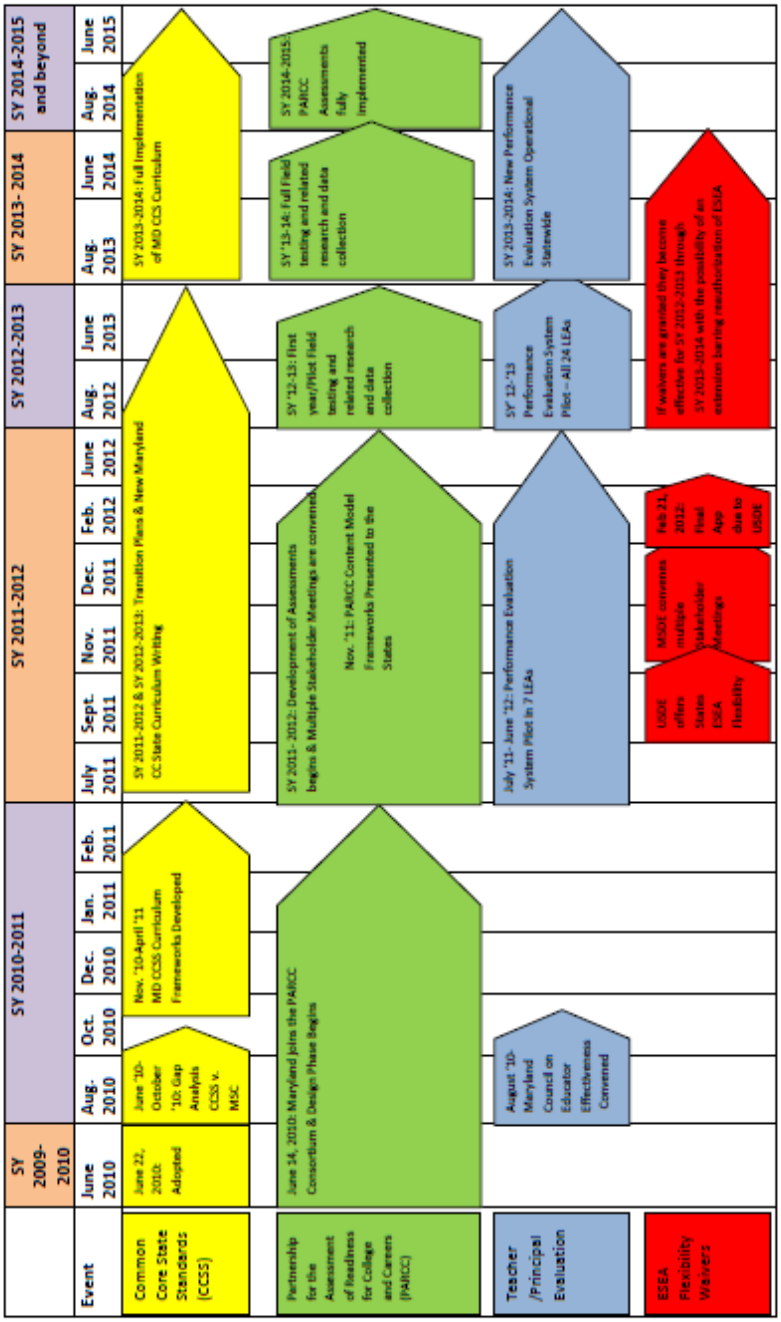
Upon further reflection, the Council became concerned about moving too quickly from a pilot evaluation system being conducted in 7 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to Statewide implementation without further time provided to the remaining school systems to also develop and pilot their own local evaluation systems in order to seek solutions to unforeseen obstacles and provide high quality professional development. Accordingly, the Council endorsed a proposal from Dr. Nancy Grasmick (Former State Superintendent of Schools) that the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) should request an amendment from the United States Department of Education (USDE) to allow an additional year before implementing the Statewide system of evaluation. This is an operational timeline amendment that changed when the new system would be State mandated. That amendment was submitted to USDE on April 22, 2011, and was approved on June 17, 2011. The timeline below describes the relationship between and among the work of the Council, pilot LEAs, professional development activity, development of regulations, local agreements and the actual implementation of the Statewide system of evaluation.



This timeline is also available in full size in Appendix 3.F. A further timeline to reflect the relationship between the Common Core State Standards and the Teacher/Principal Evaluation Model can be found below and is also available in Appendix C-6.

1/3/2012

Maryland's Third Wave of Reform: Timeline (Critical Elements)



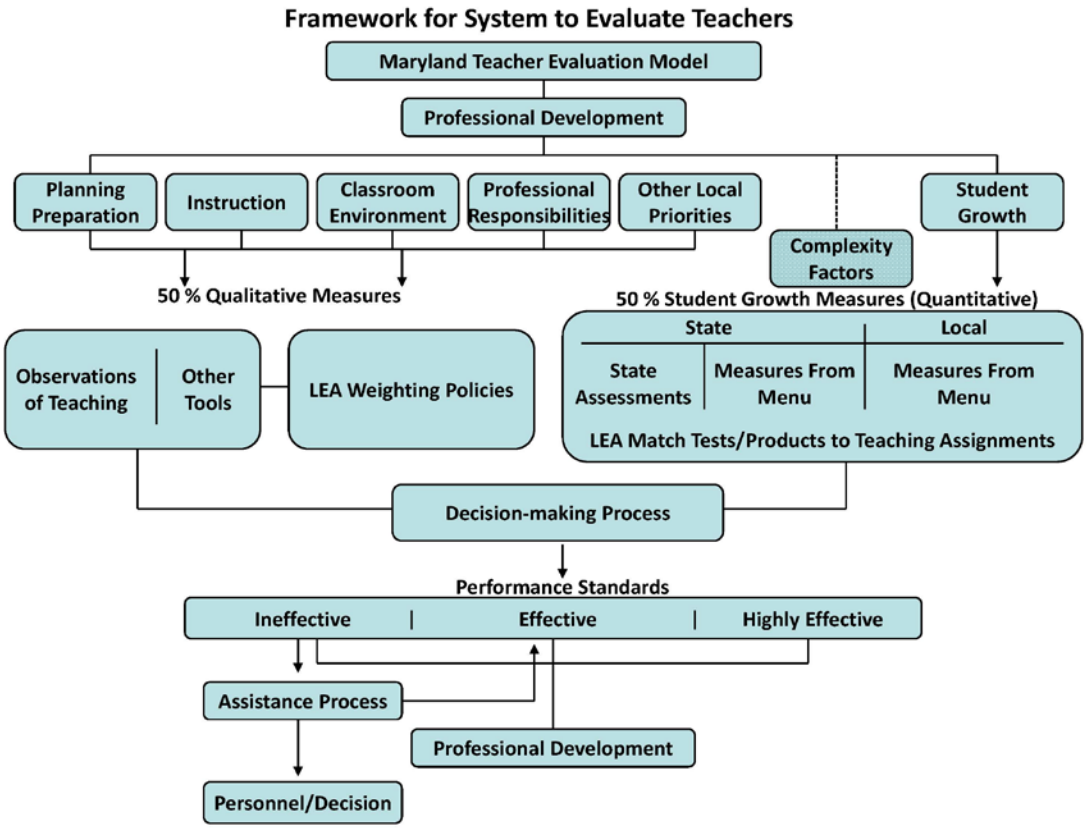
MEEC Interim Report- Framework: Evaluation of Teachers and Principals

In June 2011, after meeting 17 times beginning August 2010, the MEEC offered an interim report to the Governor on their progress to date. The report *"Maryland Council for Educator Effectiveness Initial Recommendations Statewide Educator Evaluation System"*, offered a framework for the model of evaluation of teachers and principals.

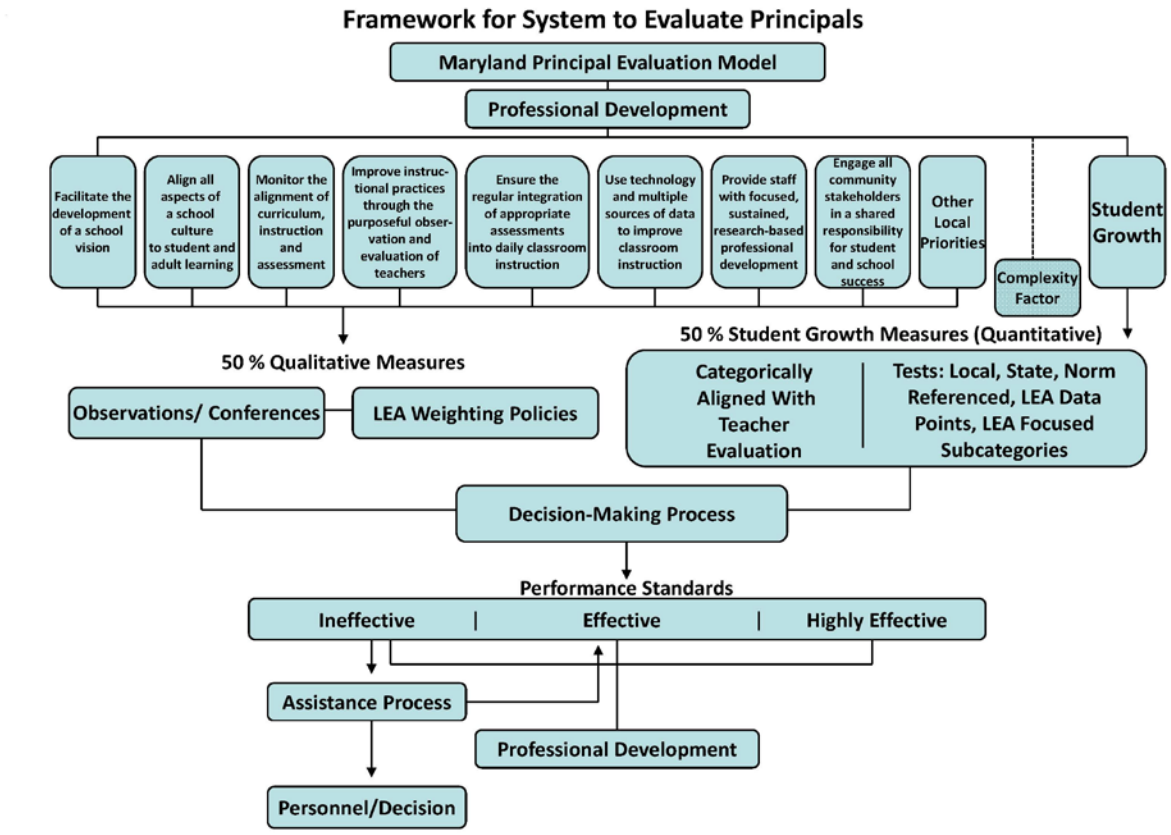
After several discussions at Council meetings about the suggested components of an effective yet flexible Statewide evaluation system, the Council endorsed two separate frameworks and definitions that accompany those frameworks (below). The first framework lays out graphically the components of a model for teacher evaluation in Maryland. The framework has at its core a professional development component. It includes four qualitative measures (planning and preparation; instruction; classroom environment; and professional responsibilities). The framework also allows for the inclusion of other local priorities in addition to the four qualitative measures to take into account other areas for which LEAs wish to hold teachers responsible. This component of the evaluation is 50%. The other 50% is the student growth component. It provides for consideration of complexity factors (see definition below) recognized by the LEA. The framework yields a decision-making process based on performance standards. Once again, professional development is included, with the caveat that such professional development is important for all teachers, not just those who are rated ineffective. Continuous improvement is the key to sustainable change.

