I. RACE TO THE TOP APPLICATION ASSURANCES
(CFDA No. 84.395A)

Legal Name of Applicant (Office of the Governor): Governor M. Jodi Rell	Applicant's Mailing Address: Executive Chambers State Capitol Hartford, CT 06106
Employer Identification Number: 06-6000798	Organizational DUNS: 807851118
State Race to the Top Contact Name: (Single point of contact for communication) Jessica Andrews	Contact Position and Office: ARRA Coordinator and Accountability Officer Connecticut Department of Education
Contact Telephone: (860) 713-6582	Contact E-mail Address: Jessica.andrews@ct.gov

Required Applicant Signatures:

To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct.

I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation:

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): Governor M. Jodi Rell	Telephone: (860)566-4840
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor: M. Jodi Rell	Date: 5/27/10
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Dr. Mark K. McQuillan	Telephone: (860) 713-6500
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: Mark K. McQuillan	Date: 5/27/10
President of the State Board of Education (Printed Name): Allan B. Taylor	Telephone: (860) 275-0225
Signature of the President of the State Board of Education: Allan B. Taylor	Date: 5/27/10

State Attorney General Certification

I certify that the State's description of, and statements and conclusions concerning, State law, statute, and regulation in its application are complete, accurate, and constitute a reasonable interpretation of State law, statute, and regulation.
(See especially Eligibility Requirement (b), Selection Criteria (B)(1), (D)(1), (E)(1), (F)(2), (F)(3).)

I certify that the State does not have any legal, statutory, or regulatory barriers at the State level to linking data on student achievement (as defined in this notice) or student growth (as defined in this notice) to teachers and principals for the purpose of teacher and principal evaluation.

State Attorney General or Authorized Representative (Printed Name):	Telephone:
Peregrine Zinn-Rowthorne, Associate Attorney General	(860)808-5315
Signature of the State Attorney General or Authorized Representative:	Date:
	5/26/10

I. ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY, REPORTING AND OTHER ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

Accountability, Transparency and Reporting Assurances

The Governor or his/her authorized representative assures that the State will comply with all of the accountability, transparency, and reporting requirements that apply to the Race to the Top program, including the following:

- For each year of the program, the State will submit a report to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require, that describes:
    - the uses of funds within the State;
    - how the State distributed the funds it received;
    - the number of jobs that the Governor estimates were saved or created with the funds;
    - the State's progress in reducing inequities in the distribution of highly qualified teachers, implementing a State longitudinal data system, and developing and implementing valid and reliable assessments for limited English proficient students and students with disabilities; and
    - if applicable, a description of each modernization, renovation, or repair project approved in the State application and funded, including the amounts awarded and project costs (ARRA Division A, Section 14008)

- The State will cooperate with any U.S. Comptroller General evaluation of the uses of funds and the impact of funding on the progress made toward closing achievement gaps (ARRA Division A, Section 14009)

- If the State uses funds for any infrastructure investment, the State will certify that the investment received the full review and vetting required by law and that the chief executive accepts responsibility that the investment is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds. This certification will include a description of the investment, the estimated total cost, and the amount of covered funds to be used. The certification will be posted on the State's website and linked to www.Recovery.gov. A State or local agency may not use funds under the ARRA for infrastructure investment funding unless this certification is made and posted. (ARRA Division A, Section 1511)

- The State will submit reports, within 10 days after the end of each calendar quarter, that contain the information required under section 1512(c) of the ARRA in accordance with any guidance issued by the Office of Management and Budget or the Department. (ARRA Division A, Section 1512(c))

- The State will cooperate with any appropriate Federal Inspector General's examination of records under the program. (ARRA Division A, Section 1515)

Other Assurances and Certifications

The Governor or his/her authorized representative assures or certifies the following:

- The State will comply with all applicable assurances in OMB Standard Forms 424B (Assurances for Non-Construction Programs) and to the extent consistent with the State's application, OMB Standard Form 424D (Assurances for Construction Programs), including the assurances relating to the legal authority to apply for assistance; access to records; conflict of interest; merit systems; nondiscrimination; Hatch Act provisions; labor standards; flood hazards; historic preservation; protection of human subjects; animal welfare; lead-based paint; Single Audit Act; and the general agreement to comply with all applicable Federal laws, executive orders and regulations.

- With respect to the certification regarding lobbying in Department Form 80-0013, no Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making or renewal of Federal grants under this program; the State will complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," when required (34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix B); and the State will require the full certification, as set forth in 34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix A, in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers.

- The State will comply with all of the operational and administrative provisions in Title XV and XIV of the ARRA, including Buy American Requirements (ARRA Division A, Section 1605), Wage Rate Requirements (section 1606), and any applicable environmental impact requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 (NEPA), as amended, (42 U.S.C. 4371 et seq.) (ARRA Division A, Section 1609). In using ARRA funds for infrastructure investment, recipients will comply with the requirement regarding Preferences for Quick Start Activities (ARRA Division A, Section 1602).

- Any local educational agency (LEA) receiving funding under this program will have on file with the State a set of assurances that meets the requirements of section 442 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232e).

- Any LEA receiving funding under this program will have on file with the State (through either its Stabilization Fiscal Stabilization Fund application or another U.S. Department of Education Federal grant) a description of how the LEA will comply with the requirements of section 427 of GEPA (20 U.S.C. 1228a). The description must include information on the steps the LEA proposes to take to permit students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers (including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age) that impede access to, or participation in, the program.

- The State and other entities will comply with the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), including the following provisions as applicable: 34 CFR Part 74–Administration of Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations; 34 CFR Part 75–Direct Grant Programs; 34 CFR Part 77– Definitions that Apply to Department Regulations; 34 CFR Part

80– Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, including the procurement provisions; 34 CFR Part 81– General Education Provisions Act–Enforcement; 34 CFR Part 82– New Restrictions on Lobbying; 34 CFR Part 84–Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance); 34 CFR Part 85–Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement).

SIGNATURE BLOCK FOR CERTIFYING OFFICIAL

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):	
Governor M. Jodi Rell	
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor: M. Jodi Rell	Date: 5/27/10

Connecticut's RACE TO THE TOP Application for Phase 2 Funding

"Race to the Top is designed to build upon a strong foundation and a firm commitment from all stakeholders.

Connecticut has both. Educators, administrators, parents and community leaders are determined to work together to overcome obstacles to learning and position all children for success and a productive future. Our State Department of Education is a proven leader in working with all stakeholders and helping school districts maximize their resources through innovation and cooperation.

A well-educated citizenry gives rise to a robust economy, a strong workforce and a quality of life unmatched in the world. This is an investment well worth making today. It is our commitment to our children and to a prosperous future for all. Race to the Top will provide the impetus to upgrade our education system so that we are well positioned in the competitive, global economy and that we can ensure that the American dream will become a reality for all of our students."

M. Jodi Rell
Governor, State of Connecticut

COMPETITIVE ED
Great schools. Bright futures. Strong Connecticut.

CT RECOVERY

APPLICATION FOR PHASE 2 FUNDING UNDER RACE TO THE TOP

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SIGNATURE BLOCK FOR CERTIFYING OFFICIAL

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): Governor M. Jodi Rell	
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor: M. Jodi Rell	Date: 5/27/10

(A) STATE SUCCESS FACTORS

(A)(1) Articulating State's education reform agenda and LEAs' participation in it *(65 points)*

The extent to which—

(i) The State has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that clearly articulates its goals for implementing reforms in the four education areas described in the ARRA and improving student outcomes statewide, establishes a clear and credible path to achieving these goals and is consistent with the specific reform plans that the State has proposed throughout its application; *(5 points)*

(ii) The participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) are strongly committed to the State's plans and to effective implementation of reform in the four education areas, as evidenced by Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) (as set forth in Appendix D) or other binding agreements between the State and its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) that include— *(45 points)*

(a) Terms and conditions that reflect strong commitment by the participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to the State's plans;

(b) Scope-of-work descriptions that require participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plans; and

(c) Signatures from as many as possible of the LEA superintendent (or equivalent), the president of the local school board (or equivalent, if applicable) and the local teachers' union leader (if applicable) (one signature of which must be from an authorized LEA representative) demonstrating the extent of leadership support within participating LEAs (as defined in this notice); and

(iii) The LEAs that are participating in the State's Race to the Top plans (including considerations of the numbers and percentages of participating LEAs, schools, K-12 students and students in poverty) will translate into broad statewide impact, allowing the State to reach its ambitious yet achievable goals, overall and by student subgroup, for—*(15 points)*

(a) Increasing student achievement in (at a minimum) reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;

(c) Increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice); and

(d) Increasing college enrollment (as defined in this notice) and increasing the number of students who complete at least a year's worth of college credit that is applicable to a degree within two years of enrollment in an institution of higher education.

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion, as well as projected goals as described in (A)(1)(iii). The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (A)(1)(ii):

- An example of the State's standard Participating LEA MOU and description of variations used, if any.
- The completed summary table indicating which specific portions of the State's plan each LEA is committed to implementing and relevant summary statistics (see Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(b), below).
- The completed summary table indicating which LEA leadership signatures have been obtained (see Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(c), below).

Evidence for (A)(1)(iii):

- The completed summary table indicating the numbers and percentages of participating LEAs, schools, K-12 students and students in poverty (see Summary Table for (A)(1)(iii), below).
- Tables and graphs that show the State's goals, overall and by subgroup, requested in the criterion, together with the supporting narrative. In addition, describe what the goals would look like were the State not to receive an award under this program.

Evidence for (A)(1)(ii) and (A)(1)(iii):

- The completed detailed table, by LEA, that includes the information requested in the criterion (see Detailed Table for (A)(1), below).

(A)(1) STATE SUCCESS FACTORS

Introduction

Trends in Education System Performance

On April 12, 2010, at Connecticut's Legislative Office Building, Cecilia Rouse, member of President Obama's Council of Economic Advisors, addressed the Commission for the Advancement of 21st Century Skills and Careers, commonly known as the "P-20 Council." Established by Governor M. Jodi Rell on January 13, 2009, the P-20 Council's mission aims to support collaboration among four systems – early childhood, K-12, higher education and workforce training – to create an effective education and career pipeline maximizing the number of skilled people in Connecticut with a postsecondary degree or other credential.

> *"Connecticut is at a crossroads. The workforce is aging, as talented young workers are leaving the state and population and job growth are stagnating. Like other northeastern states, Connecticut is transitioning from a manufacturing to a service economy. Connecticut has experienced a large and growing income disparity that impacts the need for healthcare and social services. Poor academic performance in urban schools portends a workforce less prepared to fill the shoes of those retiring and those leaving. Nine percent of Connecticut's adults (240,000 people) are functionally illiterate, a troubling statistic that can underline the next generation's chances for success."*
>
> Connecticut Economic Strategic Plan, October 2009

Dr. Rouse reviewed the history of Connecticut's performance in educational attainment, noting that Connecticut had often led the nation in student performance. Yet, she continued, the historical performance masked more recent trends as Connecticut's ranking nationwide had slipped on a number of important measures, notably, the persistence of large achievement gaps between white, black and Hispanic students at all levels and the growing number of high school graduates who come to community or four-year colleges, ill-prepared to do the academic work needed to earn an advanced degree. Connecticut, the Council learned, was losing its competitive edge and needed to rededicate itself to the difficult work of broad-gauged systemic reform of its educational institutions. As part of its commitment to this purpose, all members of the Council formally signed

nine "guiding principles" that would focus the Council's work over the next decade and serve as the state's first public statement of support for Connecticut's Race to the Top (RTTT) application, Phase 2 (See Appendix (A)(1)(a) Council's "principles").

Our Story

Connecticut is a state of 3.5 million people who reside in 169 municipalities. In October 2009, 563,927 students were enrolled in the state's public PK-12 educational system, representing 90 percent of all PK-12 students. Public school enrollment peaked in 2007 and is expected to decline over the next decade. The state's PK-12 public school students are served in 166 local education agencies (LEAs). Connecticut's public school system includes 551 elementary schools, 160 middle schools, 148 high schools, 17 regional technical high schools and 18 charter schools. In addition, the Connecticut public education system includes six Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) that also provide educational programming for Connecticut's students and each is linked to a specific group of LEAs based on geography. The state's 18 charter schools are treated as LEAs under Connecticut statute and are eligible to participate in Connecticut's RTTT application.

Each school district operates with its own administrative structure, school board and personnel contracts. All but two boards of education (New Haven and Hartford) are locally elected by the voters. Total funding (state, local and federal) for our public school systems is now close to $9 billion. At the local level, funding for school budgets constitutes a significant portion of municipal expenditures and – in 2010 – is under great stress due to the recession and other economic challenges.

School districts in Connecticut employ about 43,488 teachers at an average age of 43 years. Twenty-four percent were 55 years of age or older in 2008. About 2,000 teachers leave the profession in Connecticut each year. In addition to our certified teachers, Connecticut school districts employ just over 14,000 paraprofessionals to assist and augment the teaching-learning process. These individuals tend to represent more diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds than our teaching force. Together, teachers and paraprofessionals constitute a workforce of some 58,000 individuals across Connecticut communities. Two statewide teachers' unions, Connecticut Education Association (CEA) and American Federation for Teachers – Connecticut (AFT) represent all the teachers in Connecticut.

Student Diversity, Sheff v. O'Neill

Connecticut's public schools serve a significant number of high need students; however, there is great variability in the numbers of high need students by district. Using poverty as the metric (defined by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) as living in a family with an income at or below 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Level), 31.8 percent of Connecticut students live in poverty and that proportion is increasing. In 2009, just under 73,000 PK-12 students in our public schools lived in families where a language other than English was spoken, with Spanish the predominant non-English language. Just under 30,000 students are formally enrolled as English language learners (ELL) students and some schools serve students representing 30-40 different linguistic backgrounds. Statewide, 36.2 percent of our PK-12 public school students are African American, Hispanic, Asian or Native American, a proportion that continues to increase and place greater pressure on communities statewide to adhere to legal requirements (Connecticut General Statute Section 10-4a) for racial balance in their districts.

The Connecticut Supreme Court in 1996 ruled in Sheff v. O'Neill that the public school students in the City of Hartford attended schools that were racially, ethnically and economically isolated in violation of the Connecticut Constitution and urged the State to promptly remedy the violation. The State's efforts proved unsuccessful until 2008, when the State and plaintiffs entered into a new Stipulated Agreement requiring the development and implementation of a Comprehensive Management Plan as outlined in Appendix (A)(I)(i) based on multiple strategies aimed at meeting the goals of the original 1996 Court ruling. The Five-Year Plan, consistent with the Phase 2 Stipulation and Order included in Appendix (A)(I)(j) set forth annual desegregation goals for Hartford public school students while including enrollment targets each year for such entities as magnet schools, charter schools, public school choice and participation in other regional programs, including the Connecticut Technical High School System and Agricultural Science and Technology Programs. The new Agreement requires that 41 percent of Hartford's minority students will be taught in reduced racially isolated settings by 2012-2013 or that 80 percent of the demand for such opportunity will have been met, as measured by the number of students choosing and enrolling in a racially integrated school. The implications of this landmark case have been felt

by nearly every district in the state making the interdistrict choice and magnet school funding a source of concern if not dismay that too many students have been denied access to a high-quality education for too long simply because of where they live.

Institutions of Higher Education

Enrollment at Connecticut two- and four-year institutions of higher education has been increasing since 1997. Preliminary figures for fall 2009 show a record increase in enrollment rates at public two-year colleges of 7.8 percent over 2008 as compared with a 1.7 percent increase in the state university system and a 0.5 percent increase at the University of Connecticut. Thirty percent of students attending the state's community colleges are African American or Hispanic as compared with just under 15 percent at four-year colleges.

Upon entry in fall 2009, an estimated three quarters (76 percent) of community college enrollees were assessed as needing to take developmental mathematics and/or English. Many of these students had just graduated from high school in the spring and were attending school either full or part-time. According to the Connecticut State University System, over 50 percent of its students assessed as needing to take developmental or remedial mathematics courses. In 2008, 57 percent of students at two-year public colleges returned for a second year, while nearly 80 percent of four-year public college students returned.

Of note, the Connecticut Department of Labor projects that more than 75 percent of the top 100 fastest growing jobs over the next 10 years will require a solid or advanced knowledge of mathematics, science or engineering principles. The growth in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) occupations is projected at 13.5 percent as compared with the state's overall projected employment increase of 8.5 percent. Additionally, with the passage of the national health care reform legislation and Connecticut's own commitment to local health care reform, the demand for services in allied health fields will far exceed these projections.

This "supply side" argument is buttressed by the "demand side" of our current and future economy. Connecticut's high cost of production (wages, energy) and consumption (housing, healthcare) requires higher levels of innovation and value-added products in order for the state to compete globally. The application of technology and advanced research (in areas like nanotechnology, optics,

photonics and bio-science) is required to innovate and advance our production capabilities. The consequence is a need for highly skilled – and STEM-competent – graduates who can fuel the state's economic competitiveness.

Connecticut's Approach to Comprehensive School Reform and the Phase 2 Race to the Top Application

When we prepared our Race to the Top (RTTT) application for Phase 1, a number of reforms – spelled out in the State Board of Education's (SBE) *2006-2011 Comprehensive Five-Year Plan* – were under way, and considerable progress has been made on a number of fronts. (See Appendix (A)(1)(b) for the full plan.) Connecticut's Phase 2 process was aided immeasurably by the opportunity to receive internal and external reviews of our Phase 1 application, including those of the federal reviewers. In addition, we have examined the solid proposals of other states and we have carefully reviewed the U.S. Department of Education's *Blueprint for Reform: the Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (March 2010). For Connecticut, the period between January 19 and the end of May has been a time of intensive work and learning, including passage of landmark legislation, Public Act 10-111, supporting education reform in Connecticut that aligns with the Race to the Top goals and assurances. A complete copy of this legislation, which was signed by Governor M. Jodi Rell on May 26, 2010, is available in Appendix (A)(1)(c).

We believe that the reform agenda outlined below will accelerate student achievement gains over the next four years and that it gives strong evidence that "public education" in Connecticut is itself capable of learning and change over a short period of time.

The bold enhancements to our Phase 1 application, coupled with the solid proposals that were included in that first application, position Connecticut to join the circle of Race to the Top winners – understanding full well that the real winners will be our present and future students.