The principal framework is similar to the first in design, but does have different components because of the nature of the job of a principal. Once again, at its core is professional development. For the qualitative measures, the framework includes specifically the eight outcomes in the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework. As with the teacher framework, the principal framework yields a decision-making process based on performance standards. Targeted professional development is provided based on needs identified in the evaluation. Similar to the teacher professional development, such assistance for principals is intended for all principals, since the model is based on the premise that all principals can

continue to improve. The definitions page provides clarity to the various elements of the two frameworks, and combined with those frameworks and the General Standards provide the basis for the Statewide system of evaluation.



This Framework is also available in full size in Appendix 3.G.



This Framework is also available in full size in Appendix 3.H.

Definitions: Teacher and Principal Evaluation Model

- *Annual Evaluation* – A yearly evaluation of a teacher or principal that minimally includes student growth measure standards.
- *Assistance Process* –A process defined by the LEA for providing support to teachers and principals rated as ineffective.
- *Complexity Factors* – Factors recognized by the LEA that do not diminish student expectations but may have an extraordinary impact on student growth. For example, factors may include instructional diversity, unusually high number of transient students, specific unusual facility issues, etc. Complexity factors are not weighted with either professional practice or student growth measure domains.

- *Decision Making Process* – The process by which an LEA utilizes the data, both qualitative and quantitative, for determining a teacher's or principal's level of performance and targeted professional development.
- *LEA Match Test/Products to Teaching Assignments* – Assessments, selected by the LEA for grade level or content area teachers from the menu of multiple measures, which align with a teacher's assignment.
- *LEA Weighting Policies* – Policies set by each LEA indicating the percentage the LEA will assign to each of the qualitative measures. Qualitative measures account for 50% of the total evaluation.
- *Measures From Menu* – The list of options that were part of the report of the Maryland Council for Educator Effectiveness that may be used to measure student growth (see table below). The list is not meant to be exhaustive, but to offer suggestions.
- *Mentoring* – Ongoing support provided to teachers and/or principals by a cadre of mentors trained by the LEA to provide teachers and/or principals with the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in their classroom and schools and enable them to stay in the profession. Mentoring should be focused, systematic, ongoing, high quality, geared to the needs of the employee being mentored, include observations, and include feedback.
- *Observations of Leadership* – The process by which a trained evaluator has formally observed the qualitative measures of instructional and administrative leadership for each principal being evaluated.
- *Observations of Teaching* – The process by which a trained evaluator has formally observed the qualitative measures of teaching for each teacher being evaluated.
- *Other Tools* – Qualitative data collection tools in the classroom and school that produce sufficient data from which a teacher or principal may be evaluated on all or part of the domains of the teacher and/or principal evaluation model.
- *Performance Standards* – Levels of teacher or principal performance resulting in a final rating of ineffective, effective, or highly effective on the individual's evaluation.
- *Professional Development* – The training a teacher and/or principal receives relative to the teacher's and/or principal's level of performance. It should be research-based, high quality, timely, and relevant.

- *Qualitative* Measures (*Teacher*) – Observable measures and evidence, accounting for 50% of a teacher's evaluation, which must include the following domains: planning/preparation, instruction, classroom environment, professional responsibilities, and other local priorities if appropriate.
- *Qualitative* Measures (*Principal*) – Observable measures and evidence, accounting for 50% of a principal's evaluation, which must include: school vision, school culture, alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessments, instructional practices, appropriate assessments, technology and multiple sources of data, professional development, engagement of community stakeholders, and other local priorities if appropriate.
- *Quantitative Measures* – Data specific measure which results from students' performance on approved State or LEA multiple measures of student performance.
- *State Assessments* – State assessments as required by state or federal laws and/or regulations.
- *Student Growth Measures* – Multiple measures of student academic and affective outcomes directly related to the teacher or principal. These measures account for 50% of a teacher's or principal's evaluation.

Menu of Sample Growth Measures

This table of options was part of the June 2011 Interim Report of the Maryland Council for Educator Effectiveness. It is not meant to be a comprehensive menu.

Maryland Council for Educator Effectiveness – Sample Growth Measures

	High School	4-8 Tested	4-8,Non-Tested	PreK-3
	WHERE APPLICABLE			
State Assessments				
Portfolio	• Portfolio – student work • Portfolio – teacher work	• Portfolios	• Portfolios – student portfolios/sampling	• Portfolios
Projects/Products	• Projects: Locally Graded, State Checked, Performance Task • Intervention Assessments (Wilson Reading, Lexile Lev)	• Cross curricular projects • Research-Based Interventions	• In class projects (Science Fair, Class labs, Problem-based projects)	• Culminating Project • Summative Checklists (K)
Test Products	• College/Career Readiness Tests • SAT, AP, Accuplacer, IB, PSAT • SLO – Pre/Post test; Standardized mid-term • LEA or school developed • Reading Level Tests • Certification tests • Benchmarking tests • LAS Links • Fitness Gram, Fitness for Life, Physical Education Metrics	• Writing – Artificial Intelligence or teacher scored; Cross Curricular • Benchmarking tests • Unit Assessments • Early Reading Inventories • Math Inventories • Language Proficiency Assessments • LAS Links • Modified Assessments	• Pre-Post Assessments • Local Assessments – quarterly/other • Oral Assessments	• Dibels • Benchmarking tests • Quarterly assessments • Quarterly Reading Assessments • Sight work assessments • Basic fasts Quarterly assessments
Performance		• Performance based – cross curricular	• Small Group video (performance, ex. drama, music group, individual students, special education) • Adjudication (Ensembles, Choir)	

<u>InTASC Standards</u>

Concurrent with the work of the Maryland Educator Effectiveness Council (MEEC) has been the ongoing work of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), through its Interstate

Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). The InTASC standards (http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2011/InTASC_Model_Core_Teaching_Standards_2011.pdf) are described as model core teaching standards that outline what teachers should know and be able to do to ensure every K-12 student reaches the goal of being ready to enter college or the workforce in today's world. They are intended to be an outline of the common principles and foundations of teaching practice that cut across all subject areas and grade levels and that are necessary to improve student achievement. The MEEC fully endorsed the use of the InTASC Standards.

The Division of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (DSE/EIS) has a Professional Development Online Tracker (PDot) based on the Council for Exceptional Children and InTASC standards available on Maryland Learning Links. PDot is a free tool designed for Maryland general or special education teachers who work with students with disabilities. It helps teachers assess their own teaching in relation to the 10 standards from "Stages of Professional Development" (a continuum based on the standards which has indicators for each InTASC principle/standard and 5 levels of proficiency), and then provides teachers with specific resources – based on that self-assessment – to address the areas where they want/need to grow as a professional. This is currently a voluntary self-assessment tool MSDE will consider for use as part of the evaluation process.

Because the InTASC standards generally align well with the Framework for Teachers, the Council endorsed them as ones that should be embraced by teachers as they maximize learning in a transformed vision of teaching and learning. The 10 standards are:

- Standard #1: Learner Development. The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
- Standard #2: Learning Differences. The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.
- Standard #3: Learning Environments. The teacher works with others to create

environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.

- Standard #4: Content Knowledge. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.
- Standard #5: Application of Content. The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.
- Standard #6: Assessment. The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.
- Standard #7: Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.
- Standard #8: Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.
- Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.
- Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

Pilot Teacher Evaluation Programs

Maryland's goal is to ensure the majority of teachers and principals in its public schools are not only evaluated as being effective, but *are* effective. A lynchpin in the State's overall strategy for

creating a truly world-class education system, this new evaluation system will: (1) collect information about how every educator impacts student growth and achievement; (2) count student achievement growth as the single most significant factor, accounting for 50 percent, of the evaluation of teachers and principals; (3) combine information about student learning with high-quality, more consistent observations of teachers' and principals' skills, knowledge, and leadership by better-trained supervisors; (4) empower schools to better support educators and strengthen their practices, compensate exceptional teachers and principals, and remove those who clearly are ineffective; and (5) help Maryland identify and deploy the best teachers and principals to the neediest schools.

Student Growth Measures

The State Board of Education specified that student-learning gains should comprise 50 percent of the evaluation. Currently, Maryland is in the pilot phase with the seven pilot school districts that will result in Statewide pilot in 2012-2013 and then full implementation of this new standard by the 2013–14 school year.

Clear approaches to measuring student growth (intermediate strategy and long-term strategy): State leaders recognize that using student growth data in teacher and principal evaluations requires thoughtful planning and engagement among key stakeholders and psychometrically valid instruments and analytics. Compounding the challenge, Maryland (like many other states) is implementing its new educator evaluation system even as it plans to convert to a new student assessment system that measures Common Core State Standards and will be developed jointly with other states. These new assessments will be specifically designed to measure growth with summative assessments. MSDE envisions a system of growth measures that are flexible to accommodate various types of growth data, and will provide alert data for students not making progress during the school year.

MSDE will calculate the *progress each school makes in closing overall achievement gaps* as measured by the Maryland State Assessment (MSA) for elementary and middle schools and in end-of-course exams in algebra, biology, and English (as measured by the end-of-course High School Assessments for high school. MSDE has determined that virtually every school has an

achievement gap for at least one group of students (e.g., low-income, minority, special education); this measure reinforces the need to ensure educators are helping students make sufficient growth to close these gaps. Again, the State's experience developing and using these types of indices began with the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) results which gives MSDE existing capacity and expertise to make these school-based calculations.

The rubric (below) was developed by the Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center and has been adapted for specific application in Maryland. Pilot districts received this rubric as an example of criteria that could be used to evaluate the suitability of student growth measures in a teacher evaluation system. While it is acknowledged that many existing measures may not meet all of the criteria, the rubric can help districts select the measures that are most appropriate for initial implementation and offer guidance on how the measures can be improved.

Criteria for Reviewing Measures of Student Growth

Criteria	1	2	3	4
Alignment to Standards	The measures reflect the full depth and breadth of targeted MD grade-level standards	The measures partially reflect the depth and breadth of targeted MD grade-level standards	The measures are not aligned to targeted MD grade-level standards	No or insufficient evidence to judge
Reliability Items	There are sufficient items to enable reliable measurement (at least 5 for each intended subscore)	There are multiple but insufficient items for reliable measurement	The number of items is clearly insufficient for reliability	No or insufficient evidence to judge
Reliability: standard procedures	There are standardized procedures for *both* a) when the test is administered *and* b) the time allocated for the test	There are standardized procedures for *either* a) when the test is administered *or* b) the time allocated for the test	There are no standardized procedures for *either* a)when the test is administered *and* b) the time allocated for the test	No or insufficient evidence to judge
Reliability: scoring of open-ended responses	There are precise scoring criteria related to the performance expectations	There are general scoring criteria that are not specifically related to the performance expectations	There are no scoring criteria related to the performance expectations	No or insufficient evidence to judge
Reliability: rater training	There are clear procedures for training raters of open-ended responses	There are limited procedures for training raters of open-ended responses	There are no procedures for training raters of open-ended responses	No or insufficient evidence to judge
Reliability of Scores	There is evidence that the scores are reasonably reliable	There is evidence that the scores have low availability	There is no evidence of score reliability	No or insufficient evidence to judge
Fairness and Freedom Bias	The items are free of elements that would prevent some sub-groups of students from showing their capabilities	There are some items that contain elements that would prevent some sub-groups of students from showing their capabilities	There are many items that contain elements that would prevent some sub-groups of students from showing their capabilities	No or insufficient evidence to judge

*This rubric should be used in conjunction with the CRESST/AACC brief, Developing and Selecting Measures of Student Growth to Use for Teacher Evaluation. This brief provides detailed information about all the criteria and the evidence needed to substantiate them.

These criteria were developed by the Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center and have been adapted for specific application in Maryland.

Piloting and refining the growth measures (2011–13): Measures of student growth began being piloted in September 2011 and will continue to be refined through the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years. Maryland is working in close partnership with seven pilot school districts throughout the State: **Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Charles County, Kent County, Prince George's County, Queen Anne's County, and St. Mary's County.** Importantly, three of these districts (Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Prince George's County) disproportionally serve the majority of low-income students in Maryland — ensuring that the new evaluation system can accelerate improvement in schools serving the State's neediest students and efforts to equitably distribute effective teachers and principals. The pilot LEAs presently consist of eighty-three schools, nine hundred and thirty-four teachers, and forty-eight principals. It is representative of multiple school levels, grade levels, team levels, and subject levels; with consideration given to both assessed and non-assessed area educators. Models range from systems identifying a selection of educators across all schools to systems identifying full cohorts of educators within select schools. To varying degrees, six districts are conducting complementary pilot evaluation processes with principals and or assistant principals. Most are using a variation of existing or recently created evaluation tools to facilitate the validation of the Professional Practice portion of Educator Effectiveness. The seven Pilot LEAs recognize that the "experimental" design of the model allows for unique measures and accomplishments associated with the interests and limitations of each district and that it has the potential to create a valuable collection of evaluative evidence.

The seven LEAs' experiences over the two-year pilot are also helping to inform any needed course corrections before the system is piloted in all schools throughout the State in the 2012-13 school year and then implemented completely in school year 2013-2014. MSDE and the Maryland Educator Effectiveness Council will collaborate with the pilot districts to gather information and lessons learned to inform the Statewide scale-up.

The seven pilot districts meet with MSDE on a monthly basis to update MSDE and one another on successes and challenges and to make recommendations for revisions to the models. These meetings allow the districts to share with one another, learn from one another, request support

from MSDE and maintain the collaborative approach with which the new evaluation system is being developed.

With the goal of testing and refining the rubrics and measures, the student-growth portion of evaluations during this pilot cycle will be "no fault" without high stakes or consequences attached. However, as part of Race to the Top, participating teachers and principals in the lowest-performing schools are part of an incentive project. Those identified by their local school systems because of their exceptional impact on student growth will qualify for locally negotiated incentives for working in high-poverty/high-minority schools. In the interest of fairness during the pilot period, the participating LEAs will use their current evaluation system.

Two Race to the Top (RTTT) projects support the Student Growth portion of the Teacher/Principal Evaluation model. Project # 28/47 - Develop and Implement a Statistical Model to Measure Student Growth supports Maryland educational reform initiatives by developing and implementing a student growth model so student performance outcome measures may be used in educator effectiveness evaluations. This project assessed the strengths and limitations of various valued added growth models in Year 1. In the current year, Year 2, the SEA team has tested the Colorado growth model as a key student growth measure and distributed the data to seven LEAs for use in a no-fault teacher effectiveness pilot. Based on preliminary direction of the LEA pilots, MSDE is consolidating the best practices of the LEAs in order to develop a multi-component State student growth measurement system.

Accomplishments that show evidence of meeting goals/activities and making progress include: (1) Preparation of initial requirements document for student growth index method; (2) Design of approach using value matrices for non-tested areas to create student growth index; (3) Design of State level computation for the combined local plus State multi-component growth measure; (4) Installation of the Colorado system with associated data structures to capture and store student growth percentile data from the system, and process of student data for grades 3-8 from years 2007-2011; (5) Development of proof-of-concept dashboards showing aggregation and drill down dis-aggregation of growth data from the State to LEA to school to subgroups; (6) Completion of system technical architecture to productionalize the system and integrated the data

with teacher effectiveness data to create a single teacher effectiveness measure; (7) Initiation of assessment of short-comings with Colorado models and identification of solutions to improve the measure with the National Psychometric Council; and (8) Initiation of new procurement for psychometric consulting support to facilitate the development of a full student growth measurement system.

The second project, Project # 29/48 - Develop and Implement an Educator Evaluation System develops and implements an educator evaluation system that allows LEAs that do not have a system, to implement a system of fair evaluations that use student performance measures and professional performance measures for administrators and teachers. Year 2 activities include identifying the best administrator and teacher performance measurement practices, tools and methods in Maryland LEAs, procure an educator effectiveness system, and initiate a pilot it in one or more LEAs.

Accomplishments that show evidence of meeting goals/activities and making progress include (1) Survey of LEAs for teacher evaluation tools and procedures; (2) Preparation of strategy and initial requirements document for educator effectiveness measures and a system; (3) Creation of LEA collaboration team to review and participate in the selection of administrator and teacher effectiveness tools and methods; (4) Design of State level computation system to combined local plus State multi-component educator effectiveness measures with student growth measures; (5) Design of a portfolio method for teachers and initiation of a single-LEA pilot; and (6) Matrix that shows the initial identification of administrator rating tools and procedures, teacher rating tools and procedures, and training packages that can meet State LEA needs.

Rigorous, Transparent, Fair Evaluations

The pilot process — and MSDE's close partnership with the seven school districts to refine the new framework — is an important step to ensuring the fairness, reliability, and rigor of the new system and to identify and work out any problems before the evaluation models are piloted Statewide in 2012 and then implemented Statewide in 2013. Importantly, MSDE and its partner school districts will study the impacts and validity of the new evaluation system by examining key questions, such as: Do ratings of teachers and principals under the new system match what

principals and administrators had expected? Are teachers and principals receiving overall ratings of Effective or better in numbers that are the same, fewer, or more that had been previously rated Satisfactory?

Annual Evaluations that Provide Constructive Feedback-

Maryland's goal is to ensure that all of the teachers and principals in its schools truly *are* effective. Data and anecdotal reports suggest that nearly every educator today is rated Satisfactory — which is not the same as knowing whether principals or teachers actually *are* effective at improving student learning, the most important component of their jobs. For Maryland to achieve its aspiration of having every principal and teacher become Effective or Highly Effective, the State needs to ensure that evaluations happen regularly and that supervisors not only are able to conduct evaluations capably and fairly but also understand how to use the results to provide useful feedback and target appropriate support to those they are evaluating.

Maryland now mandates that all teachers and principals will be required to have annual evaluations on student growth. Under the current system, tenured teachers are evaluated every other year; under the new system, all school districts must follow these guidelines:

- Every teacher and principal shall be evaluated at least once annually.
- Each annual evaluation of a principal shall include all of the components of the evaluation system (student growth, the eight leadership outcomes, and locally-decided priorities).

MSDE will review the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) to address this issue. In the proposed regulation to be submitted to the State Board on March 27, 2012, the annual evaluation process will be that teachers and principals shall be evaluated at least once annually on a three year evaluation cycle, in the following ways: (1) tenured teachers shall be evaluated on both professional practice and student growth in the first year of the evaluation cycle. If in the first year of the evaluation cycle a tenured teacher is determined to be highly effective or effective then in the second year of the evaluation cycle, the tenured teacher shall be evaluated using the professional practice rating from the previous year and student growth based on the most recent available data. If in the second year of the evaluation cycle a tenured teacher is

determined to be highly effective or effective, then in the third year of the evaluation cycle, the tenured teacher shall be evaluated using the professional practice rating from the previous year and student growth based on the most recent available data. In the fourth year of the evaluation cycle conducted under these regulations, tenured teachers shall be evaluated on both professional practice and student growth. The cycle will continue as described above. In any year, a principal may determine or a teacher may request that the evaluation be based on a new review of professional practice along with student growth. (2) All non-tenured teachers and all teachers rated as ineffective shall be evaluated annually on professional practice and student growth. (3) Every principal shall be evaluated at least once annually based on all of the components set of the evaluation.

Whenever student growth demonstrates a failure on the part of the teacher or principal to meet targets and earn a rating of Effective, it will trigger additional evaluation of the teacher's or principal's performance and a determination of what intervention and/or supports may be necessary.

Because a high-quality, consistent, Statewide system for evaluating teacher and principal effectiveness has never existed before in Maryland — and because student learning data in particular have not regularly been used by all LEAs in evaluations — Maryland will invest in significant technical assistance to support school districts, and especially those education leaders who supervise teachers and principals, in making the transition.

In Maryland, principal evaluations are performed by a designated executive officer in each LEA, so assistance and support easily can be targeted to the right individuals. In order to determine the kind of assistance that executive officers feel that they need, the Division of Academic Reform and Innovation will be conducting a needs assessment session at the February 2012 executive officers meeting to help drive the design of the professional development. This training in staff evaluations will be designed during spring 2012; regional trainers will be hired to support the 58 executive officers, and support will be offered to every LEA beginning in 2012. Executive officers will help teach principals to evaluate teachers using the new teacher evaluation system; they also will receive continued professional development and support to enable them to improve

the oversight, coaching, and annual evaluation of principals. Executive officers and principals also will receive training in the use of evaluations for promotion, incentives, and removal.

MSDE Teacher/Principal Evaluation Committee

In addition to the MEEC, MSDE established an internal stakeholder group to discuss and monitor the progress of the Teacher/Principal Evaluation Model. This group consists of Cross-Divisional Assistant State Superintendents, State Directors, and State Specialists and is led by the Interim State Superintendent. The focus is on how MSDE can assist the non-pilot districts as they develop their own systems, the seven pilot districts as they continue to experiment and test their models, while also refining the Maryland default model as needed.

This group meets monthly and always one week before the pilots meet. Their main task is to write a report that will help inform the Statewide pilot in 2012-2013 including incorporating lessons learned from the seven pilot districts and designing a Statewide default model. The report will include guidance on the teacher and principal evaluation frameworks, the multiple measures, work and learnings from the pilots, annual evaluation cycles, professional development, dashboards, attributions, certification and training of principals/evaluators, and partnering with the unions.