In Section (A)(1)(i), we summarize the elements that together constitute our reform agenda:

- Connecticut's Vision for Change
- Connecticut's Landmark Legislation to Support Education Reform
- Connecticut's Bold but Achievable Goals for Student Achievement
- Connecticut's Theory of Change

  - Connecticut's Six Levers for Change
  - Three Core Elements: The Connecticut Accountability for Leaning Initiative/Scientifically Research Based Interventions (CALI/SRBI), *The Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* and the P-20 Shared Leadership Council
  - Connecticut's Comprehensive Education Reform Framework
- Connecticut's Education Reform Agenda Goals
- Financing Sustainable Change
- Resource Allocations

(A)(1)(i) ARTICULATING THE STATE'S REFORM AGENDA

Connecticut's Vision for Change

At its heart, Connecticut's plan for comprehensive educational reform is about "success," specifically the academic and personal success of *all* students. Preparation for this success must begin before students stand at the door to kindergarten for what should be, for all, a sustained and grand adventure in learning. And the success we seek does not end as high school seniors walk across the dais to receive their diplomas. Connecticut students must complete their K-12 experience both college- and career-ready, with a base of knowledge, skills and behaviors that will enable them to remain constant learners in a world where dramatic expansion of knowledge is the norm and not the exception. Our current trajectory for educational change predicts that *all* students who enter the 5th grade in 2010 will graduate in 2018 fully college- and career-ready. With financial support from the Race to the Top initiative, coupled with the opportunity to become a member of the resulting Race to the Top cohort of educational change leaders, we plan to accelerate the pace of that change.

As state data analyses have clearly shown, about a third of Connecticut's young students are genuinely "ready for kindergarten" when they begin school. Approximately 80 percent of these "ready" children progress through our K-12 system with high levels of proficiency on state assessments (see Section (A)(3)(ii)). Emerging data from our institutions of higher education indicate, however, that too many of these students are not actually "college-ready" at graduation and require an extensive period of post-secondary remediation in order to enroll in credit-bearing courses.

Our vision for Connecticut's ready students is that their achievement performance will progress from "proficiency" on state assessments to the state's "goal level and beyond." Further, we expect those ready students with exceptional records and competencies will successfully complete more advanced placement courses, participate in dual enrollment programs that allow college courses to be taken in high schools and – based on exceptional records, competencies and examinations – actually graduate as early as the end of 10th grade.

For too many other students, however, this story is not *their* story and Connecticut cannot wait until 2018 to address predictable patterns of non-achievement. Connecticut will aim to largely eliminate the achievement gap in reading and mathematics for students, representing large numbers of minority students, who become 8th graders during the 2013-2014 school year.

Our target goal is that at least 60 percent of African American and Hispanic students who enter high school as freshman in the fall of 2014 will be performing at the ***goal level or above*** *on state achievement tests. Also by the spring of 2014, our goal is for the high school graduation rate among at-risk and vulnerable students to increase from 60 to 80 percent, reducing the gap by half.*

This vision of change cannot be accomplished by the state's 166 LEAs, its excellent charter and magnet schools, its fine Technical High School System or the CSDE alone. The change that Connecticut seeks for all of its students from their pre-school years through postsecondary education must be anchored in an expanding set of partnerships. These partnerships must be inclusive in membership and focused on outcomes. Partners must be willing to share leadership, resources and accountability for results, and publicly confirm that they are committed to a higher set of expectations and much more rigor and engagement at all levels.

The change we seek also cannot be achieved if we retain an "incrementalist's" mindset, although some of the change sought will occur through small steps anchored in communities of practice and continuous improvement. Data on our present and future students coupled with our understanding of the changing and challenging world in which they will live, tell us clearly that it is time for Connecticut to unleash the energy and excellence present abundantly in this land of steady habits and to build "a new way" in education for all of our students, and for those adults who choose to serve as their teachers, leaders and mentors.

Connecticut's 2010 Landmark Legislation to Support Education Reform

The comprehensive education reform bill that supports the RTTT overarching goals and federal assurances – Public Act 10-111 – was approved by the General Assembly during the 2010 legislative session and signed into law by the Governor on May 26, 2010. Not only is the passage of such dramatic educational reform legislation essential to promoting higher levels of achievement for all students

in Connecticut, the process of collaboration that aided its passage is also significant for establishing how we intend to implement each reform element.

This RTTT education reform bill indicates strong support for each assurance within RTTT. It was the product of intensive, lengthy discussions led by the co-chairs of the Connecticut General Assembly's Education Committee who convened numerous meetings with education stakeholders throughout the session, including the CSDE, the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), the Connecticut Education Association (CEA), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT)-Connecticut, the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators and ConnCAN (an education reform advocacy nonprofit). Below is a listing of the major elements of the RTTT education reform legislation and how it links directly to each of the RTTT assurances. A complete copy of the legislation is included in Appendix (A)(1)(c) and described more fully as referenced in various sections of the application. In brief, Public Act No. 10-111 will:

- Increase the rigor and requirements for high school graduation in Connecticut, with additional coursework in science, mathematics and world languages (Sections (B) and (D))
- Require LEAs to create Student Success Plans and provide adequate student support and remedial services aimed at increasing learning time (Section (E))
- Require all districts to have an advanced placement program and a policy for earning credits through online courses (Section (D))
- Allow districts to participate in a pilot "board examination system" endorsed by the National Center for Education and the Economy (NCEE) (Section (B)(3))
- Require expansion of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (Section (C))
- Implement a teacher evaluation system linking student and teacher performance, including multiple measures of student growth (Section (D)(2))
- Create a new alternative certification route for school administrators (Section (D)(1))
- Provide authority to the Commissioner of Education to reconstitute local boards of education (Section (E)(1))

- Authorize parent-teacher governance councils in low-performing LEAs with the right to petition for school reconstitution (Section (E)(1))
- Waive enrollment limits for charters with a demonstrated record of high performance and makes the charter school facility grant program permanent (Section (F)(2))
- Establish authority for Innovation Schools within priority school districts. (Section (F)(2))

Connecticut's Bold and Achievable Goals for Student Achievement

Connecticut's Phase 2 RTTT plan has anchored its bold but achievable goals for student achievement in the increased rigor and course requirements of the *Connecticut Plan Secondary School Reform* (see Sections (A) through (E)) and a close analysis of student performance data (detailed in Section (A)(3)). We will continue to pursue the goals highlighted in the bolded subsections below *whether or not* we receive Phase 2 funding. Clearly, however, the opportunity to secure new additional funding coupled with Connecticut's landmark school reform legislation and the reform plan presented here will enable us to accelerate the pace of change, thus benefiting all of Connecticut's present and future students and their eventual employers.

How Are We Faring?

As reported in Section (A)(3), Connecticut was among the highest scoring states on the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Despite this ranking, however, less than half of our 4th and 8th graders scored at or above *proficiency* on the NAEP assessment in mathematics or reading in 2009 and from 2003-2009 there were persistent large differences in performance among subgroups of students.

On our own state Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT), which is administered in grades 3 through 8, approximately 65 percent of test-takers scored at the state's "goal or above" level. **Goal or above** is a higher standard for achievement than the **proficient** level Connecticut uses for NCLB accountability and the determination of adequate yearly progress (AYP). Proficiency in Connecticut represents a minimum level of attainment for our students but does not reflect the level of solid academic achievement that we must now expect of all students, particularly those in our elementary schools, soon to enter our high schools.

Closer examination of the CMT data from 2003-2009 indicates that:

- In *mathematics,* the percentage of students meeting the **goal** standard increased by 7 points.
- In *reading,* the percentage of students meeting **goal** increased by 5 percentage points.
- When comparing the performance of subgroups of students over time, students who are economically disadvantaged score about 40 percentage points *below* their more advantaged classmates.

The Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) is administered to grade 10 students annually. About half of all grade 10 students score at or above goal in mathematics and reading. Between 2003 and 2009, the percentage of students meeting goal on CAPT mathematics and reading remained relatively flat, and English language learners (ELL) the gap in performance between traditionally lower performing subgroups (black, Hispanic, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities) and higher performing subgroups (white, economically advantaged, non-ELL, non-disabled) subgroups is about 40 points.

Our Goals for Increasing Student Achievement

In 2009, roughly 35 percent of the students in grades 3 through 8 did not meet the state goal in reading and mathematics. We intend that, by 2014, 75 to 80 percent of the students will be performing at goal. As a result, the proportion of students who test at the goal level will need to increase by 2 to 3 percentage points each year, which translates to an additional 5,000 to 7,500 students annually meeting goal. This is an achievable target with an enormous benefit in terms of likely future high school success.

By the spring of 2014, we expect that 60 to 65 percent of our 10th graders will score at the level of goal on the state's CAPT assessment. To achieve this outcome, the percentage of students in grade 10 scoring at CAPT goal will have to increase by an average of 3 to 4 percentage points annually. This is an aggressive but achievable target that we anticipate will also have a positive impact on the readiness of students for post-secondary education.

At the same time, we are committed to challenging higher performing students who are already performing at the goal level with opportunities to continue their strong academic growth. Public Act 10-111, now provides the opportunity for early high school completion for students who demonstrate exceptional competency in required content areas (see Section B-1 for more detail).

Our target for these students is to make college opportunities available much earlier than has been traditionally done in Connecticut. To support early graduation and related options, such as dual enrollment programs and an increase in advanced placement (AP) course enrollment and completion, we must increase the proportion of students who are achieving at a level of goal or above.

Our Goals for Decreasing Achievement Gaps

In order for achievement gaps to be narrowed, the number of students making gains by subgroup at all grades tested must increase at a greater rate than that of its comparison group. Table (A)(3)(a) contains baseline data on the performance of African American, Hispanic and white students in 2009-10 and targets for reducing performance gaps over the next four years. Over the next four years , Connecticut's goal of decreasing the achievement gap between the traditionally higher performing subgroups and the lower performing subgroups is for all students to reach the high levels of performance. We expect that the performance of higher performing subgroups will continue to increase but at a rate of about 1 point a year, while the performance of African American and Hispanic students will need to increase by a substantially larger degree at 4 to 6 points per year, which will then cut the gaps in performance by approximately half.

Our Goals for Increasing Graduation Requirements and Rates

Connecticut has several goals related to high school graduation. The first goal is to increase high school course requirements proposed as part of the *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* and enacted into law by Public Act 10-111 in May 2010. By 2018, all students will graduate with 25 rather than 20 credits. Second, using the cohort adjusted calculation methodology, the gap in graduation rate between white students and African American and Hispanic students will decrease by half by 2013-2014.

The 2009 overall graduation rate was 79 percent. For white students it was 87 percent compared with 66 percent for African American students and 58 percent for Hispanic students. We expect the graduation rate for white students to continue to increase by 1 percentage point annually, while the graduation rate for African American students will need to increase by 3 to 4 percentage points and the rates for Hispanic students will need to increase by 4 to 5 percentage points.

The following chart summarizes, for each year of the grant, the targets for closing the achievement gaps:

Table (A)(1)(a) Connecticut's Targets for Closing the Achievement Gaps					
	2009-10 (Baseline)	**2010-11**	**2011-12**	**2012-13**	**2013-14**
Reduce the gap in the percentage of students meeting Goal on CMT in mathematics by half.					
African American	**37**	**42**	**47**	**53**	**59**
Hispanic	**39**	**44**	**49**	**55**	**61**
White	**78**	**79**	**80**	**81**	**82**
Reduce the gap in the percentage of students meeting Goal on CMT in reading by half.					
African American	**40**	**45**	**50**	**55**	**61**
Hispanic	**37**	**42**	**48**	**54**	**60**
White	**77**	**78**	**79**	**80**	**81**
Reduce the gap in the percentage of students meeting Goal on the CAPT in mathematics by half.					
African American	**13**	**19**	**25**	**31**	**43**
Hispanic	**17**	**23**	**29**	**35**	**41**
White	**61**	**62**	**63**	**64**	**65**
Reduce the gap in the percentage of students meeting Goal on the CAPT in reading by half.					
African American	**18**	**23**	**29**	**35**	**41**
Hispanic	**21**	**26**	**31**	**36**	**42**
White	**58**	**59**	**60**	**62**	**64**
Reduce the gap in the percentage of students graduating from high school.					
African American	**66**	**69**	**72**	**76**	**80**
Hispanic	**58**	**62**	**67**	**72**	**77**
White	**87**	**88**	**89**	**90**	**91**

Our Goals for Increased College Enrollment and Completion

In March 2010, Connecticut signed onto Complete College America, a national initiative seeking to help states implement a range of strategies that will be necessary to bring about changes in culture and practice to increase postsecondary success. In doing so, Connecticut committed to setting targets for increased postsecondary graduation, in the form of degrees **or** credentials. The Connecticut Department of Higher Education is currently working with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to develop a Connecticut-specific tool with which Connecticut can develop realistic targets based on anticipated demographic shifts. In this work, the target setting will be informed by the estimated changes in the state's high school graduation rates by demographics, as well as by President Obama's 2020 goal to move the United States back into a lead role in education. The NCHEMS tool will be complete by mid-May 2010. Initial work on target setting will be accomplished by the Connecticut P-20 Council during the summer of 2010.

A Theory of Change, Linked to Our History

Connecticut's Six Levers for Transformational Change

To aid us in implementing the four assurances that constitute the RTTT theory of change, Connecticut has identified six levers for transforming the system. Each of these levers represents work that is essential to: implement common standards and assessment linked to a robust data system; assure that all students have equitable access to effective teachers and principals; and continue expansion of our innovative models for turning around persistently low-achieving schools. Connecticut's reform levers are: (1) Family and community engagement; (2) Pre-service training and professional development; (3) Teacher, principal effectiveness and accountability; (4) Curriculum innovation, the application of technology to teaching and learning and greater emphasis on STEM competencies; (5) High school, college and workforce alignment; and (6) Financing sustainable change. These levers are operationalized in the CSDE's management structure for RTTT in Section (A)(2) under Partnerships for Change.

Embedded within the six levers are prior strategies and other factors we will continue to pursue to ensure success for all students:

- A solid PK-3 framework for early education in Connecticut with an emphasis on aligning preschool with K-3 in terms of standards, data systems development, professional development and community strategic planning and family support systems
- An increased role of STEM experiences for all students
- Targeted attention to the special needs of students with disabilities, English Learners and other subgroups that constitute Connecticut's significant achievement gaps
- The role of the Knowledge Network drawing upon Connecticut's vast but underutilized higher education and business research sectors

These will be complemented by three core elements of our education reform agenda: (a) the expansion of the *Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative* (CALI) to all school districts by 2015; (b) the implementation of the *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* by 2018; and (c) the introduction of the *P-20 Shared Leadership Council.* The Council will now help guide the state's reform plan in conjunction with six public-private Partnerships for Change. This implementation structure is described in detail in Section (A)(2).

Below, we describe what, from our perspective, is the most important of the three core elements. (For details on the *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* and the Shared Leadership Council see Sections (A)(2) and (B)(2) respectively).

The Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI/SRBI)

In 2004, the CSDE established CALI to provide professional development and coaching to accelerate the learning of ***all*** students and to close the achievement gap. CALI is based on the findings of nationally recognized researchers including Dr. Douglas Reeves, Dr. Michael Smoker, Dr. Robert Maranon, Dr. Richard Elmore and Dr. John Simpson. This work provides evidence that schools with high rates of poverty and high percentages of ethnic minorities in their student populations can achieve high academic performance. CALI provides the structure and the instructional strategies to address the needs of the subgroups of students who currently are most

challenged specifically English language learners, students with disabilities, African American and Hispanic students and students who are economically disadvantaged. (See Appendix (A)(1)(d) for a complete overview of CALI).

In 2007, the passage of state accountability legislation significantly strengthened the CALI model, and it has become Connecticut's core process for comprehensive LEA reform (Sections (C)(3), (D)(2), (D)(5),(E)(1) and (E)(2) further address the model). (See section 21 of Public Act 10-111 for a complete copy of the accountability statute, as amended, in Appendix (A)(1)(c)). CALI is based on a clear focus on achievement, a standards-based curriculum that emphasizes mathematics and writing; the use of data to inform instructional and leadership decisions, frequent assessment of student progress, an emphasis on research-based effective teaching strategies, collaborative teams focused on student learning and holding all adults accountable for student achievement. Elements of CALI also provide support for identify promising practices, evaluating these practices' effectiveness, ceasing ineffective practices based on data, holding all adults in the system accountable for progress and performance and intervening when necessary.

In addition to CALI but integrally related is a second instructional improvement effort focused explicitly on student learning: Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI). In February 2008, the CSDE issued the *Scientific Research Based Intervention (SRBI) Framework* as this state's model for implementation of **R**esponse **t**o **I**ntervention. Appendix (A)(1)(e) provides an Executive Summary of SRBI. In an SRBI framework, students who are not performing adequately based on grade level standards receive interventions at the *time of need.* SRBI eliminates waiting for students to fail and fall further behind. Data are used to determine appropriate instructional levels and methodology and then to monitor students' progress.

The Connecticut SRBI framework is based on three tiers of intervention. Tier I refers to the learning of all students in the core curriculum. Students failing to meet important academic benchmarks or social/behavioral expectations of Tier I core practices are supported with supplemental Tier II short-term interventions matched to their specific needs, with frequent progress monitoring (for example, 8-20 weeks) . These interventions are typically part of a standard treatment protocol, delivered in a standardized format to ensure the fidelity of the interventions. Students who do not respond to Tier II interventions receive more intensive, individualized interventions at the Tier III level. Tier III interventions are based on a problem-solving approach that focuses on a team of teachers

and specialists gathering additional data on student's progress and deficits, developing an intervention plan based on the student's specific needs. Again, progress monitoring is essential to monitor the effectiveness of the interventions.

Together, CALI (which is focused on changing adult behaviors) and SRBI (which is focused directly on student learning) constitute a complete package of instructional improvement processes. Based on the emerging capability of CALI to transform LEAs and schools in need of improvement, Connecticut is confident that this CALI/SRBI combination – with full implementation statewide as part of our RTTT effort – will enable our districts to make dramatic, sustainable improvements in leadership and instruction resulting in demonstrable student success (see Section (E)(3) for current demonstrated progress for CALI.).

Connecticut's Education Reform Agenda Goals

Below, we offer short summaries of how we intend to meet the four assurances required in this application. Elaborated, detailed plans for each assurance are described in Sections (B) through (F).

Assurance 1: Standards and Assessments

Connecticut will adopt both the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) (July 2010) and Common Assessments (once they have been developed and reviewed nationally). We aim to become the 32nd state to adopt College- and Career-Ready Standards and we will also align our K-12 standards to reach preschool and to achieve concordance with college entry requirements.

Assurance 2: Data Systems to Support Instruction and Guide Decision-Making Related to Student Success

Connecticut fully supports the ever-improving *collection and use* of data as one of the core areas of educational improvement infrastructure. To support this, Connecticut's education reform agenda and state reform plan ensure compliance with the three core components explicit in the RTTT data systems assurance. First, Connecticut's Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) will be completed to include the final work on the remaining six America COMPETES requirements that are in progress but not completely accomplished. The CSDE will implement all data elements now required in the Connecticut landmark education reform legislation cited earlier. Second, the CSDE will implement a series of outreach and communication strategies to make data more accessible to a broad

group of RTTT constituencies, as well as improve timely access to data essential to improving educational policymaking, operation and research. Third, Connecticut will continue its current efforts to implement through CALI the use of data-driven decision making at the LEA level to build and operate formal instructional improvement systems.

Assurance 3: Great Teachers and Leaders

Connecticut's plan for great teachers and leaders will integrate all of the innovations contemplated for the statewide reform plan as well as multi-bureau support for school and district improvement, including CALI. It will build upon nationally recognized programs and practices that have historically placed Connecticut as a leader in teacher quality and will build and implement a new framework for training teachers and administrators over the next decade. The RTTT opportunity comes at a time when Connecticut is already building and implementing a comprehensive teacher quality system with new certification regulations planned for implementation in 2016 (See Section (D)(2)).

Assurance 4: Turning Around Low-Performing Schools

Under strong accountability legislation passed in July 2007, the Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education (SBE) hold significantly increased authority to intervene in low-achieving schools and districts. The Commissioner and the SBE have a broad range of actions under their authority. These include among others: (a) requiring audits and directing the use of state or federal funds; (b) directing staff assignments and transfers; (c) requiring additional supports for children in low-performing schools; (d) assigning technical support teams and specifying curriculum for implementation; and (e) identifying school for reconstitutions or management by an entity other than the local board of education.

Over the period 2004 through 2009, the CSDE has employed CALI as its core intervention process. In April 2010, Connecticut received a federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) of $26 million dollars that will be allocated, based on approved districts' plans, to the state's lowest performing schools (Tier I and Tier II). The work to implement the SIG grant will be tightly coordinated with Connecticut's RTTT in districts with Tier I and Tier II schools (as defined in Section (E)(2)). Public Act 10-111 will further strengthen

this work by conferring new authority on the SBE to reconstitute boards of education, if reform interventions persist with no signs of improvement.

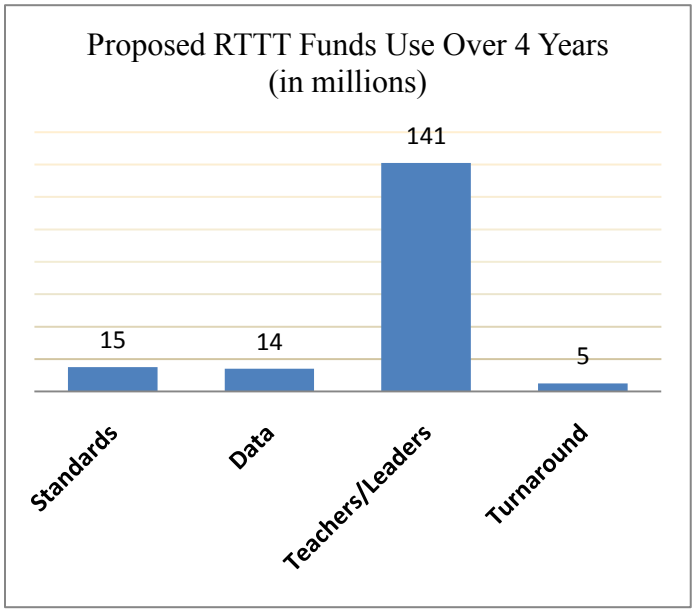
Financing Sustainable Change

To sustain initiatives begun with four-year federal ARRA funds through RTTT, Connecticut will need to examine current educational spending and propose a plan for sustainability anchored in a public process of repurposing existing educational funds. Further, it is the clear expectation of this grant opportunity that each state examine its use of federal education funds across federal agency sources.

To begin this work, the Commissioner of Education has established one of the Partnerships for Change – the Partnership for Financing Sustained Change –to lead this work. This Partnership is co-led by a senior leader at the CSDE with one or more co-chairpersons from CABE, CAPSS, or a non-profit organization. This group will convene first in September 2010 to develop a plan of action and analysis that will result, by December of 2011, in a set of findings describing Connecticut's current educational funding patterns and a set of recommendations for change, including repurposing existing federal and state funding across agencies to focus on expanding and sustaining the conditions resulting in dramatic improvements in student achievement as predicted in this application. For further detail see section (A)(2).

Resource Allocations

If funded under RTTT, Connecticut will receive up to $175 million over the four-year period, 2010-2014. Half of this amount, $87.5 million, will be allocated directly to Title I LEAs to support the state's education reform agenda as outlined in this application and the LEA Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by participating LEAs. In addition to their Title I allocation described above, Title I LEAs participating in RTTT and operate grades kindergarten through 12, will each receive an additional $140,000 over a four-year period. All other LEAs that opt to sign onto the RTTT application will each receive $100,000 over a four-year period (some of Connecticut's districts operate smaller grade ranges, such as grades kindergarten through 5 or 8, or grades 6-12 or 9-12). RESCs and the Connecticut Technical High School System will each also receive $140,000 in this additional allocation of the state portion of RTTT. This use of funds from the state's portion is equal to $24 million. The total amount of RTTT funding allocated directly for LEA use is $111 million (64 percent).



Of the remaining funds, approximately $15 million will be retained by the CSDE for infrastructure and building capacity to support LEAs to ensure success in accomplishing its responsibilities in each of the four reform assurances as described earlier in this section. The balance, roughly $49 million will be utilized to support specific initiatives related to each of the four federal assurances.

The proposed distribution of RTTT funds depicted in the graph shows clearly the extraordinary importance placed on the role of teachers and principals in the educational lives of our students. Nearly 80 percent of RTTT funds will be expended to support the development of Connecticut's teaching and administrative professionals, $141 million out of the total of $175 million requested in this application.

Funds allocated for Great Teachers and Leaders in Assurance 3 include:

- $56 million over four years to promote and expand high-quality 21st century teaching, learning and assessment, including implementation of secondary school reform ($21 million), increased AP courses ($6 million), model curricula development and assessment ($3 million), STEM innovation ($15 million), parent and family engagement ($6 million) and initiatives to foster equity and diversity ($5 million);
- $31 million over four years to develop and support teacher and principal supervision and effectiveness;
- $14 million over four years to support the recruitment and retention of effective and highly effective teachers; and
- $40 million to support the implementation of CALI in all participating LEAs by 2015.

(A)(1)(ii)(a-c) LEA Commitment to Plan and Reform Agenda

As seen early in Section (A)(1)(i), while a small state geographically and in terms of population, Connecticut's educational system is quite complex with LEAs in 166 separate municipal jurisdictions, all except for two with elected boards of education. There is no regional government, and Connecticut counties define maps not legal jurisdictions. Connecticut's towns range in size from just a few thousand people to just over 150,000 residents. This circumstance is important to understanding the student achievement results presented below in Section (A)(1)(ii).

In Connecticut's Phase 1 application, 62 percent of all eligible LEAs signed on to participate in Connecticut's education reform agenda (122 LEAs out of 197). Of note, only 59 local teachers' union leaders signed on. Over the period January through May, communications and participation grew remarkably, resulting in 162 LEAs signing on to RTTT in Phase 2 – 82 percent of the LEAs eligible to participate. In addition, the local union sign-on increased dramatically from the Phase 1 to the Phase 2 submittal – just 48 percent of local unions signed on in Phase 1 versus 87.8 percent of local union sign on in Phase 2. CSDE gained significant participants across all three categories of signatories and virtually all districts that joined Connecticut's Phase 2 RTTT are fully represented by all three leadership groups: superintendents, board of education chairpersons and union leadership. In addition to the

increased signatories, our Phase 2 effort will reach nearly all of the students statewide (95.1 percent) who live in conditions of family poverty (defined in Connecticut's as 185 percent or less of the Federal Poverty Level).

Because the kind of bold reform we envision in Connecticut will require enthusiastic and energetic buy-in at all levels, we believe this new result bodes well for the likelihood of real, sustainable change – to the betterment of our families and students, our teachers and schools and each of the participating communities as whole.

(A)(1)(ii)(a-c)

The terms and conditions, outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Appendix (A)(1)(f), reflect strong commitment by the participating LEAs and the state to successfully and collaboratively implement Connecticut's RTTT plan for education reform. Connecticut's public policy history in education is one of collaboration between stakeholders. The best reform comes from a process where all relevant parties are at the table and when legitimate differences of opinion are worked out in an atmosphere of mutual trust.

As one can see from the charts below, the detailed table in Appendix (A)(1)(g) and the MOU in Appendix (A)(1)(f), conditional commitment to implement the reform activities is included as an addendum to the MOU. This "Savings Clause" states that the signatories will agree to work together in good faith to implement the areas of Connecticut's RTTT Plan set forth in the Preliminary Scope of Work. Nothing in the MOU, however, should be construed as overriding existing collective bargaining agreements. This is a reasonable statement of respect for existing legal frameworks between LEAs and their local unions. The "Savings Clause" is **not** a declaration of refusal to agree to the requirements of our application, but rather the assertion of bargaining units rights to bargain the implementation of the requirements. Significant changes required in Connecticut's RTTT plan will necessitate deliberate consideration of the established bargaining process so that the resulting agreements can endure beyond the life of the grant and sustain long-term reform.

As previously mentioned in Section A(1)(i), both state teacher unions – the Connecticut Education Association (CEA) and the American Federation of Teachers – Connecticut (AFT), have worked tirelessly with the other stakeholders over the past five months to

gain passage of Public Act 10-111. Upon passage of this landmark legislation, leaders of Connecticut's teacher unions conveyed to the local unions the importance of Connecticut's RTTT plan for all students in Connecticut while strongly urging all members to sign on to the RTTT initiative. The collaboration shown here and the increased numbers of local union presidents' support clearly prove to have been effective. Both the CEA and AFT have signed letters of support for this application saying our RTTT plan is "a plan for success in which all stakeholders feel invested" and that they "will do this work to ensure that all teachers are prepared with the best knowledge and skills and the most effective teaching techniques to reach the learning needs of each and every child."

Participating LEAs are fully committed to working together to implement Connecticut's plan. The increase in signatories, including a significant increase in buy-in from the local teacher union leaders fully demonstrates the support needed to collaborate effectively to execute Connecticut's plan in each of the four areas of reform. Of note, in Hartford, one of our largest urban centers, the Hartford Federation of Teachers, did not sign the MOU due to recent ongoing negotiations with the Hartford Board of Education that could not be resolved in time for the RTTT application. We look to further solicitation of their support once local issues have been resolved in order to assure broad implementation of reform efforts throughout the state.

Readers should note, finally that, every Participating LEA has signed on to implement all aspects of the scope of work that create a comprehensive approach to improving teaching and learning. The scope of work articulated in the MOU in Appendix (A)(1)(f) addresses the components of the four required assurances. Detailed descriptors for each requirement are included in Appendix (A)(I)(h).

Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(b) Elements of state Reform Plans	Number of LEAs Participating (#)	Percentage of Total Participating LEAs (%)
B. Standards and Assessments		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
C. Data Systems to Support Instruction		

Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(b) Elements of state Reform Plans	Number of LEAs Participating (#)	Percentage of Total Participating LEAs (%)
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction:		
(i) Use of local instructional improvement systems	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
(ii) Professional development on use of data	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
(iii) Availability and accessibility of data to researchers	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
D. Great Teachers and Leaders		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance:		
(i) Measure student growth	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
(ii) Design and implement evaluation systems	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
(iii) Conduct annual evaluations	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
(iv)(a) Use evaluations to inform professional development	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
(iv)(b) Use evaluations to inform compensation, promotion and retention	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
(iv)(c) Use evaluations to inform tenure and/or full certification	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
(iv)(d) Use evaluations to inform removal	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals:		
(i) High-poverty and/or high-minority schools	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
(ii) Hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	0	0

Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(b) Elements of state Reform Plans	Number of LEAs Participating (#)	Percentage of Total Participating LEAs (%)
	(162 conditional)	(100% conditional)
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals:	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
(i) Quality professional development	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
(ii) Measure effectiveness of professional development	0 (162 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)
E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	0 (6 conditional)	0 (100% conditional)

Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(c)			
Signatures acquired from participating LEAs:			
Number of Participating LEAs with all applicable signatures			
	Number of Signatures Obtained (#)	**Number of Signatures Applicable (#)**	**Percentage (%)** (Obtained/Applicable)
LEA Superintendent (or equivalent)	162	162	100%
President of Local School Board (or equivalent, if applicable)	148	162	91.4%
Local Teachers' Union Leader (if applicable)	130	148	87.8%

Section (A)(1)(iii) Translation into Broad Statewide Impact

Table A(1)(iii) provides data about the Connecticut public school districts that are participating in the Race to the Top application, individually and aggregated to the state level. Connecticut expects that the implementation of the state plan will have a substantial impact on student performance overall and by subgroup, given that the 162 participating districts:

- Represent 82.2 percent of the state's total districts that include all seven of the state's large urban districts, 30 out of the 32 districts with the most economically disadvantaged populations and all of the state's charter schools, which also serve large proportions of students in poverty;
- Include 1005 K-12 schools, which is 89.6 percent of the state's public schools;
- Enroll 497,775 K-12 students, which accounts for 90.8 percent of the state's K-12 enrollment; and
- Enroll 165,736 students in poverty, which is 95.1 percent of the state's K-12 students in poverty.

Given the large percentage of Participating LEAs, K-12 schools and students, particularly those living in poverty, the state expects that the initiatives proposed in this application will realize achievement goals for 95 percent of the state's lowest performing students, the vast majority of whom are African American, Hispanic or ELL.

Through the work of the Partnerships for Change, the focused interventions in the plan will build on the recent successes that have resulted in improving the state's NAEP and CMT reading and mathematics scores of all students at the elementary and middle school levels and reducing some of the gaps in performance. The implementation of the C*onnecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* with its emphasis on academic rigor, student engagement, and attainment of 21st century skills in a school environment that supports the success of all students is directed at increasing the persistence of secondary students through middle and high school to graduation, so that graduation rates will increase and students will enter college fully prepared to succeed in college-level courses.

Summary Table for (A)(1)(iii)

	Participating LEAs (#)	**Statewide (#)**	**Percentage of Total Statewide (%)** (Participating LEAs / Statewide)
LEAs	**162**	**197**	**82.2**
Schools	**1005**	**1121**	**89.6**
K-12 Students	**497,775**	**548,247**	**90.8**
Students in poverty	**165,736**	**174,223**	**95.1**

Note: In Connecticut, if a LEA chooses, pre-kindergarten (PK) may be part of the public education program. The data above reflect students in grades kindergarten through 12, however, had the PK students and schools been included, the counts would increase from 1005 to 1035 schools, from 497,775 students to 512,300 students and from 165,736 students in poverty to 170,829 students in poverty in the participating LEAs. The statewide number of schools includes schools run by the Department of Corrections (DOC), the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). The number of LEAs statewide includes DOC, DCF, DMHAS, three incorporated and endowed academies and charter schools, all of which are considered LEAs in Connecticut.

Appendices Referenced in Section (A)(1)

Appendix (A)(1)(a) - P-20 Council Guiding Principles
Appendix (A)(1)(b) - State Board of Education's 2006-2011 Comprehensive Five-Year Plan
Appendix (A)(1)(c) - Public Act No. 10-111
Appendix (A)(1)(d)- Comprehensive Overview of CALI
Appendix (A)(1)(e) - *Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI) Executive Summary*
Appendix (A)(1)(f)- Memorandum of Understanding with Local Education Agencies
Appendix (A)(1)(g)- Table: Local Education Agency Participation
Appendix (A)(1)(h)- Table: LEA MOU Detailed Descriptors

(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up and sustain proposed plans *(30 points)*

The extent to which the State has a high-quality overall plan to—

(i) Ensure that it has the capacity required to implement its proposed plans by— *(20 points)*

(a) Providing strong leadership and dedicated teams to implement the statewide education reform plans the State has proposed;

(b) Supporting participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) in successfully implementing the education reform plans the State has proposed, through such activities as identifying promising practices, evaluating these practices' effectiveness, ceasing ineffective practices, widely disseminating and replicating the effective practices statewide, holding participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) accountable for progress and performance and intervening where necessary;

(c) Providing effective and efficient operations and processes for implementing its Race to the Top grant in such areas as grant administration and oversight, budget reporting and monitoring, performance measure tracking and reporting and fund disbursement;

(d) Using the funds for this grant, as described in the State's budget and accompanying budget narrative, to accomplish the State's plans and meet its targets, including where feasible, by coordinating, reallocating, or repurposing education funds from other Federal, State and local sources so that they align with the State's Race to the Top goals; and

(e) Using the fiscal, political and human capital resources of the State to continue, after the period of funding has ended, those reforms funded under the grant for which there is evidence of success; and

(ii) Use support from a broad group of stakeholders to better implement its plans, as evidenced by the strength of the statements or actions of support from— *(10 points)*

(a) The State's teachers and principals, which include the State's teachers' unions or statewide teacher associations; and

(b) Other critical stakeholders, such as the State's legislative leadership; charter school authorizers and State charter school membership associations (if applicable); other State and local leaders (*e.g.*, business, community, civil rights and education association leaders); Tribal schools; parent, student and community organizations (*e.g.*, parent-teacher associations, nonprofit organizations, local education foundations and community-based organizations); and institutions of higher education.

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. The State's response to (A)(2)(i)(d) will be addressed in the budget section (Section VIII of the application). Attachments, such as letters of support or commitment, should be summarized in the text box below and organized with a summary table in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (A)(2)(i)(d):

- The State's budget, as completed in Section VIII of the application. The narrative that accompanies and explains the budget and how it connects to the State's plan, as completed in Section VIII of the application.

Evidence for (A)(2)(ii):

- A summary in the narrative of the statements or actions and inclusion of key statements or actions in the Appendix.