Teacher Evaluation System: (State Default Model)

Following the initial work of the Council, the internal MSDE Teacher/Principal Evaluation Committee, representatives of MSDE and MSEA Committee, the pilot group and the ESEA Flexibility committee, with input from local superintendents and other stakeholders developed a draft Teacher and Principal State Default Evaluation Model. These models will be shared with the Educator Effectiveness Council.

Local school systems in working with their local unions are encouraged to develop the Teacher Evaluation model that is aligned with the State framework as defined in the report of the Council for Educator Effectiveness and as described above. In the event that the LEA and their union do not agree on a local model, the LEA must adopt the State Default model for Teacher Evaluation. Maryland continues to work on finalizing the State Teacher Evaluation Model and

all of its components. A copy will be provided upon completion.

Professional Practice (50%)

The State Model is designed to promote rigorous standards of professional practice and encourage professional development for teachers and administrators. As described, the teacher evaluation model is divided into two sections - professional practice (50 percent) for the qualitative portion and student growth (50 percent) for the quantitative portion. The Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching is to be used as the framework for the professional practice section for teachers. The Framework for Teaching is divided into four domains of professional practice: Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities. The LEA that selects the State Model is expected to fully implement a teacher evaluation design that assesses the four domains and the 22 Components within those four domains. Similar to teachers, the Administrator Evaluation model is also divided into two sections -- professional practice (50 percent) for the qualitative portion and student growth (50 percent) for the quantitative portion. For principals, the LEA will use the Maryland Instructional Leadership/Communications, Management, and Ethics Framework elements as the basis for the professional practice section.

Design of the Evaluation Process

In Maryland, many LEAs already incorporate the Danielson Framework for Teaching into their teacher evaluation process. Therefore, LEAs choosing the State model may continue to use observation and evaluation instruments already in use as long as those instruments fully assess the four domains and 22 components (and 76 smaller elements).

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation	**Domain 2: The Classroom Environment**
Component 1a: *Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy* • Knowledge of content • Knowledge of prerequisite relationships • Knowledge of content-related pedagogy	Component 2a: *Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport* • Teacher interaction with students • Student interactions with one another

Component 1b: *Demonstrating Knowledge of Students*

- Knowledge of child and adolescent development
- Knowledge of the learning process
- Knowledge of students' skills and knowledge and language proficiency
- Knowledge of students' interests and cultural heritage
- Knowledge of students' special needs

Component 1c: *Setting Instructional Outcomes*

- Value, sequence and alignment
- Clarity
- Suitability for diverse learners
- Balance

Component 1d: *Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources*

- Resources for classroom use
- Resources to extend content knowledge and pedagogy
- Resources for students

Component 1e: *Designing Coherent Instruction*

- Learning activities
- Instructional materials and resources
- Instructional groups
- Lesson and unit structure

Component 1f: *Designing Student Assessments*

- Congruence with instructional goals
- Criteria and standards
- Use for planning
- Design of formative assessments

Component 2b: *Establishing a Culture for Learning*

- Importance of the content
- Student pride in work
- Expectations for learning and achievement

Component 2c: *Managing Classroom Procedures*

- Management of instructional groups
- Management of transitions
- Management of materials and supplies
- Performance of non-instructional duties
- Supervision of volunteers and paraprofessionals

Component 2d: *Managing Student Behavior*

- Expectations
- Monitoring of student behavior
- Response to student misbehavior

Component 2e: *Organizing Physical Space*

- Safety and arrangement of furniture
- Accessibility to learning and use of physical resources

Domain 3: Instruction

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

Component 3a: *Communicating With Students*

- Directions and procedures
- Use of oral and written language
- Expectations for learning
- Explanations of content

Component 3b: *Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques*

- Quality of questions
- Discussion techniques
- Student participation

Component 3c: *Engaging Students in Learning*

- Representation of content
- Activities and assignments
- Grouping of students/structure and pacing
- Instructional materials and resources

Component 3d: *Using Assessment in Instruction*

- Student self-assessment and monitoring of progress
- Assessment criteria
- Monitoring of student learning
- Feedback to students

Component 3e: *Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness*

- Lesson adjustment
- Response to students
- Persistence

Component 4a: *Reflecting on Teaching*

- Accuracy
- Use in future teaching

Component 4b: *Maintaining Accurate Records*

- Student completion of assignments
- Student progress in learning
- Non-instructional records

Component 4c: *Communicating with Families*

- Information about the instructional program
- Information about individual students
- Engagement of families in the instructional program

Component 4d: *Participating in a Professional Community*

- Relationships with colleagues
- Service to the school
- Participation in school and district projects
- Involvement in a culture of professional inquiry

Component 4e: *Growing and Developing Professionally*

- Enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skill
- Receptivity to feedback from colleagues
- Service to the profession

Component 4f: *Showing Professionalism*

- Service to students
- Advocacy

	• Decision making • Integrity and ethical conduct • Compliance with school and district regulations

Several LEAs in Maryland utilize rubrics that assist administrators in describing and categorizing teachers' professional practice as a result of classroom observations. Such rubrics represent a critical resource for both teachers and evaluators because they paint a vivid portrait of professional practice at differing proficiency levels. Rubrics also ensure that both evaluators and teachers share a common language in assessing professional practice. An example of one such rubric, from the Howard County Public Schools, may be found at the following URL: http://www.hcpss.org/schools/framework_self_assess.pdf. Maryland State Department of Education staff will assist LEAs seeking to create and/or refine existing rubrics associated with the Framework for Teaching to guide professional development efforts associated with evaluating educators. Ultimately, the Framework for Teaching, when used as the foundation of an LEA's mentoring, professional development, and teacher evaluation processes, links these activities together and assists teachers in becoming more effective practitioners.

As with teacher evaluation systems in Maryland, many LEAs already use the Maryland Instructional Leadership/Communications, Management, and Ethics Framework as the basis for administrator evaluations. Therefore, LEAs choosing the State model may continue to use evaluation instruments already in use for administrators as long as those instruments fully assess the 12 outcomes that comprise that framework. Maryland State Department of Education staff will also assist LEAs seeking to create and/or refine evaluation rubrics associated with the Maryland Instructional Leadership/Communications, Management, and Ethics Framework to guide professional development efforts.

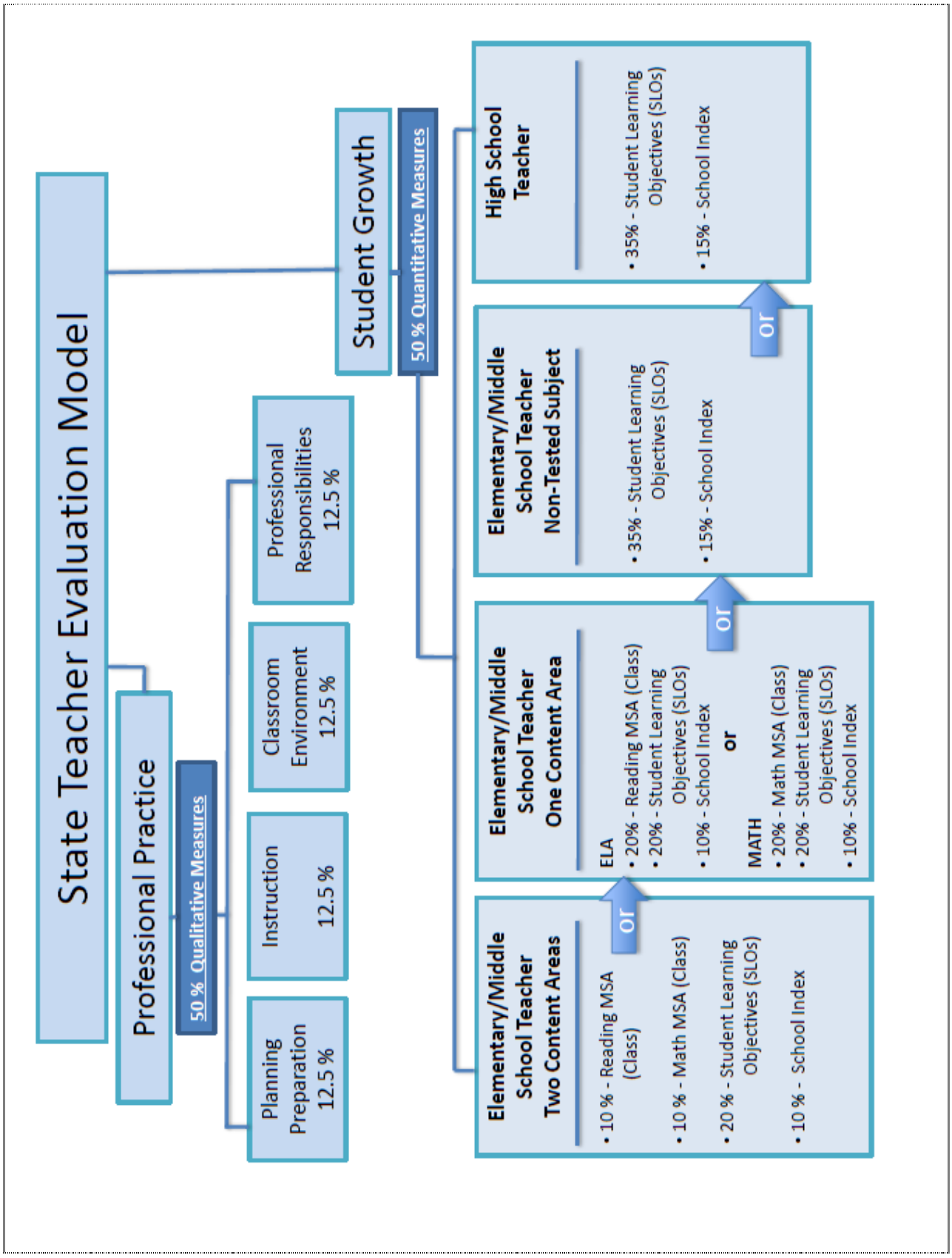
The State model requires that the evaluator assigns a rating of Highly Effective, Effective, or Ineffective for the Professional Practice portion. The weight of each of the domains/outcomes is expected to be equal in the Professional Practice category.

Professional Development

Extensive materials, including videos, webinars and on-line materials are available to support the implementation of these models of evaluation of professional practice. The LEA is encouraged to utilize Title II, Part A federal funds along with local funds to provide necessary professional development and to support these initiatives.

Depending on the continuation of federal Title II, Part A funding, grants to local school systems will include priority for professional learning experiences for teachers and school leaders that are directly aligned with the qualitative components of the teacher/principal evaluation system. The focus of professional development for principals regarding the qualitative components will include outcomes and evidences of practice as delineated in the Maryland Instructional Leadership/Communications, Management, and Ethics Framework. The focus for the qualitative components of professional practice for teachers will include the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching or other locally chosen qualitative framework.