(A)(2) BUILDING STRONG STATEWIDE CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT, SCALE UP AND SUSTAIN PROPOSED PLANS

(A)(2)(i) Building Strong Capacity

Gubernatorial and Legislative Leadership

From the highest levels of state leadership, Connecticut enjoys strong support for the education of its students. Connecticut's Governor, the Honorable M. Jodi Rell, served as co-chair of Education, Early Education and Workforce Committees of the National Governors Association and is recognized for her work in early childhood education, dropout prevention, high school reform and technology education. Preserving maximum funding levels for public schools has been a top priority and guiding principle when allocating state and federal dollars through ARRA and the State's annual Education Cost Sharing (ECS) program.

The Connecticut legislative delegation provides exceptionally strong educational leadership in both the State House of Representatives and the state Senate. Legislative Education Committee Co-Chairs, State Senator Thomas Gaffey and State Representative Andrew Fleischmann, successfully galvanized bipartisan support for landmark education reform legislation passed by the Connecticut General Assembly in May 2010 and signed by the Governor. (See Appendix (A)(2)(a) for Governor Rell's May 26,

2010 Press Release). Their leadership also contributed greatly to the 2007 accountability legislation that enhances the authority of the Commissioner and the SBE to intervene in LEAs and schools (including school closure and state takeover) that persistently produce students who fail to meet state standards. In 2009, these co-chairs also sponsored important legislation aimed at enhancing Connecticut's ability to attract and hire talented young teachers from across the New England region through such programs as *Teach for America.*

Connecticut State Board of Education

The CSDE reports to the SBE whose members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the state legislature. The SBE meets monthly and organizes its work through four standing committees as well as various ad hoc committees charged with specific, short-term tasks. By statute, the SBE must publish a five-year strategic plan that is also submitted to the Connecticut General Assembly. The state's plan, developed with extensive public input, describes the SBE's priorities and expectations for public education over the period 2006-2011, informs policymakers and guides the work of the CSDE.

Connecticut State Department of Education

In 2007, the SBE hired Dr. Mark K. McQuillan as Commissioner of Education to provide targeted and sustained administration and leadership to the CSDE as it implemented its goals and managed the resources of the CSDE. Dr. McQuillan came to Connecticut with more than 35 years of public school experience in Massachusetts, where among other positions he served as Deputy Commissioner in the Massachusetts Department of Education. With the support of the SBE, local superintendents, business and industry leaders and other stakeholders, Dr. McQuillan has articulated a vision for broad-gauged, systemic reform of Connecticut's schools that is now embedded in the CSDE's bid for Phase 2 RTTT funding.

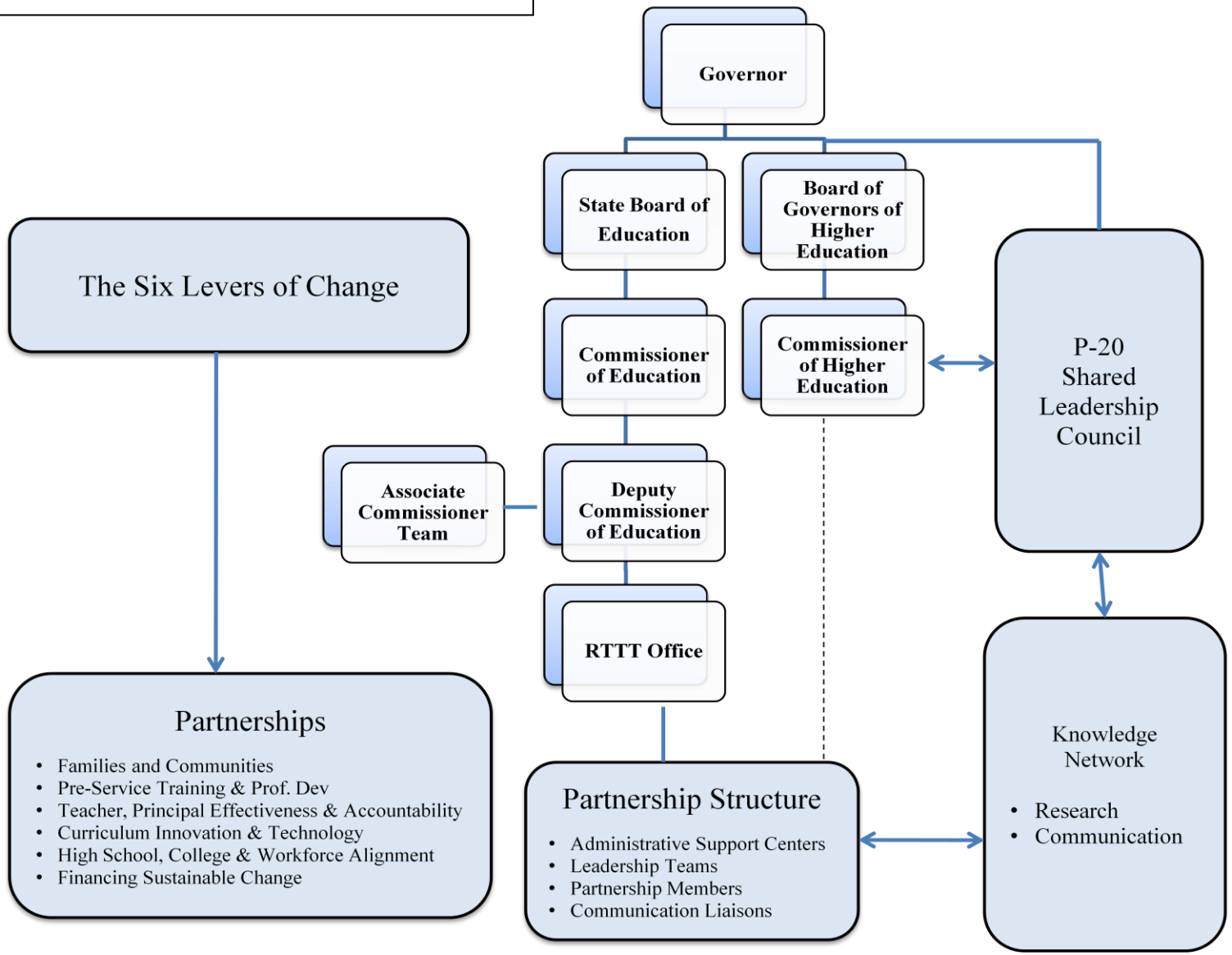
Under the Commissioner's leadership, the CSDE has reorganized its administrative structure to reflect the state's new economic realities and to better reflect an aggressive reform agenda. This reorganization is reflected in Appendix (A)(2)(b) and (A)(2)(c) that outlines the 2007 and 2009 organizational charts, respectively. Over this period, the CSDE has also developed, strengthened and formalized many new partnerships with other state agencies, educational service organizations and the nonprofit, business and

philanthropic sectors. Commitment by additional statewide organizations including, but are not limited to, parent organizations, teacher and labor unions, business, philanthropies, advocacy groups, faith-based organizations and civil rights organizations lend further support to this work.

State Education Resource Center (SERC) and the Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) Alliance

The personnel resources of the CSDE are supplemented by the State Education Resource Center (SERC) and an alliance of six RESC Alliance that aid the department in providing information, professional development services and technical assistance to LEAs, school boards, parents and other statewide, regional and local stakeholders. These organizations support LEAs through activities such as identifying promising practices, evaluating these practices' effectiveness and widely disseminating and replicating effective practices statewide. All LEAs are voluntarily attached to a RESC in their region and, as members of the RESC, gain access to mutually agreed-upon services as well as those required by the CSDE. In 2008, legislation was enacted allowing the CSDE to award contracts directly to the RESC Alliance, as it does with SERC, without having to undergo an extensive, state-mandated bidding process. In the past, this process had bogged down the CSDE's ability to provide services, professional development, technical assistance and training throughout the state. The RESC Alliance and SERC will assist the CSDE in developing and delivering the services and professional development articulated in this RTTT application. Public Act 10-111 enacted in May 2010 expands this same procurement flexibility to other state education organizations such as the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS). In support of the changes required to implement Connecticut's RTTT comprehensive reform agenda the CSDE, as described earlier in Section (A)(1), will require a further enhancement of its management structure through the 2009 P-20 Council, six new public-private Partnerships for Change and the Knowledge Network. These entities, in collaboration with the SERC and the RESC Alliance, will hold participating LEAs accountable for progress and performance and provide intervention when necessary. Together, these three leadership structures constitute Connecticut's RTTT leadership and management system as depicted on the next page.

Race to the Top Management Structure



The balance of Section (A)(2)(i) provide the CSDE's goals, activities, timeframe and responsible parties for implementing the management of RTTT in a highly effective and efficient manner. The Commissioner of Education and his cabinet have formulated six goals, summarized in the table below:

Connecticut's Plan to Manage the RTTT Implementation Process Effectively and Efficiently				
Goal	**2010-2011**	**2011-2012**	**2012-2013**	**2013-2014**
Goal 1: New Race to the Top management and leadership structures will be established and functioning well. *This goal addresses:* **(A)(2)(i)(a)**.	Within 60 days of award	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal 2: Divisions and bureaus along with CSDE's senior leadership will administer, support and co-lead components of the Race to the Top plan for comprehensive reform. *This goal addresses*: **(A)(2)(i)(a) and (b)**.	Complete	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal 3: The expansion of CSDE's staff required to support Connecticut's Race to the Top reform agenda will be hired with a minimal time lag upon receipt of the award notification. *This goal addresses*: **(A)(2)(i)(a) and (b)**.	Within 120 days of award	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal 4: The CSDE will ensure strong, effective and efficient fiscal operations and processes for implementing and reporting on the RTTT grant. *This goal addresses*: **(A)(2)(i)(c)**.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal 5: The CSDE will use RTTT funds to fully implement the proposed reform agenda and will coordinate, reallocate or repurpose education funds from other federal, state or local sources. *This goal addresses*: **(A)(2)(i)(d)**.	Beginning in 2011	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal 6: The CSDE will establish a sustainability plan to continue fiscal support for reforms put into place through the Race to the Top initiative. *This goal addresses:* **(A)(2)(i)(e)**.	Begin work September 2010	Report by December 2011	Executive and Legislative Consideration	Enacted as needed

Section (A)(2)(i): The Detail

(A)(2)(i)(a)

Goal 1: New RTTT management and leadership structures will be established and functioning well
As the result of this goal, the RTTT initiative will be launched in a timely manner with no lag in the establishment of management and leadership structures.

P-20 Shared Leadership Council

With the award of the RTTT grant, the CSDE will look to the P-20 Shared Leadership Council to provide direction and policy oversight of the CSDE's implementation of all aspects of the state's education reform plan. The P-20 Shared Leadership Council will work and collaborate with the SBE and the State Board of Higher Education to oversee many of the accountability requirements of the Race to the Top grant. The chairperson of each board currently serves on the P-20 Shared Leadership Council. The Commissioners of Education and Higher Education co-chair the bi-monthly meetings of the Council. With the P-20 Shared Leadership Council as the umbrella organizational unit for all administrative units assigned to implement RTTT initiatives, Connecticut as a whole will have a comprehensive set of representatives and leaders from public education services agencies, non-profits and foundations working in the state. The CSDE will, by definition, bear the primary responsibility for implementing the RTTT state reform plan, with higher education playing an essential supporting role. The P-20 Shared Leadership Council is exclusively an advisory and policy development body.

Office of Race to the Top and RTTT Management Team

Working through the Deputy Commissioner and his Associate Commissioners' Team (ACT), the Office of Race to the Top will be staffed by a Senior Manager or Bureau Chief, a Program Evaluator, the ARRA Accountability Officer (currently in place) and an Administrative Assistant. The Senior Manager will report directly to the Deputy Commissioner, but will work closely with the ACT and the members assigned to the Partnership Leadership Teams (see below). Responsibilities will include: (a) tracking progress of each goal in the RTTT; (b) receiving policy, practice or program items from the various partnerships and organizing them for action within or beyond the CSDE; (c) examining outcome data for students, programs and the workforce and proposing a Results Based

Accountability template and reporting format for the Appropriations Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly; (d) assisting in creation of the Knowledge Network; and (e) other management or logistics tasks assigned by the Deputy Commissioner.

Partnerships for Change

Members of each of the six Partnerships for Change (see Section (A)(1)(i)) will include statewide and local leaders from inside and outside the K-12 education sector in Connecticut. Sectors represented on the partnerships include the business and employment sector, philanthropy, higher education, early childhood, local government and the nonprofit human services sector. The responsibilities, tasks and products of each partnership are specified in the sections of this application requiring descriptions of *Activities, Timeframes and Responsible Parties.* Each partnership will have access to various support services in the CSDE necessary to provide fiscal, planning and information services to the entire partnership. These support services may be shared with one of the six Administrative Support Centers (see below) asked to assist the CSDE in carrying out its work, serving virtually as an extra administrative unit. Each of the Partnerships for Change will have a Leadership Team as described below.

Administrative Support Centers

Administrative Support Centers will be appointed by the Commissioner of Education to help lead and implement the work of each Partnership for Change. To date, the Commissioner has designated: (a) SERC and the Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC); (b) the RESC Alliance; (c) the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS); (d) the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS); and (e) the Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC) to be the Administrative Support Centers assigned to the six Partnerships for Change delineated above. The primary responsibility of each center will be to assist each Partnership's Leadership Team in planning, coordinating, budgeting and administering the various projects assigned to each Partnership for Change. Each center will be paid a management fee to provide the administrative services envisioned and to assist the Leadership Team and Partnerships for Change in determining who, among the various providers and educational organizations throughout the state, can provide the services associated with implementing the state's Reform Plan.

Leadership Teams

As shown in the organizational chart above, each Partnership for Change shall be led by a Leadership Team consisting of CSDE personnel, a leader from each Administrative Support Center and one to three leaders external to the department and selected by the Commissioner of Education. The convener of each leadership team shall be responsible for organizing and chairing meetings of the statewide committee, coordinating and implementing the work of the CSDE's RTTT Senior Manager and giving direction to the work of each administrative support center, with which the CSDE shall contract for the provision of services related to the projects.

Partnership Members

Members of each statewide Partnership for Change, CEOs, Presidents and Executive Officers representing dozens of educational and non-profit organizations working in Connecticut will constitute the working group of the partnerships under the direction of the Leadership Team. Together with the Leadership Teams, members will ensure that the procedures and policies for effectively carrying out the work associated with each project in the state's reform plan are clearly established and well-communicated to all stakeholders with a vested interest in the work of each group. Members may be tasked to carry out certain projects assigned to the partnership as a whole and members may also serve as a part of the Knowledge Network. The broader function of the Network, however, is purposefully open-ended.

Inter-Partnership and LEA Liaisons

Each partnership will have assigned to it a RESC director and/or his/her designee whose primary responsibility will be to serve as the information leader who will link the Partnerships' and department's activities to the districts and to other stakeholders. The RESC Alliance as a whole and individually through its assigned representatives will coordinate information and ensure communication across the six committees. All information will be managed electronically through a single Web site, housed at the CSDE. The CSDE will contract with the RESC Alliance to engage in the logistical activities described above.

Intra-Committee and CSDE Liaisons

Finally, CSDE Liaisons will serve the same functions as those described above, except the audience will be within the CSDE. Liaisons will be selected from volunteer representatives in the CSDE by each Leadership Team, in collaboration with the Deputy Commissioner and ACT.

Activities:

- The CSDE will organize and convene the first meetings of the Partnership for Change by July 15, 2010, to clarify roles and responsibilities and the major tasks that must be completed by June 2011.
- The CSDE will meet with the Leadership Teams of each partner group by September 1, 2010, to establish meeting calendars and begin planning and scheduling the long-range training initiatives and activities delineated in the state's Reform Plan.

Timeframe: Several of the Administrative Support Centers have already been established and have met over the period January – May 2010. The P-20 Shared Leadership Council will be established in September 2010. The Office of Race to the Top will be established within 60 days of notification of award. All structures will continue through 2014.

Responsible Parties: Commissioner of the CSDE, senior CSDE managers, members of the Shared Leadership Council and the six Partnerships for Change

(A)(2)(i)(b)

Goal 2. Senior leadership within the CSDE will administer, support and co-lead components of the Race to the Top plan for comprehensive reform

As the result of this goal, the RTTT initiative will be fully integrated within the administrative and program functions and bureaus of the CSDE.

Background Information

As described earlier in this section, the CSDE completed a recent reorganization that provides for an interdivisional and bureau structure to support participating LEAs and hold districts accountable for progress and performance. The divisions work

collaboratively and have begun to work with the Partnerships for Change to provide the necessary supports, to ensure coherence with reporting requirements, identify best practices, evaluate best practices statewide, and monitor and hold LEAs accountable for progress and performance. All divisions within the CSDE report to the Deputy Commissioner who, with the Commissioner, sits as a member of the P-20 Shared Leadership Council and coordinates the Race to the Top executive management team through his own leadership team of the Deputy Commissioner and ACT.

Four divisions within the CSDE (and their respective bureaus) will provide support to LEAs as they implement Connecticut's comprehensive reform agenda:(a) Division of Teaching and Learning and Instructional Leadership (with the Bureaus of Accountability and Improvement, Teaching and Learning and Educator Standards and Certification); (b) Division of Assessment, Research and Technology (with the Bureaus of Student Assessment and Data Collection, Research and Evaluation); (c) Division of Family and Student Services (with the Bureaus of Choice, Special Education and Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education); and (d) the Connecticut Technical High School System. Responsibilities of each bureau are summarized in Appendix (A)(1)(k).

Activities:

- The CSDE will organize and convene the first meetings of the Partnership for Change by July 15, 2010, to clarify roles and responsibilities and the major tasks that must be completed by June 2011.
- The CSDE will meet with the Leadership Teams of each partner group by September 1, 2010, to establish meeting calendars and begin planning and scheduling the long-range training initiatives and activities delineated in the state's Reform Plan.

Timeframe: Divisions and bureaus are currently working with some of the Partnerships for Change and external stakeholders to implement initial elements of Connecticut's comprehensive reform agenda and will expand immediately upon receipt of RTTT and continue beyond the life of the grant.

Responsible Parties: Leadership and staff from each division, supervised by the Deputy Commissioner and ACT of the CSDE

Goal 3: The addition of new staff to the CSDE will be completed in a timely manner upon notification of Race to the Top funding.

As the result of this goal, the RTTT initiative will be properly staffed within a minimum period of time, not to exceed 120 days after receipt of funding.