The teacher toolkit portal, developed as part of the Race to the Top grant, represents a significant professional development resource in support of educator evaluation. The Toolkit will provide educators with access to a variety of online and face-to-face professional development, tools that will help them plan their individual professional development plans along with opportunities to collaborate online. It will provide a user friendly resource for teachers and principals to tap professional development resources linked to the Common Core State Curriculum, multiple dashboards for student, teacher and principal performance and teacher and principal evaluation systems.


State Teacher Evaluation Model
Professional Practice
50 % Qualitative Measures
Planning Preparation 12.5 %
Instruction 12.5 %
Classroom Environment 12.5 %
Professional Responsibilities 12.5 %
Student Growth
50 % Quantitative Measures
Elementary/Middle School Teacher Two Content Areas
• 10 % - Reading MSA (Class)
• 10 % - Math MSA (Class)
• 20 % - Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)
• 10 % - School Index
or
Elementary/Middle School Teacher One Content Area
ELA
• 20% - Reading MSA (Class)
• 20% - Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)
• 10% - School Index
or
MATH
• 20% - Math MSA (Class)
• 20% - Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)
• 10% - School Index
or
Elementary/Middle School Teacher Non-Tested Subject
• 35% - Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)
• 15% - School Index
or
High School Teacher
• 35% - Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)
• 15% - School Index

Student Growth (50%)

Student growth will be determined based on the courses and grade levels a teacher teaches. The State model incorporates the use of the Maryland School Progress Index (described in Principle 2) and Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) (defined more clearly below) to define student growth for the evaluation. Wherever a Statewide assessment exists; it must be used as one of the multiple measures (per Race to the Top). State assessments, if available, will be combined with SLOs and MSDE's approval to yield ratings of Highly Effective, Effective, or Ineffective. The evaluator rates the teacher/principal as Highly Effective, Effective, or Ineffective on the student growth rubric. The metrics that serve as the basis of the evaluation are below.

- For elementary and middle school teachers who teach more than one subject (Option A), the student growth would be calculated by combining the aggregate of 10% of the class reading scores on the Maryland State Assessment (MSA), 10% of the class mathematics scores, 20% of the SLOs and then the remaining 10% comes from the School Progress Index.
- For elementary and middle school teachers who only teach one subject (Option B), the score would still be calculated using 20% from SLOs and 10% from the School Progress Index, however, the final 20% would be calculated from the Class scores of the appropriate subject (Mathematics or English/Language Arts).
- For elementary or middle school teachers who teach in a non-tested content area, their student growth rating would be determined by the SLOs (35%) and the School Progress Index rating (15%).
- High school teachers would derive their student growth rating the same way as non-tested content area teachers. Thirty-five percent comes from their SLOs and 15% from the School Progress Index.

These metrics are also displayed graphically in Appendix 3.I. It is important to note that MSDE is in the process of defining options and strategies for co-teachers in one content all day, self contained special educators like those teaching multiple subjects, and support for special educators in the non-tested areas.

MSDE is finalizing the method of calculation of growth for the Maryland School Assessment. The Assistant State Superintendent for Assessment, Accountability, and Data Systems is meeting

with the Psychometric Council on February 23, 2012 to review the use of student growth percentiles and the Value Matrix. A recommendation will be brought to the Core Team which includes the Interim State Superintendent for approval. Standard setting will be conducted on the teacher evaluation model to determine the process for arriving at the final evaluation based on the inputs as described above. MSDE will update the model with any revisions as needed. The results of the standard setting process and other revisions to the teacher and principal evaluation will be made available upon completion.

Overall Evaluation

The intersection of the Professional Practice rating (50%) and the Student Growth rating (50%) will result in the final evaluation of the teacher/principal.

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

The use of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) is planned to be an integral part of the teacher and principal evaluation process. A student learning objective is a long term academic goal for a group or class of students. SLOs are specific and measurable, based on available prior student learning data, and aligned to State standards, as well as any school and LEA priorities. SLOs should represent the most important learning during the interval of instruction. Objectives may be based on progress or mastery.

SLOs are a solution that can work for all teachers, make a difference in instruction and student outcomes and will support the transition to Common Core State Standards and assessments. SLOs are also helpful in framing the conversations about school improvement and closing the achievement gap.

Student Learning Objectives are not new in Maryland. Today in schools across the State groups of teachers review formative and summative assessments with principals and other school leadership and make instructional decisions based on past and current data and student work. Maryland currently sees teachers conducting teacher research to solve real problems in their classrooms and basing their instructional decisions on data they collect.

In trying to assure quality and clarity Maryland has asked for technical assistance from USDE from the Race to the Top Reform Support Network to capture best practices, models and strategies from Massachusetts, Colorado, Austin TX, and New York. Maryland has also contacted colleagues in Rhode Island who have had SLOs in use to find out what lessons they have learned this year. See Appendix 3.J for the SLO Report for Maryland from the Race to the Top Reform Support Network.

Maryland has an Ad Hoc committee in place that is currently reviewing in-State and out of state models that could be adopted for the State model. Maryland is preparing an informational document on SLOs which will include a general overview of SLOs and the rationale for using them in Maryland's Educator Evaluation System, a more in-depth detailed explanation of how SLOs will be used in Maryland, and the explicit connection between SLOs and professional practice. In addition Maryland will provide resources and information for all educators on developing SLOs that address the specific needs of all subgroups.

Maryland is committed to making SLOs a focus for evaluating all teachers, but most especially to address teachers who teach in areas that are not tested. The SLO process adds key strengths to an evaluation system, including: providing a model for differentiating teacher effectiveness; establishing a vehicle for improving teaching based on data on student performance and growth; bringing more science to the art of teaching; linking teacher effectiveness to principal effectiveness; connecting evaluation directly to student learning, while respecting teacher professionalism; and enabling teachers and principals to become more systematic and strategic in their instructional decisions to improve the quality of the outcome.

Principal Evaluation System: (State Default Model)

Simultaneous to the development of the teacher evaluation model, MSDE and its stakeholders have been working on a State default model for the principal evaluation system. Similar to the teacher evaluation model, the principal model will be based 50% on growth measures and 50% on Professional Practice Measures.

Growth Measures for Principals (50%)

Cognizant of the fact that growth is and should be measured differently for principals of different types and level of schools; MSDE developed a model that is differentiated based on the type of school a principal leads (see the table below). For elementary and middle school principals, growth will be defined 20% by Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). Similar to the teacher model, these will be developed collaboratively by the principal and the evaluator before the start of the school year and will be based on overall student performance within the school. MSA school-wide reading and mathematics scores will each make up another 10% of this component. The final 10% will be decided based on the Maryland School Progress Index discussed in Principle 2. Since high school principals do not have MSA scores, their growth measures will be based 35% on SLOs and 15% on the Maryland School Progress Index. Finally, principals of Special Education Centers, a PreK-2 school or any of the other types of schools in the State will calculate their growth measure with 35% from SLOs and 15% from the Maryland School Progress Index.

Growth Measures for Principals (50%)

Elementary/Middle Principals	**High School Principals**	**Other Principals (e.g., Special Centers, PreK-2)**
Student Learning Objectives: 20%	Student Learning Objectives: 35%	Student Learning Objectives: 35%
MSA Reading:10%	Index: 15%	Index: 15%
MSA Mathematics: 10%		
Index: 10%		

Professional Practice Measures for Principals (50%)

Professional practice measures for principals will make up the remaining 50% of the evaluation. These measures will have two main components: Providing effective instructional leadership and providing a safe, orderly, and supportive learning environment. Recognizing the important role principals play as instructional leaders, this first component will consist of facilitating the development of a school vision; aligning all aspects of a school culture to student and adult learning; monitoring the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment; improving instructional practices through purposeful observation and evaluation of teachers; ensuring the regular integration of appropriate assessments into daily classroom instruction; using technology

and multiple sources of data to improve classroom instruction; providing staff with focused, sustained, research-based professional development; and engaging all community stakeholders in a shared responsibility for student and school success.

The second professional practice measure involves providing a safe, orderly, and supportive learning environment. This is measured by whether a principal manages and administers the school operations and budget in an effective and efficient manner; communicates effectively in a variety of situations and circumstances with diverse audiences; understands, responds to, and helps influence the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context of the school community; and promotes the success of every student and teacher by acting within a framework of integrity, fairness, and ethics.

MSDE is developing a series of "Look-fors" for each of the above metrics either by using the evidences in practice in the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework or the knowledge, dispositions, and performances in the ISLLC Standards.
For the most recent version of the Principal Default Model, please see Appendix 3.K.

Internal Support Mechanisms and Non-Pilot Districts

A variety of technical assistance has been provided to the pilot LEAs in support of their work, mostly through the RTTT funds. Individual visitations have been conducted to each LEA along with combined monthly progress and informational sharing meetings. Electronic networks have been established to facilitate communications, to maintain a reference resource, and to conduct topical Webinar sessions. Teleconferencing has occurred with MSDE and USDE to report progress and to identify immediate and longer range needs for State and national assistance. A second round of visits took place in January 2012 along with a meeting that included a topically driven action agenda.

In preparation for the second year Statewide pilot, the other seventeen LEAs have accepted the invitation to participate in less formal processes to inform and instruct them of the work that is occurring. Upon request, visitations and conversations have been conducted to thirteen of the non-pilot LEAs; with two more scheduled. The purpose of such briefings was to obtain a sense

of what the non-pilot LEAs may be presently doing with the Educator Effectiveness Initiative, what they may be planning, and how MSDE might be of technical assistance concurrent to the seven pilot LEA initiative. Points of contact indicate that the non-pilot LEAs are independently pursuing a number of approaches to crafting a local method for measuring educator effectiveness. The non-pilot LEAs, not unlike their pilot counterparts, are at varying points in their efforts to quantify educator effectiveness. Some are taking full advantage of this year to pursue conversations with their stakeholder groups; realigning local evaluation instruments and initiating discussions about the means for quantifying student growth. Others, equally complying with this year's expectations, are taking the time to converse and consider options while awaiting the outcomes of the seven pilot LEAs.

Both pilot and non-pilot LEAs are committed to the spirit and the intent of the Educator Effectiveness initiative and a positive and productive dynamic is being evidenced between administrative and association personnel.

New Regulations

As mentioned above, new regulations have been developed and were presented to the State Board of Education on March 27, 2012. A copy of these regulations can be found in Appendix II- 11. These regulations address much of what has been and is being learned by the pilots. The regulations will be posted in the State Register for 40 days of public comment in mid-May. It is expected that the regulations will come back to the State Board in July 2012 for any revisions and/or action. The State Superintendent and MSDE will rely heavily on the Maryland Educator Effectiveness Council to identify and develop further recommendations for the framework as needed. The Council will continue to meet throughout the pilots to provide input and advice on these additional issues:

- Guide MSDE's evaluation and research questions throughout the two-year pilot of the new system (one year with 7 districts and one year statewide); and
- Identify by April 2012 corrections and adjustments to the overall design of the State evaluation system — including the guidelines, tools, and measures — before the system is piloted statewide in fall 2012.