Activities

Besides hiring of positions/contracts for the new Office of Race to the Top, three Divisions within the CSDE will hire other staff to address the new administrative, financial and accountability provisions required during the four years. Approximately 12 to 15 full-time personnel for administration, administrative support and technical assistance are projected to be necessary to execute all aspects of the plan, combined with other non-state positions that will be contracted out to the various administrative agents described above. The staffing roster, totaling approximately $3 million per year for four years is discussed briefly in Section (A)(2)(i)(d) and more completely in our proposed RTTT budget in Appendix (A)(2)(d).

Timeframe: New staff will be hired within 120 days after receipt of RTTT funding

Responsible Parties: CSDE, Connecticut State Department of Administrative Services, Governor's Office of Policy and Management

(A)(2)(i)(c)

Goal 4: The CSDE will assure strong, effective and efficient fiscal operations and processes for implementing and reporting on the RTTT grant.

As the result of this goal, funds will be dispersed in a timely manner and accountability reporting processes will be established and implemented.

Background Information

The CSDE administers nearly 50 different federal grants provided through the U.S. Departments of Education and Agriculture through its Division of Finance and Internal Operations, employing 80 employees in various offices and bureaus including the Bureau of Grants Management and Fiscal Services. These federal programs total more than $525 million annually.

Activities

All federal grant programs that the CSDE administers are subject to strict cash management and oversight procedures, including:

- Organizationally to ensure sound fiscal practices, there is separation of duties between the program areas that approve grant awards and the fiscal areas responsible for the disbursement of funds. Even on the fiscal side, two bureaus, Grants Management and Fiscal Services, provide a check and balance on the disbursement, reporting and monitoring of all federal funds.
- Except where specifically prohibited by federal law, the CSDE requires for each grant program detailed budgets from all grantees. Prior to any disbursement, the CSDE must approve the spending plan and ensure compliance within the grant. Grantees are made aware of the CSDE's strict variance policies and the potential for refund.
- Grantees may only request draw downs on a monthly basis. The Bureau of Grants Management reviews the monthly requests for reasonableness and appropriateness.
- An accounting (CPA) firm audits the reports.
- For each federal formula grant, the Bureau of Grants Management develops calculation forms that detail all the intermittent steps that ultimately produce the entitlements. In addition, the Bureau of Grants Management reviews all the data elements for accuracy and reasonableness. The Division of Legal and Governmental Affairs and the Office of Internal Audit review the calculation forms for compliance with federal law.
- Each identified bureau overseeing the grant programs appoints a grant manager who works with bureau staff to regularly monitor districts for program compliance with state and federal grant programs.

- The Bureau of Grants Management and the Office of Internal Audit continuously work with school business officials, CPA firms and the state auditors to keep everyone apprised of the CSDE's cash management and monitoring polices.
- Under the management structure outlined in Goal 2 above, the ARRA Administrative Officer will be responsible for the oversight of performance measures, tracking and reporting in accordance with the federal requirements.

Timeframe: This work will begin immediately upon receipt of federal Race to the Top funding and will continue through 2014

Responsible Parties: CSDE, Deputy Commissioner, Chief Financial Officer, ARRA Administrative Officer and the Division of Finance and Internal Operations

(A)(2)(i)(d)

Goal 5: The CSDE will use RTTT funds to fully implement the proposed reform agenda and will coordinate, reallocate or repurpose education funds from other federal, state or local sources.

As the result of this goal, state and federal funds will be used to leverage high impact results in support of the RTTT comprehensive reform agenda.

Background Information

The budget set forth in Appendix (A)(2)(d) of this application totals $175 million to be spent over four years. Each project budget supports specific initiatives and activities described in our state Reform Plan. Half of the total of $175 million -- $87.5 million -- will be allocated directly to Title I LEAs to support the state's education reform agenda as outlined in this application and the LEA Memorandum of Understanding signed by participating LEAs. In addition to their Title I allocation described above, Title I LEAs that participate in RTTT and operate grades kindergarten through 12, will each receive an additional $140,000 over a four-year period. As noted earlier, all other LEAs that opt to sign onto the Race to the Top application will each receive $100,000 over a four year period. RESCs and the Connecticut Technical High School System will also receive $140,000 in this addition allocation of the state portion of

RTTT funds. This use of funds from the state's portion is equal to $23.9 million. The total amount of RTTT funding allocated directly for LEA use is $111,360,000 (64 percent).

Activities

- Upon notification of award, the CSDE will establish a chart of accounts for tracking fiscal inputs and outputs of RTTT federal funding.
- The recently awarded federal Title I g School Improvement Grant (SIG) is currently being coordinated with work outlined in Section E-3 to support LEA adoption of school turnaround models.
- State funding for after-school programs is being reviewed in order to re-emphasize a STEM focus wherever appropriate.
- More than $5.5 million in current state funding is also dedicated to the comprehensive reform agenda: school accountability ($1.86 million); longitudinal data systems ($1.5 million); and teacher standards ($2.9 million), which funds the new Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) program.

Timeframe: This work has already begun and will continue through 2014

Responsible Parties: The Commissioner of Education, the Deputy Commissioner and ACT

(A)(2)(i)(e)

Goal 6. The CSDE will establish a sustainability plan that incorporates fiscal, political and human capital resources to continue support for reforms put into place through the RTTT initiative.

As the result of this goal, resources identified in the sustainability plan will be committed to continue support for RTTT change efforts proven to be effective in increasing the achievement of Connecticut students and reducing Connecticut's K-12 achievement gap.

Background Information

In Connecticut's Phase 1 application, we committed to a multi-year process, beginning in 2010-2011 to develop a plan for sustainability without the reliance on new state, local or federal funding. In the period between January and May 2010, we have continued to design a public-private structure to assist us in the task. As described earlier in this section, the Commissioner of Education will establish a public-private Partnership for Financing Sustainable Change to be led by the department's Chief Financial Officer, the Executive Directors for CAPSS and CABE and others with strong background in state and municipal finance.

This group will convene first in September 2010 to develop a plan of action and analysis that will result, by December of 2011, in a set of findings describing Connecticut's current educational funding patterns and a set of recommendations for change, including repurposing existing federal and state funding across agencies to focus on expanding and sustaining conditions that result in dramatic improvements in student achievement as predicted in this application.

Three circumstances make the work of the partnership even more urgent. First, at the state level, Connecticut faces the prospect of major budget deficits in each year of the coming biennium (2011-2012 and 2012-2013). Second, the SBE has created an Ad Hoc Committee on Funding for Public School Choice to review and recommend changes in the state's funding methodologies for charter and magnet schools. That report is due later in December 2010. Finally, on March 5, 2010, the Governor issued an executive order calling for the creation of a commission to study and make recommendations on eliminating Connecticut's achievement gap. The Commission on Educational Achievement is charged with structural, cultural and financial issues underpinning the underperformance of students in rural and urban centers throughout Connecticut. A member of the commission will simultaneously serve as a member of the SBE's Ad Hoc Committee on Funding for Public School Choice to avoid redundancies and enhance communication between the two study groups. Taken together, these inputs to the Partnership for Financing Sustainable Change will ensure a period of timely and highly important deliberation.

Activities

- The Partnership for Financing Sustainable Change will convene in September of 2010 for a 16-month period (with staff support and consultants as needed.

- The Partnership will review existing state and federal competitive and discretionary funding that could be "repurposed" to support promising or successful RTTT programs.
- The Partnership will examine the basis for Connecticut's existing Education Cost System to determine if it could be made more simple, transparent and equitable as related to local needs.
- The Partnership will propose changes to the U.S. Department of Education to permit flexibility in the use of all federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding.
- The Partnership will propose policy, regulatory or statutory changes necessary to repurpose existing education (or other) funds to sustain the work of Connecticut's comprehensive reform agenda.

Timeframe: The report of the Partnership for Financing Sustainable Change will be prepared for the Governor, SBE and leadership of the Connecticut General Assembly by January 2012. Executive and legislation action will be sought for implementation of some or all of these recommendations in the 2014-2015 CSDE's budget. The budget for this year is prepared by the executive branch in the fall of 2013 and presented to the Connecticut General Assembly in January 2014. Legislative action must be completed by June of 2014 for SFY 2014-2015.

Responsible Parties: The Partnership for Financing Sustainable Change, Commissioner of Education

(A)(2)(ii)(a-b) Support from a Broad Base of Stakeholders

As specified in Section (A)(2)(i)(a), Connecticut is committed to further strengthening its existing partnerships and forging new relationships, with outside stakeholders. Our application includes more than 100 letters of support from various stakeholders summarized below, each offering supplementary support, experience and added capacity to the RTTT effort. These letters of support, found in Appendix (A)(2)(e), specifically indicate how each stakeholder will add value and impact to the implementation of the reform agenda. For example, several stakeholders indicate their participation as members of one or more of the Partnerships for Change organized by the Commissioner. Of note, both state teachers' union associations, the American Federation of Teachers - Connecticut and the Connecticut Education Association, have indicated their support and their commitment to working with the CSDE, the RTTT Partnerships for Change and the P-20 Shared Leadership Council.

Below is a complete list of stakeholder support groups, aligned with the categories referenced in the application:

Stakeholder Support Groups		
Statewide Teacher Union Associations AFT Connecticut Connecticut Education Association Connecticut Federation of School Administrators ***State Legislature*** Connecticut General Assembly Legislative Black and Puerto Rican Caucus Connecticut General Assembly Education Committee Gubernatorial Candidate Support ***United States Congress*** Connecticut's Federal Delegation United States Congressional Support ***RESCs*** Education Connection Area Cooperative Educational Services Capitol Region Education Council Cooperative Educational Services EASTCONN LEARN	***Education Organizations*** Annenberg Institute for School Reform Connecticut Academy for Education Connecticut After School Network Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc. Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents Connecticut Association of Schools Connecticut Center for School Change Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance Great Schools Partnership Regional Educational Laboratory at EDC State Education Resource Center State Department of Higher Education ***Institutions of Higher Education*** Capital Community College Central Connecticut State University Charter Oak State College College Board Connecticut State University System	***Institutions of Higher Education*** *(continued)* Connecticut Community Colleges Eastern Connecticut State University Fairfield University Lincoln College Middlesex Community College Naugatuck Valley Community College Norwalk Community College Post University Saint Joseph College Stamford Public Schools Southern Connecticut State University Trinity College Tunxis Community College University of Bridgeport University of Connecticut University of Connecticut, Neag School of Education University of New Haven Wesleyan University Western Connecticut State University Yale University

Stakeholder Support Groups		
Education Foundations Nellie Mae Education Foundation Fairfield County Community Foundation New England Secondary School Consortium Norwalk Education Foundation William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund ***Parent Organizations*** African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities Connecticut Parent Teacher Association Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center Connecticut Parent Power Family Resource Center, Meriden Middlesex County Parent Leadership Alumni Middletown School's School Family Partners District Team ***Community-Based Organizations*** Achieve Hartford Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition Stepping Stones Museum for Children The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven ***Science Technology Engineering Math-Related Organizations (STEM)*** Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering Connecticut Science Center Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement Connecticut Commission for Education Technology	***Business Community*** AT&T Bank of America Barnes Group, Inc. Boehringer Ingelheim Cigna Connecticut Business and Industry Association Connecticut Development Authority Connecticut United for Research Excellence, Inc. Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce Greater Meriden Chamber of Commerce Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce General Dynamics / Electric Boat Middlesex Chamber Northeast Utilities System Pfizer, Inc. Proton Energy Systems Stanley Black and Decker The Computer Company, Inc. The Hartford Travelers UIL Holdings Corporation Webster Bank	***State of Connecticut Commissions*** African-American Affairs Commission Commission on Children Economic and Community Development Employment and Training Commission Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission Workforce Competitiveness ***Other Critical Stakeholders*** Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now Urban League of Greater Hartford Connecticut NAACP Connecticut Puerto Rican Forum, Inc. Institute for the Hispanic Family New England Secondary School Consortium / Great Schools Partnership Our Piece of the Pie State Advisory Council on Special Education SBE Student Advisory Council United Way of Connecticut Wheeler Clinic

(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps *(30 points)*

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its ability to—

(i) Make progress over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas and used its ARRA and other Federal and State funding to pursue such reforms; *(5 points)*

(ii) Improve student outcomes overall and by student subgroup since at least 2003 and explain the connections between the data and the actions that have contributed to — *(25 points)*

(a) Increasing student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA;

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA; and

(c) Increasing high school graduation rates.

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (A)(3)(ii):

- NAEP and ESEA results since at least 2003. Include in the Appendix all the data requested in the criterion as a resource for peer reviewers for each year in which a test was given or data was collected. Note that this data will be used for reference only and can be in raw format. In the narrative, provide the analysis of this data and any tables or graphs that best support the narrative.

(A)(3) DEMONSTRATING SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN RAISING ACHIEVEMENT AND CLOSING GAPS

(A)(3)(i): Connecticut has demonstrated the ability to make progress over the past several years in the four education reform areas by using federal and state funding to support them. These efforts have contributed to increases in student performance on its state assessments and its position among the highest performing states on grade 4 and 8 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Improving Data Systems

Connecticut has been working to continually improve its data systems and to meet the 12 America COMPETES requirements as defined in the RTTT Application. Section (C)(1) provides a summary of Connecticut's progress toward meeting each requirement. Six have been fully implemented and six are in progress, with target completion dates of 2011-12 on the remaining six. In 2009, Connecticut received its second Institute of Education Services state Longitudinal Data System Grant. These funds, along with about $3 million in state funds, are directed toward completing the remaining work on Connecticut's state longitudinal data system.

Standards and Assessments

Connecticut has a strong record of focusing on high academic achievement standards for the state's students. The state has developed curriculum standards for pre-kindergarten to grade 8 (including grade-level expectations in English language arts, mathematics and science) and created models for curriculum in mathematics, English language arts (K-8) and algebra. The pre-kindergarten to grade 8 curriculum standards for English language arts, mathematics and science offer a continuum of grade-specific skills and knowledge that build across a child's school career, beginning with pre-kindergarten as the foundation. The state has a plan, which is ready for the adoption of the CCSS when the standards are released.

To support districts in using the state's curriculum standards, Connecticut developed the *Connecticut Curriculum Development Guide* (CCDG), an instrument designed to lead the planning, review and development of local PK-12 curriculum. Using an inventory of components recommended for all PK-12 curricula, the guide provides a common language and structure for curriculum design in an effort to increase consistency statewide, within and across subject areas, at district, school and grade levels.

On January 15, 2009, Commissioner Mark McQuillan received notification from the Assistant Secretary of the U. S. Department of Education, Kerri L. Briggs, that Connecticut's standards assessments in grades 3 through 8 (Connecticut Mastery Test) and 10 (Connecticut Academic Performance Test) and science in grades 5, 8 and 10 received *full approval* from the U. S. Department of Education. At the same time Connecticut received *full approval* for its alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, the Skills Checklist, for mathematics, English/language arts and science for the same grades. Connecticut has been working to

continually improve its standards and assessments and reported on all of the 12 indicators included in the Phase 2 State Fiscal Stabilization Funds application. Currently, the state meets six of the indicators and plans in to completely address the other six by September 30, 2011.

Great Teachers and Leaders

The last 20 years have provided the CSDE with strong experiences in developing and implementing standards-based, statewide student assessment, beginning teacher assessment and support programs and rigorous teacher and administrator evaluation guidelines. During the past three years, the CSDE:

1. Revised its Certification Regulations, which are currently awaiting SBE approval in July 2010.
2. Revised the *Common Core of Teaching,* which embodies the teaching standards that all teachers are expected to use. The leadership standards will be revised beginning in spring 2010.
3. Begun developing a new beginning teacher induction model (T.E.A.M.) to be fully implemented in 2010-2011.
4. Made plans to use the expertise gained during the last 20 years in developing valid and reliable measures of teacher competence, to further develop a more rigorous, data-driven set of guidelines for teacher and administrator evaluation. Work on this initiative is set to begin in spring 2010.

The newly revised *Connecticut Common Core of Teaching* is the set of standards against which LEAs will evaluate the effectiveness of their teachers. Additionally, the CSDE has plans to revise and update the guidelines for professional development following the revision of the teacher and administrator evaluation documents to move districts from providing “sit and get” professional development to job-embedded learning.

Turning Around the Lowest Achieving Schools

The CSDE has made significant progress in turning around schools through the establishment of state accountability legislation in 2007 and implementation of the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) with an emphasis on using data and assessment to improve the quality of instruction. As a result, students in these schools are making demonstrable academic progress. A complete description is included in Section (E)(2)(ii) and the CALI overview found in Appendix (A)(1)(d).

A(3)(ii): Demonstrating Significant Progress in Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps

When examining student performance over time, from 2003 through 2009, Connecticut can document significant improvements in mathematics and English language arts (reading and writing) by looking at its National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data and the state assessment data from the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT), administered in grades 3 through 8 and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), administered in grade 10.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

NAEP is the national assessment administered to a representative sample of students to determine the proficiency level of all students in grades 4 and 8 and of demographic subgroups of students. It represents a "common denominator" assessment to compare the performance of students across states. Connecticut has participated in every NAEP administration since the inception of state-level NAEP in 1990. Beginning in 2003, NCLB required all states to participate in state-level NAEP. Before that time states could decline participation without penalty. The data presented in Table (A)(3)(a) summarize results for 2003 through 2009 for grades 4 and 8 mathematics and reading and for grade 8 writing in 2002 and 2007.

NAEP Reading and Writing

Table (A)(3)(a) summarizes the results of NAEP Reading and Writing for 2003 through 2009, for grades 4 and 8 reading and for grade 8 writing in 2002 and 2007. Connecticut's 2009 NAEP reading results for all grade 4 students indicate that the state's proficiency rate was 42 percent, which was higher than the national average of 32 percent. Connecticut performance was significantly higher than 43 states and only Massachusetts scored significantly higher than Connecticut. For grade 8 reading, the state's proficiency rate was 43 percent, which was higher than the national average of 30 percent. No state had a greater grade 8 reading proficiency rate than Connecticut, six states (Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Vermont) were not significantly different and 43 states were significantly lower. Although there are large gaps among subgroups, the trend from 2005 to 2009 is positive for most groups.

Table (A)(3)(a): Longitudinal NAEP Results GRADE 4 NAEP Reading and Writing Proficiency Rates By Student Group

Year	All Students	Male	Female	Eligible for F/R Lunch	Not Eligible	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	ELL	Not ELL	SPED	Not SPED
Grade 4 NAEP Reading Proficiency Rates By Student Group													
2009	42	38	47	18	52	52	22	15	55	6	44	13	46
2007	41	37	46	13	53	52	15	16	59	8	43	12	45
2005	38	34	43	14	48	47	12	15	49	8	40	10	41
2003	43	38	47	18	53	54	12	18	44	‡	43	12	46
Grade 8 NAEP Reading Proficiency Rates By Student Group													
Year	**All Students**	**Male**	**Female**	**Eligible for F/R Lunch**	**Not Eligible**	**White**	**Black**	**Hispanic**	**Asian/Pacific Islander**	**ELL**	**Not ELL**	**SPED**	**Not SPED**
2009	43	37	48	18	51	51	11	19	64	‡	43	13	46
2007	37	31	43	14	45	46	12	14	45	2	38	8	41
2005	34	28	40	12	42	42	11	13	50	‡	34	11	37
2003	37	31	43	15	45	45	12	14	54	‡	37	6	41
Grade 8 NAEP Writing Proficiency Rates By Student Group													
Year	**All Students**	**Male**	**Female**	**Eligible for F/R Lunch**	**Not Eligible**	**White**	**Black**	**Hispanic**	**Asian/Pacific Islander**	**ELL**	**Not ELL**	**SPED**	**Not SPED**
2007	53	42	63	28	62	63	27	27	52	4	54	18	57
2002	45	35	55	24	54	55	15	17	55	‡	46	13	49

‡ Reporting standards not met. $p<.05$

NAEP grade 8 writing was last tested in 2007. Connecticut's proficiency rate of 53 percent was higher than the national average of 31 percent. No state scored higher than Connecticut and only one state, New Jersey, was not significantly different. Wide gaps also exist in subgroup performance, although the trend line in change from 2002 is positive for most subgroups.

NAEP Mathematics

Table (A)(3)(b) summarizes the grade 4 and 8 mathematics results from 2003 through 2009. Connecticut's grade 4 proficiency rate in mathematics of 46 percent was higher than the national average of 38 percent. Connecticut's students performed as well as or better than students in 45 states and they performed lower than students in four states (Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire and Vermont). Large gaps also exist among subgroups, although the trend line between 2003 and 2009 is positive for all groups. Connecticut's grade 8 mathematics proficiency rate of 40 percent was higher than the national rate of 33 percent. Connecticut's eighth-grade students scored as well as or better than students in 45 states and they performed lower than students in four states (Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey and Vermont). In grade 8, large gaps in performance persist among subgroups; however, there are positive trends among most groups, particularly when we examine the gender gap.

Table (A)(3)(b): Longitudinal NAEP Results GRADE 4 NAEP Mathematics Proficiency Rates By Student Group													
Year	**All Students**	**Male**	**Female**	**Eligible for F/R Lunch**	**Not Eligible**	**White**	**Black**	**Hispanic**	**Asian/Pacific Islander**	**ELL**	**Not ELL**	**SPED**	**Not SPED**
2009	46	49	44	18	58	58	14	18	65	9	48	19	50
2007	45	46	43	16	57	57	15	18	64	6	47	13	49
2005	42	45	40	16	52	53	11	15	57	10	44	14	46
2003	41	45	37	12	54	53	10	15	52	3	42	17	44
Grade 8 NAEP Mathematics Proficiency Rates By Student Group													
Year	**All Students**	**Male**	**Female**	**Eligible for F/R Lunch**	**Not Eligible**	**White**	**Black**	**Hispanic**	**Asian/Pacific Islander**	**ELL**	**Not ELL**	**SPED**	**Not SPED**
2009	40	39	41	13	49	49	10	14	61	6	41	13	43
2007	35	35	34	10	44	44	7	10	61	1	36	9	38
2005	35	35	34	10	44	46	6	10	46	9	35	10	38
2003	35	37	33	12	44	44	7	11	51	11	35	8	39
‡ Reporting standards not met. $p<.05$													

Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT)

Connecticut has administered the CMT since 1986 (now in its fourth generation) to assess mathematics, reading and writing. Before 2005, only grades 4, 6 and 8 were tested in the fall; from 2006 on, grades 3 through 8 were tested in the spring and a science assessment was added in grades 5 and 8. To satisfy the NCLB reporting requirements, Connecticut annually reports the percentage of students scoring at or above the state's proficient level. However, the state has a more challenging standard, **Goal**, that all students are expected to meet. Since 2006, approximately 250,000 students have taken the CMT annually. CMT results are presented in the tables below. The data are aggregated to report the percentages of students scoring "at or above goal" across all six grades.

CMT Reading and Writing

Table (A)(3)(c) summarizes the CMT reading results. The reading CMT consists of a reading comprehension test and a *Degrees of Reading Power* (DRP) test at each grade. The reading trends in performance also are generally positive for all students and most subgroups. However, the greatest increase in percentages of students scoring at or above the goal level occurred between 2008 and 2009, after flat performance from 2003 to 2007. Between 2003 and 2009, the proportion of all Connecticut students scoring at or above the goal level increased by 5 percentage points. As a point of reference, each percentage point increase per year, from one year to the next, indicates that about an additional 2,500 students reached goal across the state from the previous year.

Table (A)(3)(c): Comparison of CMT READING Scores from 2003 to 2009												
CMT READING: Percentage at/above Goal by Student Groups												
Year	**All Students**	**Male**	**Female**	**Eligible for F/R Lunch**	**Not Eligible**	**White**	**Black**	**Hispanic**	**ELL**	**Not ELL**	**SPED**	**Not SPED**
2009	66	64	68	38	78	77	40	37	11	68	30	69
2008	62	60	65	34	75	74	35	33	10	65	20	67
2007	61	59	64	33	73	73	33	31	9	64	20	67
2006	62	59	65	32	74	74	33	32	15	64	20	67
2004	60	56	64	31	70	71	31	30	14	61	19	65
2003	61	58	65	32	72	73	32	30	10	63	20	66

CMT reading scores also reflect large gaps in performance among subgroups, but most often with the lower performing groups making equal or higher gains. In comparing subgroup performance, the percentage point change is:

- greater for males (6) than females (3);
- equal for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (6) and those who were not eligible (6);
- greater for black (8) and Hispanic (7) students than white (4) students;
- smaller for ELL (1) than non-ELL (5) students; and
- greater for special education students (10) than for non-special education students (3). (Note: A modified assessment pilot was administered for the first time in 2009 to a small number of special education students who did not take the standard CMT.)

Table (A)(3)(d) summarizes the CMT writing results. The writing CMT consists of a Direct Assessment of Writing test and an Editing and Revising test at each grade. Overall, the percentage of students scoring at or above goal increased from 61 percent in 2003 to 64 percent in 2009, for an increase of 3 percentage points.

Table (A)(3)(d): Comparison of CMT Writing Scores from 2003 to 2009												
CMT Writing: Percentage at/above Goal by Student Groups												
Year	**All Students**	**Male**	**Female**	**Eligible for F/R Lunch**	**Not Eligible**	**White**	**Black**	**Hispanic**	**ELL**	**Not ELL**	**SPED**	**Not SPED**
2009	64	56	73	40	76	74	41	39	20	66	20	70
2008	63	55	71	37	74	73	39	38	18	65	19	69
2007	63	53	71	38	73	73	39	37	20	65	20	68
2006	62	54	71	37	72	72	39	37	25	64	20	68
2005	62	53	71	37	71	71	37	37	26	63	20	67
2004	63	55	72	38	73	73	39	38	20	65	21	68
2003	61	53	69	36	69	70	37	34	19	62	18	65

CMT writing scores also reflect large gaps in performance among subgroups, with a few cases in the lower performing groups making equal or higher gains that their higher performing counterparts and the patterns were not as consistent as reading. In comparing subgroup performance, the percentage point change is:

- smaller for males (3) than for females (4);
- smaller for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (4) and those who were not eligible (7);
- greater for Hispanic (5) students than for black (4) and white (4) students;
- smaller for ELL (1) than non-ELL (4) students; and
- smaller for special education (2) students than for non-special education (5) students.

CMT Mathematics

The CMT mathematics test assesses in all six grades students' knowledge and skills in four areas: (1) numerical and proportional reasoning; (2) geometry and measurement; (3) algebraic reasoning; and (4) statistics and probability. Table (A)(3)(e) provides data

from 2003 to 2009. The data show positive trends in CMT mathematics, consistent with the NAEP results. The percentage of students tested who scored "at or above goal" from 2003 to 2009 has increased for all students and for each subgroup, with the largest changes in performance occurring between 2008 and 2009. Between 2003 and 2009, the proportion of Connecticut students scoring at or above the goal level increased by 7 percentage points.

Table (A)(3)(e): Comparison of CMT MATHEMATICS Scores from 2003 to 2009

CMT Mathematics: Percentage at/above Goal by Student Groups

Year	All Students	Male	Female	Eligible for F/R Lunch	Not Eligible	White	Black	Hispanic	ELL	Not ELL	SPED	Not SPED
2009	66	66	66	39	78	78	37	39	22	68	31	69
2008	63	63	63	35	75	75	33	36	20	65	23	68
2007	62	62	62	34	74	74	32	34	20	64	22	67
2006	58	59	59	30	70	70	27	30	22	60	20	63
2004	58	58	58	30	68	69	27	29	22	59	20	63
2003	59	59	58	30	69	70	27	30	18	60	20	63

In comparing subgroup performance, the percentage point change is:

- smaller for males (7) than for females (8);
- equal for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (9) and those who were not eligible (9);
- greater for black (10) and Hispanic (9) students than white (8) students;
- smaller for ELL (4) than non-ELL (8) students; and
- greater for special education students (11) than for non-special education (6) students.

The trends in reading and mathematics are consistent, suggesting some systematic decrease in the disparity in performance among subgroups, except for English language learners. Underperforming groups are making progress, but have a considerable distance to go to perform at the same level as their higher performing counterparts.

Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)

The CAPT is Connecticut's high school test used for state and NCLB accountability. It has been administered since 1995 and is now in its third generation. CAPT assesses grade 10 students in mathematics, reading, writing and science. Approximately 45,000 grade 10 students take the CAPT annually. An additional 11,000 grade 11 and 12 students retest to meet their local graduation requirements because performance on the CAPT is a legislated requirement for LEAs as a component of their local graduation requirements, but must not be the sole criteria.

CAPT Reading and Writing

Table (A)(3)(f) displays the CAPT reading results, from 2003 to 2009, of the percentage of students scoring at or above goal. The CAPT reading test consists of two components: (1) reading for information; and (2) response to literature. Both consist entirely of extended-response items. Overall, the trends are generally flat between 2003 and 2009. Between 2003 and 2009, the proportion of Connecticut students scoring at or above the goal level only increased by 1 percentage point statewide.

Table (A)(3)(f): Comparison of CAPT READING Scores from 2003 to 2009												
CAPT Reading: Percentage at/above Goal by Student Groups												
Year	**All Students**	**Male**	**Female**	**Eligible for F/R Lunch**	**Not Eligible**	**White**	**Black**	**Hispanic**	**ELL**	**Not ELL**	**SPED**	**Not SPED**
2009	48	41	54	19	57	58	18	21	7	49	14	50
2008	46	41	51	16	55	57	15	18	6	47	11	49
2007	46	39	53	17	54	56	16	18	8	47	11	49
2006	47	41	53	18	54	57	17	19	9	48	10	51
2005	49	42	56	20	56	59	19	21	12	50	13	53
2004	48	42	54	19	54	57	19	19	11	49	13	52
2003	47	39	55	17	53	56	17	18	6	48	13	51

In comparing subgroup performance, patterns were not consistent with NAEP and CMT reading performance for some subgroups. The percentage point change is:

- greater for males (2) than females (-1);
- smaller for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (2) than non-eligible (4);
- greater for Hispanic students (3) and white students (2) than black students (1);
- the same for ELL (1) and non-ELL (1) students; and
- greater for special education students (1) than for non-special education students (-1).

Table (A)(3)(g) summarizes CAPT writing results from 2003 to 2009. The CAPT writing consists of two interdisciplinary writing, extended-response tasks and an Editing and Revising test. The statewide percentage of grade 10 students scoring at or above goal increased from 53 percent in 2003 to 55 percent in 2009, for a gain of 2 percentage points. The overall trend in writing performance

was somewhat positive between 2003 and 2008, with a decline in 2009 for all subgroups. There are large gaps in student writing performance among subgroups at the high school level and, except for gender, the gaps between lower performing and higher performing subgroups have increased.

Table (A)(3)(g): Comparison of CAPT WRITING Scores from 2003 to 2009												
CAPT Writing: Percentage at/above Goal by Student Groups												
Year	**All Students**	**Male**	**Female**	**Eligible for F/R Lunch**	**Not Eligible**	**White**	**Black**	**Hispanic**	**ELL**	**Not ELL**	**SPED**	**Not SPED**
2009	55	48	62	25	65	66	26	26	8	57	14	60
2008	58	51	65	27	68	69	29	28	9	60	16	63
2007	53	44	62	23	62	63	24	25	9	54	13	58
2006	52	43	62	26	60	62	25	25	15	54	13	57
2005	55	46	65	26	62	65	26	25	13	56	15	60
2004	54	44	63	24	60	64	24	23	9	55	14	58
2003	53	42	63	23	59	61	24	24	7	54	16	57

In comparing the change in subgroup performance between 2003 and 2009, the percentage increase is:

- greater for males (6) than for females (-1);
- smaller for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (2) than for non-eligible students (6);
- smaller for Hispanic students (2) and black students (2) than for white students (5);
- smaller for ELL students (1) than for non-ELL students (3); and
- smaller for special education students (-2) than for non-special education students (3).

CAPT Mathematics

The mathematics CAPT, using constructed response and grid-in items, assesses grade 10 students' knowledge and skills in four areas: (1) numerical and proportional reasoning; (2) geometry and measurement; (3) algebraic reasoning; and (4) statistics and probability. Table (A)(3)(h) summarizes CAPT mathematics results from 2005 to 2009. Overall, the trends in mathematics achievement at the goal level are positive between 2003 and 2008, with small declines between 2008 and 2009.

Table A.3.h: Comparison of CAPT MATHEMATICS Scores from 2003 to 2009

CAPT Mathematics: Percentage at/above Goal by Student Groups

Year	All students	Male	Female	Eligible for F/R Lunch	Not Eligible	White	Black	Hispanic	ELL	Not ELL	SPED	Not SPED
2009	48	51	45	17	59	61	13	17	9	49	15	51
2008	50	53	47	18	60	63	15	18	8	52	15	54
2007	45	47	43	14	55	57	11	15	9	46	13	49
2006	46	49	44	16	55	58	11	15	10	48	12	50
2005	47	49	47	17	55	59	13	17	14	49	14	52
2004	46	49	43	15	53	56	10	14	11	47	13	50
2003	45	47	44	13	52	55	10	13	10	46	13	49

Between 2003 and 2009, the proportion of Connecticut students scoring at or above the goal level increased by 3 percentage points. Comparing performance among subgroups, the percentage point change is:

- greater for males (4) than females (1);
- smaller for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (4) than those who were not eligible (7);
- smaller for Hispanic students (4) and black students (3) than white students (6);
- smaller for ELL (-1) than non-ELL students (3); and
- the same for special education students (2) and for non-special education students (2).

There continue to be large differences in subgroup performance, and many of the trends for subgroups suggest that the gap is increasing in Connecticut high school student mathematics performance.

Graduation Rates

Connecticut is collecting the data necessary to calculate the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate. Connecticut originally agreed to the National Governors Association (NGA) Compact graduation rate with plans to release this rate with the graduating class of 2010. The recently released Title I guidelines also called for the addition of the four-year adjusted cohort rates and, therefore, the process began to ensure data were in place to calculate the graduation rate earlier than anticipated. Because this is a new formula for Connecticut's graduation rate, the plan is to release these data to LEAs to show data for their districts as well as each high school's graduation rate for the graduating class of 2009.

Until the four-year, adjusted cohort rate is fully operational, Connecticut uses a modified cohort rate (2003-08) based on aggregate school- and district-level data, the rate the USDE approved for use in Connecticut's federal accountability system. This calculation, A divided by B, is as follows:

A. the number of June 2010 four-year graduates with a regular diploma

divided by:

B. the number of June 2010 graduates plus number of 2009-10 12th-grade dropouts; plus number of 2008-09 11th-grade dropouts; plus number of 2007-08 10th-grade dropouts; plus number of 2006-07 9th-grade dropouts.

The state graduation rate is reported in the Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR) and the state graduation rate for special education students is also required under IDEA in the state Performance Plan. The rates are based on the modified cohort graduation rate, also called our "transitional" rate, under the ESEA.

Table (A)(3)(i) compares the modified cohort rate graduation from 2003 to 2009. The trend line in graduation rates for all students and for the designated subgroups is positive from 2003 to 2007. Between 2003 and 2007, the statewide graduation rate increased to 92.4

percent from 89.0 percent, for a total of 3 percentage points. In comparing subgroup performance, the percentage point increase (in parentheses) is greater for American Indian (12.4), Asian American (5.3), black (6.6) and Hispanic (6.8) students than white (3.5) students. The improvement in graduation rate for special education students is 15.4 percentage points over the five-year period of time.

Table (A)(3)(i): Connecticut Graduation Rates for the Class of 2003 through 2008

Class of	All Students	American Indian	Asian American	Black	Hispanic	White	Special Education
2009	79.3	66.2	82.4	66.2	58.1	86.8	61.3
2008	92.1	*	*	*	*	*	79.4
2007	92.4	95.4	96.3	87.6	79.8	95.5	77.2
2006	92.2	91.4	96.0	86.0	79.4	94.9	73.5
2005	91.2	87.7	94.1	87.3	82.4	93.3	67.7
2004	89.8	88.7	94.2	82.7	73.5	93.4	63.2
2003	89.0	83.0	91.0	81.0	73.0	92.0	61.8

Note: The statewide graduation rate for the class of 2009 was 79.3 percent. The decline from previous years is due to a change in the calculation methods that were used previous to the NGA rate.

Data for some subgroups (*) were not reported in 2008, because the CSDE was transitioning to a new method of calculating the graduation rate. This change resulted in a data issue with the aggregate dropout data, by race; we have historically used to produce the modified cohort graduation rate. Data by these subgroups will be reported in the future using the new method.