Further adjustments to the evaluation system and specific consequences for those rated Ineffective under the new system still need to be enacted into policy in 2012 (and 2013 if additional corrections are needed). It is important to understand that members of the State Board of Education — who are appointed by the Governor — have sole authority within the limits of the law to act on these issues. Maryland leaders are appropriately taking the needed time to seek input from stakeholders to refine and perfect the new evaluation system — and not simply postponing difficult decisions to a distant date or to an uncertain future. The action of Maryland's General Assembly — combined with the State Board's broad powers to "determine the elementary and secondary educational policies of this State" and to do so by regulations that have the "force of law" and apply to all school systems (Annotated Code of Maryland, §2-205(b)(1) and§2-205(c)) — ensure Maryland will take action and enact all aspects of the plan outlined above, after conferring closely with stakeholders.

Towards Full Implementation: Refining the Evaluation System and Involving Teachers and Principals:

As part of annual evaluations, school districts will have flexibility to determine how these domains are assessed. They also have the flexibility to suggest additional measures for this 50 percent that reflect unique priorities of their communities. Similar to the non-growth measure component of the teacher evaluation, LEAs will have flexibility in their principal evaluations to determine how best to assess these outcomes, which must be done annually. In addition, LEAs may add attributes of principal leadership (e.g., school-management skills) to these eight outcomes that reflect local priorities. LEAs must work within the framework as described for teachers and principals, must include multiple measures and must have annual evaluations.

Initially each LEA will submit their evaluation model to MSDE for review and approval. In future years as part of the annual Master Plan update process, MSDE will review each LEA's evaluation framework and exert quality control as needed. Maryland tracks performances at the district level through the Bridge to Excellence program, which requires local school systems to develop and implement a comprehensive master plan, updated annually, as part of receiving increased State funding. Because the Master Plan is reviewed annually by MSDE and LEA staff to ensure that students, schools, and districts are making sufficient progress toward performance

goals, the process serves as an important, high-profile accountability tool in Maryland.

The new Maryland Teacher/Principal Evaluation System will be operational Statewide in September 2013. All twenty-four LEAs will be mandated to participate in the new collaboratively developed system. All revisions to the model will be available.

Update:

Maryland's work on redesigning its Teacher/Principal Evaluation System has been a critical component of Maryland's Third Wave of Education Reform. Please see Appendix II-12 for a timeline of this work. Maryland currently has 7 LEAs piloting different elements of a Teacher/Principal Evaluation model. The information and learnings from these pilots will inform the recommendations for the statewide field test of new Teacher/Principal Evaluation Models by all 24 LEAs in 2012-2013. Maryland has developed a default model for districts that are unable to mutually agree with their bargaining unit on an LEA model.

MSDE has also created the Maryland Teacher/Principal Evaluation Guidebook, an implementation guide to assist LEAs in implementing the new Teacher/Principal Evaluation System in the 2012-2013 school year field test. This guidebook can be found at: http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/race_to_the_top/tpeg. Revisions will be made to the Guidebook following the field test and will be distributed for the 2013-2014 full implementation.

The Maryland State Evaluation Default Model will be piloted during the statewide field testing in 2012-2013 by Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS). AACPS is a mid size LEA with a diverse school population which includes Annapolis, the State capital. The components of the 50% student growth portion include MSA results by class, the Maryland School Progress Index, and Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). In addition to AACPS, Calvert and Somerset County LEAs are also field testing the State Model. These are two smaller counties and should provide more varied data on the State Model

Because Maryland decided that SLOs would be a part of the default model, MSDE is prepared to offer professional development on developing and measuring SLOs. Maryland requested technical assistance from USDE to learn how SLOs have been used in the educator evaluation systems across the country. This information has been shared with superintendents and other school system leaders as well as with the Maryland State Educators Association [MSEA] a local arm of NEA. Of the 24 school systems in the state, 23 are MSEA members.

Additionally, MSDE recently sent a team to Charlotte-Mecklenburg, NC, where Student Learning Objectives have been used to measure student outcomes as part of a TIF grant for five years. The team met with Dr. Susan Norwood, Executive Director of the grant. The team also met with teachers and principals to find out from practitioners how effective the SLOs are in increasing student achievement. The team is composed of cross divisional personnel who will implement the professional development model for school systems using SLOs next year and for the Maryland State Teacher and Principal Evaluation System. Team members were chosen because of their ability to plan and conduct professional development for LEA pilot programs and also to impact specific stakeholder groups as well.

The SLO team includes a former LEA superintendent, who will communicate directly with superintendents, a program approval specialist who will connect with teacher and principals preparation programs, a Title I specialist who will communicate with Focus and Priority Title I schools and a Career and Technology specialist who will work with LEA supervisors of these programs to assure effective implementation of SLOs for this diverse population. Dr. Megan Dolan, Mid- Atlantic Comprehensive Center, also is a part of the team and has provided valuable research and contact from across the country.

MSDE is creating a full Professional Development Plan and Timeline for SLOs, Charlotte, Danielson, the School Progress Index, etc. Members of the SLO team already created the following Professional Development Plan for SLOs:

Rev. 4-10-12

Maryland State Department of Education
Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)
Professional Development Plan Proposal

Overview

Rationale

As part of the third wave of education reform, the Maryland State Department of Education is developing a model for measuring student growth as one of the factors in determining educator effectiveness and professional development (PD) needs. Educational leaders, policymakers, practitioners and other stakeholders have researched numerous approaches of calculating student growth and attributing that growth to principals and teachers. Based on this exploration, Maryland has elected to gauge student growth with Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). The SLO development process gives principals and teachers time to give careful consideration to students' instructional needs and practitioners' specific PD needs while developing high expectations and attainable goals for what students will learn over a given time period. Developing SLOs gives educators an opportunity to enter into a partnership with fellow practitioners to use student data to inform instructional practice. In addition to developing objectives that can be reliably measured for student growth, SLOs support processes for the following:

- *Connecting evaluation directly to student learning, while respecting teacher professionalism;*
- *Understanding student's instructional needs as they change;*
- *Establishing a vehicle for improving instruction based on student performance and growth data;*
- *Bringing more science and research-based practice to the art of teaching;*
- *Relating teacher effectiveness to principal effectiveness;*
- *Linking operational goals at all levels of education with the focus on student achievement;*
- *Providing a mode for differentiating teacher effectiveness; and*
- *Improving student achievement by using targeted educational outcomes.*

Because SLOs will be used across all subject areas and grade levels or grade level bands, a strategic PD plan is necessary to ensure that designated school personnel from every Local Education Agency (LEA) are trained on the purpose, structure, benefits and use of SLOs as a tool for closing achievement gaps and improving professional practice.

Maryland State Department of Education

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

Professional Development Plan Proposal

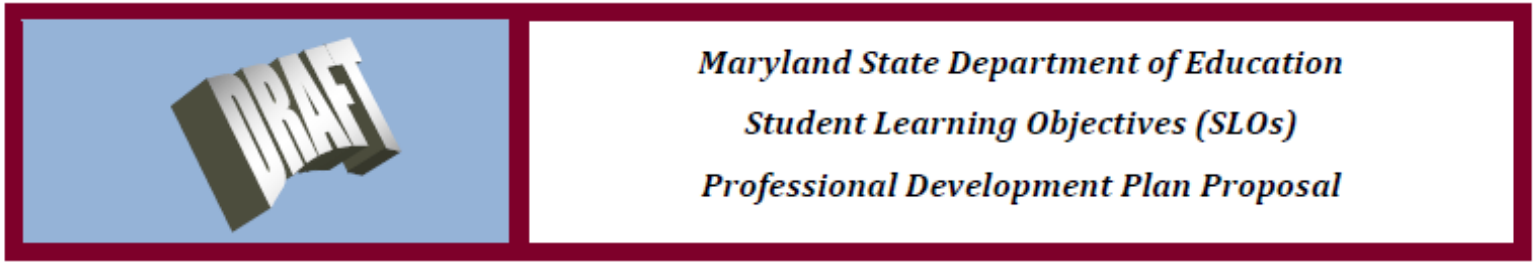
SLO Professional Development Philosophy and Plan

Philosophy

Professional development for SLO development and implementation will be offered with the intent to train a cadre of education practitioners within each LEA. This model of training a "local district team" to provide support and technical assistance to their own will enable districts to deliver professional development as needed and within the parameters of their own local PD calendar. An important component of this PD is the training of designated LEA district and school personnel as evaluators in the SLO development process. The evaluator has the role of developing a collaborative relationship with educators while assisting in the writing and assessing of SLOs. This is to ensure that SLO development and implementation address gaps in student achievement, instructional needs of all students' and support for educators' professional development planning. This relationship plays a pivotal role in aligning rigorous and achievable SLO targets with school and LEA improvement goals and the state curricular frameworks while helping to identify specific professional development needs of practitioners to help meet their targets.

In an effort to communicate information about SLOs and the SLO development process, MSDE will provide a combination of ***online*** *and* ***face-to-face*** *training. This training model will consist of a* ***Pre-Training Webinar*** *that is open to all educators at every level will set the stage for a basic understanding of SLOs. The goals for participants attending the pre-training webinar are to: 1) Develop a common understanding of SLOs; 2) Understand benefits of using SLOs; 3) Learn how SLOs support professional practice; 4) Develop a common vocabulary for measuring student growth; and 5) Prepare for the face-to-face training sessions.* ***Participation in the Pre-Training Webinar is a requirement for participation in the face-to-face sessions*** *because specific instructions will be given on how to prepare and who is appropriate for the next steps in the SLO professional development process. For subsequent training, face-to-face and online follow-up sessions will be held for the local district teams to provide opportunities for authentic practice in developing and implementing SLOs. Separate face-to-face training sessions will be held for executive level LEA administrators as needed. All SLO sessions will be recorded and archived online for asynchronous and synchronous training.*

Ongoing professional development will include both face-to-face and online sessions. The ***Pre-Training Webinar*** *and vital portions of the face-to-face sessions will be archived online for future use. Additional* ***online modules*** *will be created for specific LEA audiences such as Executive Level (Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, and School Board Members) Principals, Content Area Supervisors, SLO Evaluators and local district teams that include teachers and principals. The online modules will be archived and available for asynchronous and synchronous training.*



Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)
Professional Development

ONLINE CONTENT	FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING CYCLE & CONTENT
Pre-Training Webinar **Audience:** **Administrators, Teachers, Principals, Evaluators, Executive Officers, Human Resources Staff, Content Area Supervisors, Professional Development Staff** **Time:** **60 minutes** **Availability:** **Live, Archived-Open Access – Required** **Outcomes:** 1. Develop a common understanding of SLOs 2. Understand benefits of using SLOs; 3. Learn how SLOs support principals' and teachers' professional practice; 4. Develop a common vocabulary for measuring student growth; and 5. Prepare for face-to-face training sessions: • Identify appropriate staff • Registration process • Materials and resources needed	**Administrator Training** **Session 1:** Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, Human Resources Staff **Content Overviews:** Developing Student Learning Objectives Classroom Focused Improvement Process (CFIP) Aligning Standards and Assessments **Local District Teams Training** **Session 2:** LEA Principals, Content Supervisors, Teachers, SLO Evaluators, Professional Development Staff (Trainers) **Content:** Developing Student Learning Objectives Classroom Focused Improvement Process (CFIP) Aligning Standards and Assessments **Local District Teams Follow-up Training** **Session 3:** LEA Principals, Content Supervisors, Teachers, SLO Evaluators, Professional Development Staff (Trainers) **Content:** **Determined by District needs**

Finally, Maryland has a project in its Race to the Top application that is directly tied to the training of school and district staff. Project 40/15 was originally designed for the training of executive officers in the teacher and principal evaluation system that was to be developed. Its scope has since been expanded. Maryland has hired a Center Coordinator for this project, and is in the process of hiring two regional trainers. The Center Coordinator has travelled to each of our 24 LEAs to ascertain their professional development needs. MSDE also conducted a session at the February convening of executive officers to determine what needs they felt they had. The Center Coordinator and the two regional trainers will work with an outside vendor to design appropriate professional development sessions based on the needs assessments Maryland has conducted. They will then deliver those professional development sessions in regional forums to executive officers. They will also deliver sessions for principals. Because of Maryland's size as a State and our resultant ability to get to each LEA within a three-hour drive, we also intend to offer sessions for individual LEAs as needed. Maryland feels fortunate to have funds for this effort as a result of our Race to the Top grant. We believe that this effort combined with other efforts described herein will provide us the opportunity to reach deeply into each LEA and support them in a way that they consider most important.

Additionally, as part of the plan that each LEA must submit for approval of their Teacher/Principal Evaluation model, the LEA must describe how they will provide professional development on the model to teachers and principals.

Validation

Maryland is committed to continual improvement and will apply that commitment to Teacher/Principal evaluation process. The seven pilots (2011-2012), statewide field testing (2012-2013), Maryland Teacher/Principal Evaluation Guidebook, and MSDE's intention to continually review and revise the system and the models are indicative of the importance Maryland places on an effective Teacher/Principal Evaluation model.

Maryland principals will assist in the validation process of the new evaluation system for teachers. Likewise, the feedback from executive officers will also validate the new evaluation

process for principals. Essentially, Maryland will utilize feedback from those who are in a supervisory role, as they are best positioned, to confirm that the ratings assigned to those whom they evaluate in the new evaluation system appear reasonable based on past practice. Certainly Maryland will use data to assist in this effort as well, but expert professional judgment will be invaluable as Maryland enters this new territory.

Finally, Maryland hired a retired Superintendent as part of the Race to the Top project to work specifically on Teacher/Principal Evaluation. She is the liaison between MSDE and the LEA Superintendents to assist in the transition to the new system. Her position also facilitates increased communication, support, and understanding between MSDE and its LEAs.

Information concerning the operation and effects of the pilots is currently being gathered. An end of year report was designed by representatives from inter-divisional MSDE offices with responsibility for teacher evaluation, professional development, accountability and assessment, and policy to elicit information about the focus of each pilot, the evaluation cycle observed, the measures used for student growth and professional practice, and a general reflection on the process and product including lessons learned. This information will be analyzed, interpreted, shared with stakeholders, and used to guide improvement. Goals and requirements are being established for the field test. The tools to gather this information will be developed and distributed to all LEAs participating in the field test with a timeline for submission.

PRINCIPLE 4: REDUCING DUPLICATION AND UNNECESSARY BURDEN

4. A REMOVE DUPLICATIVE AND BURDENSOME REPORTING REQUIREMENTS THAT HAVE LITTLE OR NO IMPACT ON STUDENT OUTCOMES

Maryland has a long history of consolidating and reducing reporting. Beginning in the early 1990's, MSDE produced the School Accountability Funding for Excellence reporting compendium of all Federal Programs. This not only reduced the explanatory work necessary for each program but it also forced more coherence between programs, thus bringing more efficiency to the work.

Efficiency is the key, not just reduction of paperwork. Maryland's programs must run smoothly and with great attention to fiscal responsibility. Because of this premise and the understanding from the Maryland General Assembly about the need to consolidate plans, MSDE embarked, in 2003, on the Master Planning Process. Master Plans consist of the ESEA goals, Race to the Top goals, and additional State goals. With each goal there is an explanation of milestones; tracking and analyses of data against these milestones; an evaluation of the successes and challenges; and then a clear path forward to attaining each and every goal including the resource allocation. The original five-year plans are updated annually leading to a constant adjustment of programs and policies that drive excellent schooling in each of the LEAs.

The Guidance document for each year's Master Plan is created with the assistance of an External Advisory Panel. MSDE staff begin meeting with this Panel in February of each year to bring forward any changes to laws, regulations or policies that have occurred since the last Update. This Panel consists of LEA Superintendents, LEA data experts, LEA Assistant Superintendents for Instruction, policy specialists and a variety of MSDE staff that have program responsibilities. This group is forthright and demanding but able to keep the big picture of consolidation in sight. Because each member has responsibilities for producing the Master Plan for their respective LEA, the members are vigilant regarding redundancy and unnecessary additions to the plans. As

the External Advisory Panel meets beginning February 2012 and prepares for the next Master Plan Update, MSDE will ask the Panel to pay particular attention to Principle 4: "Reducing Duplication and Unnecessary Burden".

The annual Master Plan Guidance is distributed in early spring each year with preloaded data from previous years. As soon as the current year's data is available it is provided so that all LEAs work with approved, MSDE data. The planning and writing happens throughout the summer with the formulaic Federal Grant portions due in August and the complete Master Plan due in October. The August submissions are reviewed by specialists in the program and the complete Master Plan is reviewed by panels of experts from both MSDE and the LEAs. This panel work allows for another feedback loop not only to assure that LEAs have viable, realistic goals and plans to meet them but that MSDE uses the most efficient process to gather this information.

Final Master Plan Updates are approved by the Superintendent based on the recommendation of the panel. A summary of the plans is then presented to the State Board of Education, the Governor and the leaders of the Maryland General Assembly. The local Master Plans are used by the LEAs to inform the funding agents in their districts and to report to the public the progress they are making and their commitment to continue to address disparities. These multiple uses are yet another example of how this process reduces paperwork because without it each of the LEAs would have to prepare and each of the constituencies above would have to receive and review a separate report.

Reviewers will find references to Master Plan reporting throughout this application. With nine years of experience with this process MSDE has learned the power and the efficiency of one vehicle for describing the direction of schooling in Maryland.

MSDE will continue to look for additional ways to reduce paperwork. Again, this reduction will always be for the betterment of the program, not just so that paperwork is reduced.

ADDENDUM #2

TPE ESEA Extension and RTTT Amendments

TPE Amendment #1: To Change State Teacher and Principal Evaluation Models

Discussion

In spring of 2012, Maryland developed State and Local Teacher and Principal Evaluation Models using assessment parameters that reflected 50% Professional Practice and 50% Student Growth. The Professional Practice portion for teachers included minimum component measures of Planning and Preparation, Instruction, Classroom Environment, and Professional Responsibilities. The parallel portion for principals included the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework Domains. Similarly, the Student Growth portion was comprised of multiple measures that included a 20% component measure of the Maryland School Assessments (grades 3-8 Reading and Math) and allowed component measures of the School Progress Index (Principle 3 ESEA), Student Learning Objectives, and other objective measures of student growth and learning that were linked to state and/or local goals.

The School Progress Index, approved as part of the ESEA waiver Principle #2, is a school wide collective measure of achievement, growth, gap, and college and career readiness. It was originally designed for school accountability. Standard setting was conducted in February 2012 to determine the recommendations for the weights of the elements within each component and for the three components of the elementary/middle and high school index. The five performance Strands that resulted from the School Progress Index were then proportionately applied to a 10% state evaluation value.

Student Learning Objectives were also determined to be a percentage of the student growth component in the state model and for the majority of the school systems in the new Teacher Principal Evaluation systems.

On August 30, 2012, the Maryland State Department of Education submitted a letter of amendment (approved January 9, 2013) increasing the contribution of Student Learning Objectives and decreasing the contribution of the School Progress Index. This amendment was intended to tighten the alignment between the state principal and teacher models. United States Department of Education's letter of

amendment approval was conditional to the requirement that Maryland use data from assessments required under Title 1 of ESEA (Maryland School Assessments and eventually PARCC) in determining student growth in teacher and principal evaluation and that the State implement guidelines that require each high school teacher in tested areas and each high school principal include at least one Student Learning Objective with a Maryland High School Assessment data point on student performance in evaluation systems.

Field Testing

The purpose of the Field Test was to provide a collaborative and innovative platform for Local Education Agencies to develop and test components of their teacher and principal evaluation systems thereby ensuring readiness for full implementation of the new teacher and principal evaluation systems in school year 2013-14. As such, it was always anticipated that relevant changes in local and state models would emerge from lessons learned from these experiences. The outcomes of the Field Test experience were to demonstrate that intended models were approvable and could result in teacher and principal ratings. To facilitate this process, monthly Field Test meetings were conducted with teams from the twenty-four Local Education Agencies. These meetings engaged participants in collaborative group problem identification and problem solving scenarios designed to move districts closer to operational consistencies and implementation readiness as measured by effectiveness ratings at the conclusion of the Field Test period.
By the end of March 2013, more than 8,600 teachers (14% of the State population) and principals (26% of the State population) had participated in the Field Tests with resultant ratings of Highly Effective, Effective, and Ineffective. With functioning models in place, authentic incubators were available to identify data trends and to conduct various investigations. Simulations were conducted using the School Progress Index to test the impact of collective measures on individual teacher performance ratings, to investigate cohorts to determine the extent of shared measures on teacher rating scores, and to execute trials to refine the measurement and translation of student assessments for application in teacher and principal evaluation.
At the same time a cross-representative stakeholder group was created at the direction of superintendents, to craft recommendations for incorporating high school assessments into the evaluation of high school tested area teachers and high school principals. From January to April, the workgroup, conducted meetings both independent and inclusive of various focus groups. They explored approaches for employing the high school assessment data as both a lag and annual measure in evaluation. A report of their findings and recommendations was presented to and accepted by local superintendents on May 3, 2013.

Findings
Through repeated simulation and investigation, the Maryland State Department of Education learned that the introduction of the School Progress Index into teacher evaluation provided a positive contribution to only 5% of the teachers. The State also learned that

its methodology for translating student test scores into growth measures, using the revised Maryland Tiered Assessment Index, was performing with precision and would tend to break when appropriate to the benefit of teachers and principals. Increased confidence in the contribution of the Maryland Tiered Assessment Index combined with reservations about the contribution of the School Progress Index has led Maryland to eliminate the School Progress Index from the state model. The State further believes that the indicators within the School Progress Index can be better elevated through the Student Learning Objective process which can be linked to district goals and school improvement plans specific to the needs of the school community and the individual classroom. The State also believes that the increased evaluation value that can be attributed to Student Learning Objectives provides greater incentive for teachers and principals to address issues related to gap reduction, achievement, growth and readiness for college and careers, than did the School Progress Index.