Actions Contributing to Increases in Student Performance: Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative

Observations

In comparing data over time, the results from NAEP and the CMT suggest that overall Connecticut has made some progress in its elementary and middle schools in improving student performance in reading, writing and mathematics. However, there is much work still to do to continue to move all students to high levels of performance and to reduce the state's persistent achievement gap. Initiatives that have promise in improving student performance must be expanded to change the status quo whereby students who are economically disadvantaged, black, Hispanic, English language learners or who have disabilities consistently perform below their more advantaged counterparts. Some of the initiatives that have already been implemented and will be expanded through Connecticut's RTTT work are described below.

The CAPT results tell a somewhat different story. With little improvement in the percentage of grade 10 students meeting the state 'goal', the challenge at the high school level has been much greater for Connecticut in improving performance and reducing gaps. The *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* was designed specifically to tackle the high school performance issues raised by CAPT and our unsatisfactory number of remedial courses taken in community colleges statewide. The implementation of the *Connecticut Plan* is a necessary step to ensure that the state's high school graduates are better prepared for college and career success, particularly those who are the most at-risk academically. The *Connecticut Plan* requires districts to develop Student Success Plans for all middle and high school students and implement support systems to ensure that all students can meet the rigorous graduation requirements.

Promising Initiatives, Positive Outcomes

Since 2003, CSDE has worked vigorously to improve student learning outcomes. As a result of our work to implement No Child Left Behind and the SBE's 2006 Comprehensive Plan, many districts have been challenged to develop and implement rigorous PK-12 curricula with benchmark assessments, curriculum-based assessments and pacing guides, with particular attention to early literacy training and reading.

To support Connecticut's districts in developing effective curricula, the CSDE created the *Connecticut Curriculum Development Guide* in 2006. This guide is an instrument designed to lead the planning, review and development of PK-12 curriculum. Using an inventory of components recommended for all PK-12 curricula, the guide provides a common language and structure for curriculum design in an effort to increase consistency within and among programs, districts, grade levels and subject areas statewide.

With a sharp focus on the quality of instruction delivered in classrooms, CSDE has also created and disseminated important documents for districts to reinforce the state's assessment of effective content, process and practice, while reducing the development costs of producing these strategies locally. These documents include: *Connecticut Walkthrough Protocol Guide* (2008)*; Connecticut's Benchmark Assessments for Language Arts and Mathematics* (2009)*; Connecticut's Pacing Guides for Language Arts, Mathematics and Science* (2007)*;* and *Connecticut's Curriculum Frameworks for Language Arts, Mathematics and Science* (2007-2009).

Further, in the last two years, the SBE has developed and revised dozens of policy statements regarding mathematics, English language arts, science, health and ELL instruction science to align them with the curriculum standards and frameworks developed in those areas.

Reflecting the importance of effective instruction in the early years of student development, stronger alignment has also been made between preschool and kindergarten. *Connecticut's Preschool Framework* (2006) consists of content standards and performance standards (indicators) in each of four domains. It is supported by *Connecticut's Preschool Assessment* Framework (2008), which is a curriculum-embedded tool for assessing 3- and 4-year-olds in their classrooms. Connecticut has also developed standards for *Early Learning,* which includes grade-level expectations for the year before kindergarten and the *Connecticut Early Childhood Performance Development Guide* (2006).

It is significant to note, that as part of our intensified efforts to improve reading and literacy, the SBE made it a matter of policy in 2007 that all teachers by 2009 must take and pass "The Foundations of Reading", a rigorous examination on the science of teaching reading before being certified to practice. This examination, coupled with statewide conferences on reading improvement have, since 2007, all established a renewed sense of urgency to have all students reading at grade level by 4th grade.

Finally and arguably most important, CSDE established the CALI in 2004 to provide embedded professional development and coaching to accelerate the learning of all students and in so doing, close the achievement gap of students in the highest need, lowest performing schools and districts. In 2007, with the passage of state accountability legislation Section 223e (see Section E 1), this work was significantly strengthened to become Connecticut's Reform Model affecting all schools. We believe the upward trends noted earlier, have their roots in the intensive CALI work we have been doing in our most disadvantaged "Partner" districts since 2007 described more fully in Section (E)(2) of the application.

Final Thoughts

Connecticut's NAEP and the CMT results suggest that overall Connecticut has made progress, albeit not enough progress, in its elementary and middle schools in improving student performance in mathematics and reading and we have begun to close our achievement gaps. With the expansion of the initiatives outlined above as components of the state's comprehensive and systemic RTTT plan, Connecticut is poised to meet, within four years, the challenging targets we propose in Table (A)(1)(a), (i.e., cutting the performance gaps in half between white students and their African American and Hispanic classmates).

Meeting our CMT targets for "ready students" at the elementary and middle school levels will ensure that entering high school freshmen will be ready to successfully tackle the rigorous course of study the *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* (Section A-1) requires for graduation. We expect that with this plan we will build the foundation for likewise cutting the CAPT mathematics and reading gaps and, as well, the gaps in graduation rates between white students and their African American and Hispanic counterparts. As a result, Connecticut's future high school graduates, particularly those who have been the most at-risk academically, will be better prepared to enter college with no need for remediation and successfully complete challenging degree programs. In the end, we expect our graduation rates to rise, our drop-out rates to decline and our students to be better prepared to enter college or the workforce with the skills they will need for success.

(B) Standards and Assessments (70 total points)

State Reform Conditions Criteria

(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards *(40 points)*

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its commitment to adopting a common set of high-quality standards, evidenced by (as set forth in Appendix B) —

(i) The State's participation in a consortium of States that — *(20 points)*

(a) Is working toward jointly developing and adopting a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) that are supported by evidence that they are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation; and

(b) Includes a significant number of States; and

(ii) — *(20 points)*

(a) For Phase 1 applications, the State's high-quality plan demonstrating its commitment to and progress toward adopting a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) by August 2, 2010, or, at a minimum, by a later date in 2010 specified by the State, and to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way; or

(b) For Phase 2 applications, the State's adoption of a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) by August 2, 2010, or, at a minimum, by a later date in 2010 specified by the State in a high-quality plan toward which the State has made significant progress, and its commitment to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way.[1]

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

[1] Phase 2 applicants addressing selection criterion (B)(1)(ii) may amend their June 1, 2010 application submission through August 2, 2010 by submitting evidence of adopting common standards after June 1, 2010.

Evidence for (B)(1)(i):

- A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of a standards consortium.
- A copy of the final standards or, if the standards are not yet final, a copy of the draft standards and anticipated date for completing the standards.
- Documentation that the standards are or will be internationally benchmarked and that, when well-implemented, will help to ensure that students are prepared for college and careers.
- The number of States participating in the standards consortium and the list of these States.

Evidence for (B)(1)(ii):

For Phase 1 applicants:

- A description of the legal process in the State for adopting standards, and the State's plan, current progress, and timeframe for adoption.

For Phase 2 applicants:

- Evidence that the State has adopted the standards. Or, if the State has not yet adopted the standards, a description of the legal process in the State for adopting standards and the State's plan, current progress, and timeframe for adoption.

(B)(1) DEVELOPING AND ADOPTING COMMON STANDARDS

Introduction

In its Phase 1 Race to the Top (RTTT) application, Connecticut committed to adopting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) supported by aligned curriculum and professional development. Connecticut maintains that commitment in this RTTT application. Since January 2010, Connecticut has formulated a broader and much bolder agenda related to the new standards. This work is summarized in the table below.

Summary of State Progress on Standards and Assessments - January through July 2010		
Action/Result	**Date**	**Responsible Party**
Statutory Change: High School Graduation New statutory language specifying higher graduation standards to be completed by students graduating in 2018 (Public Act 10-111) Statutory Change: New statute authorizing early high school graduation options (Public Act 10-111)	 May 2010 May 2010	CT General Assembly, 2010 Session
RTTT Partnerships for Change Established RTTT Partnership for Family and Community Engagement RTTT Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment RTTT Partnership for Curriculum Innovation and Technology (includes STEM)	 May 2010	Commissioner of Education with Partnership Leadership Team
Building Educator Knowledge of New Standards Stakeholder forums LEA input on professional development needs ACHIEVE Gap Analysis completed to align CT mathematics and English language arts achievement standards to CCSS Stakeholder Engagement Conference Stakeholder feedback compiled and posted on the Web Adoption of CCSS	 March 2010 March 2010 May-June 2010 June 2010 July 2010 July 2010 July 2010	Commissioner of Education LEA forum participants CT State Department of Education with ACHIEVE CT State Department of Education CT State Department of Education CT State Department of Education CT State Board of Education
Identification of Additional Standards Work Plan to align Preschool Curriculum Framework to CCSC for K-3 Plan to develop Career- and College-Ready Standards	 February 2010 May 2010	CT State Department of Education
K-12 Curriculum Development www.CTcurriculum.org online	Spring 2010	CT State Department of Education

Based on this work, Connecticut is now on track to:

- Adopt, disseminate and support the statewide implementation of CCSS in English language arts and mathematics;
- Increase high school graduation requirements and options for early entry to higher education;
- Develop the state's first set of college- and career-ready standards;
- Assure alignment of the CCSS with standards for early childhood education and post-secondary education;
- Expand K-12 curriculum development aligned with the CCSS;
- Act on LEA input on targeted professional development needs related to CCSS and assessments; and
- Increase family and community understanding of the new standards and their importance.

Further detail is provided in Section (B)(3).

(B)(1)(i): Consortium Participation and Standards Adoption

In May 2009, Governor M. Jodi Rell and Chief State School Officer, Commissioner Mark K. McQuillan, signed the CCSS Memorandum of Agreement issued by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors' Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices, in partnership with Achieve, ACT and the College Board. With that memorandum, Connecticut joined 47 other states, two territories and the District of Columbia in a multi-state process of developing a common core of rigorous, internationally-benchmarked standards in English language arts and mathematics aligned to college and workforce readiness. A copy of the signed Memorandum of Agreement is provided as Appendix (B)(1)(a).

At the July 2010 meeting of the State Board of Education (SBE), the common standards will be presented for adoption. A copy of the draft national CCSS is provided as Appendix (B)(1)(b). SBE approval is the final and legal process for adoption of state standards; no legislative action is required for adoption in Connecticut.

Section (B)(1)(ii): State Progress in Adopting and Implementing Standards

The information below provides more substantial detail on current actions reported in the table above. Over the last seven months, content specialists at the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) have carefully monitored the CCSS development process and have provided specific feedback to drafts released in November 2009 and February 2010. While awaiting the publication of the finalized common standards, anticipated in early June 2010, the CSDE has developed a comprehensive plan to assure stakeholder acceptance and a confident transition to implementing the new CCSS standards.

First, the CSDE will do a thorough comparison of Connecticut's standards in English language arts and mathematics to the CCSS. To accomplish this, an online Gap Analysis Tool developed by Achieve will be used. In April 2010, Achieve trained a team of CSDE content specialists to upload both sets of standards and generate an analysis report that will identify which standards appear in both documents, which appear only in the state's current standards, and which appear only in the CCSS. This analysis will be completed in June 2010. The results will enable the department to understand the degree of similarity between the two sets of standards and to predict how the adoption of the CCSS may impact school districts, teacher preparation institutions and other education stakeholders.

Once the gap analysis study is completed, the CSDE will work with the RESC Alliance to convene a statewide Stakeholder Engagement Conference. The conference will bring together 125 representatives of a broad range of education stakeholders, including, but not limited to, teachers, principals, curriculum specialists, teacher preparation institutions, education advocacy groups, parent advocacy groups, social advocacy groups, special needs groups, business and industry and unions. The four goals of the conference are to:

(1) Build credibility, acceptance and understanding of CCSS in advance of adoption and implementation;
(2) Identify Connecticut state standards that should be added to the CCSS;
(3) Collect data on the relative rigor, clarity and sequencing of the CCSS and the state's standards; and
(4) Elicit feedback to inform CSDE planning for rollout, transition support, new resources and professional development.

Working in facilitated small groups, stakeholders will respond to a department-developed questionnaire to provide quantitative data about the quality of the CCSS; what additional standards – unique to Connecticut – should be added, if any, to the CCSS; and what resources or support systems will be needed for effective implementation of the new CCSS. Stakeholder responses will be analyzed by an independent evaluator who will prepare a report summarizing the conference processes and findings (see Appendix (B)(1)(c)), copy of Stakeholder Engagement Conference data collection form and draft of new CCSS**)**. The evaluator's report and the Commissioner's recommendation to adopt the CCSS, including Connecticut's additional unique standards, will be presented for discussion and voted on at the July 2010 meeting of the SBE.

In light of the fact that the CCSS do not include early childhood standards, the CSDE is proactively planning to work with the state's Early Childhood Cabinet to develop appropriate standards for children from birth to 5 years old and integrate them into the new Connecticut state standards. To assure a seamless alignment with the K-12 common standards, the work on new early childhood standards for Connecticut will begin once the final edition of the CCSS is published. In addition, the CSDE, working with the Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment, will propose college- and career-ready standards within the next year (see Section (B)(3)).

Appendices Referenced in Section (B)(1)(i-ii)

Appendix (B)(1)(a) Memorandum of Agreement for Standards Consortium Participation

Appendix (B)(1)(b) Copy of Common Standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts

Appendix (B)(1)(c) Copy of Stakeholder Engagement Conference Data Collection Form

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments *(10 points)*

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its commitment to improving the quality of its assessments, evidenced by (as set forth in Appendix B) the State's participation in a consortium of States that—

(i) Is working toward jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice); and

(ii) Includes a significant number of States.

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (B)(2):

- A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of a consortium that intends to develop high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards; or documentation that the State's consortium has applied, or intends to apply, for a grant through the separate Race to the Top Assessment Program (to be described in a subsequent notice); or other evidence of the State's plan to develop and adopt common, high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice).
- The number of States participating in the assessment consortium and the list of these States.

Recommended maximum response length: One page

(B)(2) DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING COMMON, HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENTS

(B)(2)(i-ii) Connecticut is committed to adoption of high-quality common assessments that reflect the depth and breadth of the CCSS. Since January, Connecticut has continued to expand its membership and roles in three consortia that are or will be engaged in the development of common assessments that flow from the CCSS.

Valid and reliable assessments are an essential component of an integrated system of education for instruction, management and public accountability. Assessments are designed to improve the performance of all students, particularly subgroups of students whose performance has not prepared them to graduate from public high schools or, if they did, to be successful in higher education and the workforce. A comprehensive, integrated and cohesive structure of formative, benchmark and summative assessments and performance tasks provides educators with a critical set of tools. These assessments are aligned with the rigorous curriculum standards, and educators can use them to measure students' progress, diagnose where learning issues are occurring, and plan instruction to move all students to higher levels of understanding.

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium

On April 13, 2010, Commissioner McQuillan signed the Document of Commitment through which Connecticut joined with 33 other states to participate in a state-led and -governed SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium to develop a new generation of comprehensive assessments aligned with the CCSS. Connecticut is a member of the Steering Committee for the development of the consortium's application for the Race to the Top Assessment Grant (Category A) for Comprehensive Assessment Systems. Eight CSDE staff members are participating in workgroups to draft sections of the application. A copy of the Document of Commitment, list of member states and Governance Structure and Priorities are included in Appendix (B)(2)(a). Connecticut expects to be one of the 'governing states' for the assessment system development when the application has been funded.

The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium's primary goal is to develop a balanced system of formative and summative assessments for evaluating student achievement in meeting the CCSS and measuring growth over time. The priorities for the consortium's work will be to ensure that:

- Assessments are managed as part of an integrated system that also includes standards, curriculum, instruction and professional development

- Assessments provide evidence of how well students perform on challenging tasks that prepare them for college and the 21st century workforce
- Teachers are involved in designing and developing curriculum and assessments and are trained to reliably score assessments
- Technology contributes to higher-quality assessments and improved information systems to support accountability
- Assessments are structured to continually improve teaching and learning

National Center for Education and the Economy Consortium

Connecticut is one of eight states working with the National Center for Education and the Economy (NCEE) in its application for funds in the Investment in Innovations (i3) Grant to support internationally benchmarked Board Examination Systems as alternative paths for students to complete high school graduation requirements and transition to college or the workforce. Connecticut is also a 'governing state' for NCEE's application for the RTTT Assessment Grant (Category B) High School Course Assessment Programs, also to support the implementation of the Board Examination Systems. See Appendix (B)(2)(b) for a copy of the letter of intent and list of member states.

New England Secondary School Consortium

Connecticut is also a member of the New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC) with the Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont State Departments of Education and the Great Schools Partnership. See Appendix (B)(2)(c) for the NESSC Letter of Support. The NESSC is working closely with states to design and plan a variety of secondary school improvement initiatives to bring greater coherence to secondary school education in New England and to promote best practices, school innovation and forward-thinking educational policy in the region. The next phase of the Consortium's work begins in July 2010 and includes developing performance assessments, coordinating the sharing of virtual high school courses among the member states, implementing consistent data definitions of high school effectiveness indicators (drop-out rate, graduation rate, college entry rate, etc.). A copy of the NESSC Phase II Work Plan is included in Appendix (B)(2)(d). Members of the Partnerships for High School, College and Workforce Alignment are participating in the Work Group, which meets monthly.

Table (B)(-2)(i-ii)(a): January through July 2010 State Progress in Adopting Common Assessments and Related State Law and Policy		
Action/ Result	**Date**	**Responsible Party**
RTTT Category A - Comprehensive Assessment System Grant Application	June 23, 2010	Consortium Executive Committee with Connecticut as a member
RTTT Category B - High School Assessment Grant Application	June 23, 2010	NCEE with Connecticut as a member
NESSC Phase II Work Plan	July 1, 2010	CSDE and NESSC

Appendices Referenced in Section (B)(2)

Appendix (B)(2)(a) Document of Commitment for the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, Governance Structure and Priorities, and list of member states

Appendix (B)(2)(b) Letter of Intent for National Center for Education and Economy Consortium and list of member states

Appendix (B)(2)(c) NESSC Letter of Support

Appendix (B)(2)(d) NESSC Phase II Work Plan

Reform Plan Criteria

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments *(20 points)*

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan for supporting a statewide transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked K-12 standards that build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation, and high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) tied to these standards. State or LEA activities might, for example, include: developing a rollout plan for the standards together with all of their supporting components; in cooperation with the State's institutions of higher education, aligning high school exit criteria and college entrance requirements with the new standards and assessments; developing or acquiring, disseminating, and implementing high-quality instructional materials and assessments (including, for example, formative and interim assessments (both as defined in this notice)); developing or acquiring and delivering high-quality professional development to support the transition to new standards and assessments; and engaging in other strategies that translate the standards and information from assessments into classroom practice for all students, including high-need students (as defined in this notice).