The State further accepts the workgroup's suggested model for the application of high school assessments into evaluation which is based upon two annual data Student Learning Objective measures and one lag data Student Learning Objective measure and expands this concept across the State teacher and principal evaluation models to bring consistency and fairness to all teachers and principals.

Recommendations

The Maryland State Department of Education requests that USDE approve amending the Maryland State Teacher and Principals Evaluation Models to reflect the attached model designs (see attached). The approval of this amendment further increases the alignments and brings all 22 Local Education Agencies into compliance with the state model frameworks, allowing the Maryland State Department of Education to focus the delivery of professional development and technical assistance to districts during the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years. The State further recommends moving oversight of Project 40-15, which focuses on the delivery of professional development services to executive officers, to the greater Teacher and Principal Evaluation project.

State Teacher Evaluation Model

Professional Practice

50 % Qualitative Measures
Domain percentages proposed by LEA and approved by MSDE

- Planning and Preparation 12.5%
- Instruction 12.5%
- Classroom Environment 12.5%
- Professional Responsibilities 12.5%

Student Growth

50 % Quantitative Measures
As defined below

Maryland State Department of Education – Preparing World-Class Students

Amendment Pending

Elementary/Middle School Teacher Two Tested Areas

- 20% MSA Lag Measure based on 10% Reading **and** 10% Math
- 15% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the district or school level
- 15% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the classroom level

or

Elementary/Middle School Teacher One Tested Area

- 20% MSA Lag Measure based on either 20% Math **or** 20% Reading
- 15% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the district or school level
- 15% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the classroom level

or

High School Teacher Tested Subjects

- 20% SLO Lag Measure based on HSA Algebra, HSA English 2, HSA Biology, or HSA American Government and including an HSA data point
- 15% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the district or school level
- 15% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the classroom level

or

K-12 Non-Tested Area/Subject Teachers

- 20% SLO Lag Measure based on School Progress Index Indicators (Achievement, Gap Reduction, Growth, College and Career Readiness), Advanced Placement Tests, or similarly available measures
- 15% SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the district or school level
- 15% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the classroom level

State Principal Evaluation Model

Professional Practice

50% Qualitative Measures
12 Domains Each 2-10%

Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework (8)

- School Vision
- School Culture
- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Observation/Evaluation of Teachers
- Integration of Appropriate Assessments
- Use of Technology and Data
- Professional Development
- Stakeholder Engagement

Interstate School Leaders and Licensure Consortium (4)

- School Operations and Budget
- Effective Communication
- Influencing the School Community
- Integrity, Fairness, and Ethics

Student Growth

50% Quantitative Measures
As defined below

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Preparing World-Class Students

Amendment Pending

Elementary/Middle School Principals

20% MSA Lag Measure as determined by 10 % Reading MSA and 10% Math MSA
10% School Progress Index
10% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the district level
10% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the school level

or

High School Principals

20% SLO Lag Measure as determined by 10% HSAs and 10% AP scores, SPI Indicators (Gap Reduction, College & Career Readiness, Achievement), or similar valid delayed measures
10% School Progress Index
10% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the district level
10% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the school level

or

Other Principals (e.g., Special Center, PreK-2)

20% SLO Lag Measure as determined by 10% HSAs and 10% AP scores, SPI Indicators (Gap Reduction, College & Career Readiness, Achievement), or similar valid delayed measures
10% School Progress Index
10% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the district level
10% Annual SLO Measure as determined by priority identification at the school level

Local Teacher Evaluation Models *2013-2014**

Professional Practice

50 % Qualitative Measures
Domain percentages proposed by LEA and approved by MSDE

- Planning and Preparation
- Instruction
- Classroom Environment
- Professional Responsibilities
- Additional Domains Based on Local Priorities

Student Growth

50 % Quantitative Measures
As defined below

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Preparing World-Class Students

Amendment Pending

Elementary/Middle School Teacher Two Content Areas

Either
5 % - Reading MSA (Class)
5 % - Math MSA (Class)
10%- School Progress Index

or
10%- Reading MSA (Class)
10%- Math MSA (Class)

and
30% - LEA proposed objective measures of student growth and learning linked to state and/or local goals and approved by MSDE

or

Elementary/Middle School Teacher One Content Area

Either
10% - Reading MSA (Class) or Math MSA (Class)
10% -School Progress Index

or
20% -Reading MSA (Class) or Math MSA (Class

and
30% - LEA proposed objective measures of student growth and learning linked to state and/or local goals and approved by MSDE

or

High School Teacher

LEA proposed objective measures of student growth and learning linked to state and/or local goals and approved by MSDE; no single measure to exceed 35% . For tested area teachers, one Student Learning Objective must include an HSA data point.

or

Elementary/Middle School Teacher Non-Tested Subject

LEA proposed objective measures of student growth and learning linked to state and/or local goals and approved by MSDE; no single measure to exceed 35% .

** MSA/SPI split increases to 15%/5% in 2014-2015 and becomes 20% MSA/PARCC in 2015-2016*

Local Principal Evaluation Models *2013-2014**

Professional Practice

50 % Qualitative Measures
Domain percentages proposed by LEA and approved by MSDE

Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework (8)

- School Vision
- School Culture
- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Observation/Evaluation of Teachers
- Integration of Appropriate Assessments
- Use of Technology and Data
- Professional Development
- Stakeholder Engagement

Additional Domains Based on Local Priorities

Student Growth

50 % Quantitative Measures
As defined below

Maryland State Department of Education
Preparing World-Class Students

Amendment Pending

Elementary & Middle School Principals

Either

- 5 % - Reading MSA (School)
- 5 % - Math MSA (School)
- 10%-School Progress Index

or

10%- Reading MSA (School)
10%- Math MSA (School)

and

- 30% - LEA proposed objective measures of student growth and learning linked to state and/or local goals and approved by MSDE

or

High School Principals

LEA proposed objective measures of student growth and learning linked to state and/or local goals and approved by MSDE; no single measure to exceed 35%. One Student Learning Objective must be targeted at HSAs.

or

Other Principals (e.g., Special Center, PreK-2)

LEA proposed objective measures of student growth and learning linked to state and/or local goals and approved by MSDE; no single measure to exceed 35%. If appropriate, one Student Learning Objective must be targeted at HSAs.

** MSA/SPI split increases to 15%/5% in 2014-2015 and becomes 20% MSA/PARCC in 2015-2016*

TPE Amendment #2: To Support Extension of ESEA Flexibility Waiver

Discussion

In seeking an extension to Maryland's ESEA Flexibility Waiver, MSDE must consider how to concurrently satisfy concrete expectations within the one-year extension allowance and intended expectations for TPE beyond the extension. In doing so both USDE and Maryland recognize unknowns that will continue to emerge and be resolved over the next three years. Foremost among these are confidences and proficiencies with Student Learning Objectives as a student growth measure, confidences in the translation and attribution of the PARCC Assessments into student growth measures, and confidences associated with the ability of principals to plan and manage teacher evaluation processes that result in fair effectiveness ratings and effective professional development. All of these must be navigated within Maryland's continued commitment to teacher and principal evaluation that reflects a 50% measure of Professional Practice and a 50% measure of Student Growth; including a 20% application of Student Growth that is attributed to state tests. To reaffirm Maryland's commitment to TPE and to satisfy USDE's conditions for ESEA Flexibility Waiver Extension, Maryland is submitting the attached "Plan for Transitioning Teacher Evaluation from MSA to PARCC Assessments. SY 2013-2014 and SY 2014-2015 demonstrate the one-year extension terms of Maryland's current Flexibility Waiver and includes allowance for not using state test-associated measures in making personnel decisions. SY 2015-2016 and SY 2016-2017 demonstrate how Maryland will respond to remaining unknowns and confidences in completing its intentions for TPE. It is understood, that test measures from 2014-2015 will serve as baseline data and that subsequent data from 2015-2016 will facilitate the norming of the test measures in 2016-2017. Similar norming will occur annually as additional test data is acquired and analyzed. Annual analysis will further support the review and reconsideration of component measures and values within State and Local evaluation models. Maryland's intentions, as evidenced in the amended Maryland Models for Teacher and Principal Evaluation, incorporate changes resulting from the 2013 Statewide Field Test in conjunction with the Plan for Transition, accommodate the two Waivers offered by USDE in June 2013, and facilitate annual adjustments to TPE as unknowns become knowns.

Findings

From inception, it was recognized that the transition to the PARCC Assessments would create a two year hiatus on student growth measures attributed to state testing and this disruption in data would require an interim solution for applying student growth to educator effectiveness. It is further recognized that a great deal of practice, discovery, and learning must still occur to shepherd SLOs to fully effective operational status. While on-going instructional awareness and practice will build ever-increasing alignments between the Maryland College and Career-Readiness Standards and the PARCC Assessments, unknowns remain in regard to the resulting construct and conduct of the assessments. The combined impact of the waiver extension and its amendments binds MSDE through SY 2014-2015; while the architecture for SY 2015-2017 demonstrate Maryland's intentions beyond the Waiver Extension and pending any forthcoming offer of ESEA Renewal. Test measures from 2014-2015 will serve as baseline data and that subsequent

data from 2015-2016 will facilitate the norming of the test measures for application in 2016-2017 evaluation processes. Similar norming will occur annually as additional test data is acquired and analyzed. The State believes that the Transition Plan will meet the criteria of full implementation and benefit TPE as follows:

- Provide a substitute methodology for capturing Student Growth during the two year period when MSA expires and PARCC matures
- Provide a three year period for refining the application and increasing confidence in SLOs as a measure of student growth in the evaluation process
- Provide a three year period for principals and LEAs to develop and refine strategies to effectively manage the capacity requirements of the evaluation components
- Provide an annual timeframe for the analysis and validation of TPE data and methodologies

Recommendations

The Maryland State Department of Education requests that USDE approve amending and extending the current ESEA Waiver for an additional year to reflect the following

	SY 2013-2014	**SY 2014-2015**
50%	Professional Practice *Four Component measures* *1. Planning & Preparation* *2. Instruction* *3. Classroom Environment* *4. Professional Responsibilities* *(Counts for personnel decisions)*	Professional Practice *Four Component measures* *1. Planning & Preparation* *2. Instruction* *3. Classroom Environment* *4. Professional Responsibilities* *(Counts for personnel decisions)*
30%	Student Growth • *One or more SLO* • *Approved Local measures* *(Counts for personnel decisions)*	Student Growth • *One or more SLO* • *Approved Local measures* *(Counts for personnel decisions)*
20%	• *Translation of 2013 MSA assessments to a growth measure by applying MTAI in Sept 2013 for application to Spring 2014 evaluations.* *(Does not count for personnel decisions)*	• *Use of 2014 MSA assessments to inform district or school level SLO for application to Spring 2015 evaluations* *(Informs personnel decisions)*

The approval of this amendment further increases model alignments and brings all 22 Local Education Agencies into compliance with the state model frameworks, allowing the Maryland State Department of Education to focus the delivery of professional development and technical assistance to districts during the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years.