The State shall provide its plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

(B)(3) SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION TO ENHANCED STANDARDS AND HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENTS

Introduction

Over the period January through May 2010, Connecticut has established a broad set of implementation goals to ensure that CCSS and high-quality curricula will be available and in use and that a full-range of aligned assessments will be in place to track the progress of student learning and the fidelity with which the common standards and curricula are being used. This work is anchored in five advances over this period.

First, we have strengthened our commitment to engaging families and community agencies in understanding and support of the new higher standards. Second, our 2008 plan for secondary school reform was enacted as part of Public Act 10-111 (See Appendix

(A)(1)(c)) adopted by the Connecticut General Assembly in May 2010). Third, we have begun work on our commitment to align the K-12 common standards and assessments with prekindergarten and postsecondary education. Fourth, Connecticut has moved forward to enrich its evolving framework for teaching and learning anchored in a STEM framework. Finally, we will improve the working relationship between PK-12 education and our strong public and private institutions of higher education to ensure that our prekindergarten, college- and workforce-readiness standards, to be developed and adopted by June 2011, are aligned with higher education

On December 3, 2008, the SBE approved the *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* (see Appendix B)(3)(a)). Four key themes of the *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* are concordant with the expectations of Race to the Top:

1. *Student engagement*, reflecting improvements in instructional both delivery and school climate;
2. *21st century skills* required for future success in college and careers, based in particular on the work of the Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment;
3. *Rigorous expectations*, reflected in more demanding high school graduation requirements and higher, more clearly articulated course specifications; and
4. *Accountability* in the form of multiple assessments (including common formative assessments and end-of-course exams) linked to Connecticut's standards and frameworks.

Because there is strong concordance between the emerging CCSS, Connecticut's existing content standards and the elements of the *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform*, Connecticut is already on track to launch the state's plan to help LEAs transition to the new common standards and assessments. Importantly, in May 2010 the Connecticut General Assembly enacted significant education reform legislation (see Appendix (A)(1)(c)) that incorporated into law key elements of the secondary school reform plan. Specifically, the freshman class entering high school in the fall of 2014 will need to successfully complete 25 rather than 20 credits,

complete additional mathematics and science courses along with end-of-course examinations, develop Student Success Plans and complete a senior year Capstone Project in order to graduate.

The balance of Section (B)(3) describes the goals of Connecticut's transition plan, along with activities, timelines and responsible parties. Much of the work in Connecticut's transition plan focuses on enhancing the effectiveness of the state's teachers and administrators so they in turn will become better able to improve the performance of the state's public school students. As a result, we expect that students entering high school in 2014 will graduate equipped with the necessary knowledge, 21st century skills and behaviors needed to be productive. Planning will take place in the final year to ensure that the initiatives will be sustained.

The table below provides a summary of the goals and timelines that will support Connecticut schools and districts in the transition to the CCSS and associated assessments. The details of the goals of Connecticut's transition plan are listed below the chart and include activities, timelines and responsible parties. Although not the lead agency in most of the activities, higher education will be invited to participate in the planning and implementation to inform aligning their undergraduate and teacher preparation programs with the CCSS.

Connecticut's Goals and Activities to Support LEA Implementation of Common Standards and Assessments				
Goals/Activities	**2010-2011**	**2011-2012**	**2012-2013**	**2013-2014**
Goal 1: Stakeholder Understanding • Family and Community • Educators and Educational Associations • General Public and Policy Makers	Continue work begun in 2010 October 2010 June 2010	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal 2: Prekindergarten and Post-Secondary Standards Alignment • College- and Career-Ready Standards • Preschool Learning Standards and K-3 Standards Alignment	Ongoing Ongoing	Adopt Adopt	Roll-out Roll-out	
Goal 3: Professional Development • CT Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) and SRBI Training • Connecticut Student Assessment Forum: A Changing Paradigm • Fall 2010 Conference on New Generation Learners • Student Success Plans and Capstone Experience Training • Benchmark Assessment Development Training • Early Grade Learning Standards and Assessment Training • Teacher Involvement in Test Development and Scoring • LEA Requested Professional Development • SLDS/CEDaR Training	Ongoing August 2010 October 2010 Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
Goal 4: Multiple Pathways to Graduation for High School Students • Board Examination Certificates • Virtual New England Secondary Reform Consortium (NESSC) High School and College Course Offerings	Ongoing Ongoing	Ongoing Ongoing	Ongoing Ongoing	Ongoing Ongoing
Goal 5: Access to Digital Library • Continued development of the www.CTcurriculum.org Web site with inclusion of frameworks-based curriculum units	Begin Grades 6-12	Complete Grades 6-12; Begin PK-5	Complete PK-5	X
Goal 6: Expanded access to STEM learning opportunities for students and LEA faculty	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing

(B)(3) Plan in Detail

Goal 1: Increase public and targeted stakeholder understanding of Common Core State Standards.

As the result of this goal, educators, parents and the general public will clearly understand how the CCSS in mathematics and English language arts increase the expectations for the performance of all students, PK-12, and how they relate to the *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform*.

Activities

Family and Community Engagement

- Create a Web-based information site – linked to Connecticut's federally-funded Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC) – to inform parents and the community about the CCSS, assessments and the CALI (see Sections (D)(5), and (E)(1) (2)). Target completion date: July 2011.
- Working with the Partnership for Family and Community Engagement, develop a strategic communications and outreach strategy for improving family and community engagement in student learning, including providing family-friendly, multi-language presentations on the new CCSS. Target completion date: July 2011.

Teachers, Administrators and Statewide Education Associations

- Working with the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development, develop and disseminate to statewide stakeholders (including institutions of higher education) and LEAs a matrix presenting similarities and differences between the CCSS and Connecticut's previous standards and requirements in the *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform*, highlighting any key areas of change. This will be disseminated through the Regional Education Service Center (RESC) Alliance. Target completion date: October 2010.

- Working with the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development and the Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment, update existing resources such as grade-level expectations, pacing guides and model curricula and provide information to LEAs, higher education institutions and other constituents about how existing state curriculum resources dovetail with the requirements of the new common standards and the *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* requirements as codified in Public Act 10-111, and disseminate through professional development meetings at the RESCs. Target completion date: November 2010.
- Working with the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development and the Partnership on High School, College and Workforce Alignment, conduct statewide and regional events to present the CCSS at the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)/Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) annual meeting and to the early childhood education sector. Target completion date: November 2010.
- Working with the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development, CSDE will develop targeted professional development sessions/materials to address concerns and questions raised by educators, beginning with those raised at the March 2010 forums. Target completion date: June 2011.

General Public and Policymakers

- With the RTTT Knowledge Network and the Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment, conduct a media campaign to inform the general public and state policymakers (beyond the field of education) about the importance and implications of CCSS and assessments for the continued improvement of student achievement.

Timeframe: June 2010-July 2011. Continued public and stakeholder education each subsequent year, 2011-2014

Responsible Parties: CSDE; Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development; Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment; and Partnership for Family and Community Engagement; and the RTTT Knowledge Network

Goal 2: Construct, review and adopt college- and career-ready standards and align Preschool Curriculum Framework to create cohesive PK-3 framework.

As the result of this goal, Connecticut's implementation of common standards will be enhanced by creating vertical alignment with preschool and post-secondary standards.

Activities

- Led by the Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment, CSDE will develop and adopt college- and career-ready standards by June 2011.
- Following review by the Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment, the CSDE will endorse and promote the International Society for Technology in Education's National Educational Technology Standards for Students, Teachers, and Administrators (NETS-S, NETS-T, NETS-A). These internationally embraced standards address technology and other essential 21st century skills.

Early Learning Standards and PK-3 Vertical Curriculum Alignment

Connecticut's Early Childhood Education Cabinet was designated by the Governor in February 2009 as the State Advisory Council for Early Education and Care under the Head Start Act of 2007. As part of its federally-mandated functions, the council must address issues related to preschool that are analogous to the levers of change within the RTTT framework.

- Align Early Learning Guidelines (B-3) with the Preschool Curriculum Frameworks (3-5) for B-5 standards.
- Align B-5 standards with the CCSS for a PK-3 continuum.

***Timeframe*:** Adoption by June 2011

***Responsible Parties*:** CSDE; Partnership on High School, College and Workforce Alignment; Early Childhood Education Cabinet; School Readiness Network; Head Start Association; and the elementary principals' network (hosted by the Connecticut Association of Schools)

Goal 3: Provide educators from PK through 12 schools and higher education institutions with high-quality professional development related to the transition to and use of CCSS and the state's evolving assessment system.

As the result of this goal, educators demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary to continually improve curriculum and instruction so that their students perform at high levels.

Activities

Continue CALI and SRBI Training

These training programs will be made available to LEAs through the RESC Alliance and incorporated into pre-service training for undergraduates majoring in education. Target date: Annually beginning in fall 2010. See Sections (A)(1)(i) and (E)(3).

Timeframe: Annually starting in the fall of 2010

Responsible Parties: CSDE, RESC Alliance and higher education institutions

Connecticut Student Assessment Forum: A Changing Paradigm

Working with the University of Connecticut Neag School of Education and assessment and technology vendors, the CSDE will offer a two-day forum with nationally-acclaimed keynote speakers, presentations and workshops. The emphasis will be on using assessment data to inform curricular and instructional decisions and current state initiatives such as the Connecticut Benchmark Assessment System (CBAS), the Student Growth Projection Model, K-2 Assessments Consortium, research on accommodations on assessments for students with disabilities and English language learners, and performance formative assessments. The use of technology in assessment and reporting will be highlighted, as well the new generation of assessments that are being developed by consortiums nationally to measure student progress and growth relative to the CCSS that Connecticut adopted in July.

Timeframe: August 2010

Responsible Parties: Connecticut State Department of Education, University of Connecticut Neag School of Education and vendors

Fall 2010 Conference on New Generation Learners (October 2010)

Working with the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), the Partnership for Curriculum Innovation and Technology and the Knowledge Network, the department will offer a day-long conference for teachers and administrators showcasing district and school initiatives that are effective in increasing support for, and improving the performance and engagement of students, particularly those who are most academically at risk.

Timeframe: October 2012

Responsible Parties: CSDE, CAS, Partnership for Curriculum Innovation and Technology and the Knowledge Network

Professional Development Workshops on Implementing Student Success Plans and Capstone Experience

Beginning in the 6th grade and continuing through high school, each Connecticut student will develop a Student Success Plan. The plan incorporates the student's individual interests and abilities and establishes an individualized program of study that will help every student remain interested in school and achieve post-high school educational and career goals. These electronic Student Success Plans are integrated within the local student information system so that school professionals can help students monitor their progress in meeting grade-level and college- and career-readiness standards online. The capstone experience is a culminating performance-based project to help graduating students focus on an area of interest as they transition to college or the workforce. Through the capstone experience, each student demonstrates 21st century skills and content knowledge mapped to their Student Success Plans, including research skills and the ability to communicate their findings in written and oral presentations.

Beginning in the fall of 2010, the RESC Alliance, working in conjunction with the Partnership for Family and Community Engagement, will provide professional development to LEA personnel in implementing Student Success Plans and capstone experience projects that adhere to the guidelines posted on the state Web site and on CTcurriculum.org (see Table (B)(3)(a)).

Timeframe: Begin in fall of 2010. Continue annually through 2014

Responsible Parties: CSDE, RESC Alliance, Partnership for Family and Community Engagement

Benchmark Assessment Development and Training

The Connecticut Benchmark Assessment System (CBAS) provides rapid-time access to school- and classroom-level data to inform instruction and the need for supports. CBAS is based on the grade-level expectations (GLE) for mathematics and the assessment strands for reading, as defined in the Department's *Sequenced Mathematics Grade-Level Expectations* in grades 3-5, the *Mathematics Curriculum Pacing Guides* for grades 6-8, and the grades 3-8 *Reading Comprehension GLEs and Pacing Guide* system for benchmark assessments. CBAS is composed of 18 tests that mark student progress from the fall of grade 3 to the spring of grade 8 in mathematics and reading comprehension. CBAS results are available to teachers almost immediately following the administration of the assessment. Total mathematics and reading comprehension scores and mathematics GLE or reading comprehension strand raw scores are reported.

For the past four years, Connecticut has worked with LEAs to develop its online CBAS for grades 3 through 8. The state made CBAS available this year to all LEAs on a voluntary basis and 80 districts participated. The state is committed to developing a comprehensive, high-quality assessment system that integrates *summative* assessments with *formative* assessments for learning. The formative assessments provide teachers with feedback to help them diagnose how well students learn, so that they can adjust instruction and help students monitor their progress. In addition, *benchmark* assessments are used to monitor students' mastery and retention of skills and concepts over time and help students and their parents understand whether the child is on track to meet the grade-level requirements.

Connecticut's *Initiative to Support a Comprehensive Assessment System: Guidelines for Implementing Formative Assessment at the District Level* in Appendix (B)(3)(b) outlines the integration of these types of assessments into a cohesive system. To this end, Connecticut has been working with its testing contractor and LEAs to develop, pilot and administer the online CBAS for grades 3

through 8 in mathematics and reading. For each subject, CBAS provides LEA staff members with electronic reports for three sets of standards-based interim assessments annually that teachers can use to monitor student progress toward meeting grade-level standards over the course of a school year. The long-term goal for the CBAS project is to produce a large bank of items classified for specific educational objectives. The expectation is that teachers will be able to use the item bank to produce customized assessments that can be administered at the LEAs' convenience to provide immediate information to teachers regarding student performance relative to state defined standards. Professional development will be provided on an ongoing basis to assist and support LEA professionals in the use of the CBAS.

Upon adoption of the CCSS, the CSDE and its testing contractor will revise the benchmark assessments to align with the new standards. LEAs will then begin to chart their own progress and that of their students toward meeting the CCSS. Connecticut will also expand CBAS to include the Direct Assessment of Writing benchmarks for the same grades, to be administered three times per year, which will be scored using an artificial intelligence application to provide timely feedback to teachers and students.

Timeframe: Training annually, in the fall

Responsible Parties: CSDE, LEAs and assessment vendors

Entry to Early Grade Standards and Assessments

Connecticut recognizes that each child's success in elementary, middle and high schools is largely dependent on the skills and knowledge they have when they enter pre-school or kindergarten. As a result, the state requires kindergarten teachers to administer and report the results of a Kindergarten Inventory, which summarizes the skill-level that children have at the beginning of the year in the areas of language, literacy and numeracy, as well as social, artistic and physical skills. Results are used as a statewide indicator to monitor kindergarten preparedness. Training is provided annually to inform kindergarten teachers about assessment standards and appropriate use of the Inventory. Results of this assessment are transmitted back to the districts late in the fall and released on the department's Web site (see Section (C)(2)).

To complement the Inventory information and provide districts with tools for early intervention, the CSDE and the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) are working on a K-2 Assessment Consortium Project to bring together practitioners and experts in early childhood instruction and assessment to explore current practices in formative assessment in literacy, mathematics and science for our schools' youngest learners. The Consortium will work to identify unmet needs in this area and develop developmentally appropriate formative assessment materials and protocols in specific content areas for the early elementary grades. The project's focus in the first year is an appropriate formative assessments in math and science for grades K-2. The consortium is composed of representatives from 15 Partner Districts that are working with the Bureau of Accountability and Improvement, the CSDE and the regional educational service centers (RESCs). This includes practicing early childhood teachers (K-2); early childhood coordinators; and math, science and language arts specialists familiar with early childhood curriculum. The representatives who compose the Consortium are meeting six times per year to work on writing protocols for assessment administrations, piloting, editing, revising and finalizing created assessments and formats, developing administrative procedures and data analysis protocols, and creating a Web site to host the final assessment products. These assessments will be made available to LEAs, and the RESC will provide professional development for teachers so that they can reliably administer the assessments and interpret the results.

Activities:

- District assessment calendars collected and analyzed, 2010
- Release of Year 1 mathematics/science assessments, summer 2010
- Consortium meets to identify next steps for assessment development and professional development, June 2010
- 2010-11 plan developed, July 2010

Through the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development, the School Readiness Councils and the Early Childhood Education Cabinet, orientation and professional development opportunities will be provided to the Connecticut sector including K-2 teachers, principals and coordinators, with awareness training done for the early childhood field.

Timeframe: Assessment completion in June 2010 and ongoing orientation and training beginning October 2010

Responsible Parties: CSDE, CREC, State Education Resource Center (SERC), Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development; School Readiness providers, Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet, LEAs and higher education institutions

Teacher Involvement in Test Development and Scoring Protocols

Connecticut has a long history in involving practicing educators in all aspects of test development. The department will offer professional development statewide through the RESC Alliance to train teachers to teach rigorous statewide standards on key units, with special outreach to teachers in LEAs with large numbers of high-need students. Committees of educators will be trained to develop formative constructed-response and extended-response items and performance tasks that complement each model curriculum, including applying the Principles of Universal Design (a proprietary design compliance construct) to ensure access for students with disabilities and English language learners. Expert teachers, higher education faculty and researchers will participate in the development of the designated model curricula, formative assessments, sample lessons and end-of-course exams for the designated courses. Beginning in the fall of 2011, the RESC Alliance will provide annual training and professional development to district staff members in scoring constructed- and intended-response items and performance tasks using rubrics so that there is consistency. CTcurriculum.org will house the newly developed assessment tools and scoring rubrics.

Timeframe: Annually beginning in the fall of 2011

Responsible Parties: CSDE, RESC Alliance, LEAs

LEA Requested Professional Development

The Commissioner of Education hosted a series of stakeholder input sessions in late March 2010 to explore ways of both strengthening this RTTT application and better meeting the needs of LEAs in implementing the new CCSS. Results of these sessions

will form the basis of targeted professional development opportunities for teachers and instructional leaders. Among the areas requested for targeted professional development by LEA staff and administrators in 2010-2011 were the following:

- The relationship between the CCSS and emerging formative assessments;
- A crosswalk between current state and local curricula and the CCSS to facilitate the development and sharing of curriculum units that appropriately reflect the new standards; and
- The use of student performance data to modify current classroom instructional practice, an expansion of CALI.

Timeframe: 2010-2011

Responsible Parties: CSDE, Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development, LEAs

Training in Connecticut's State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) and Its CEDaR Data Web site

The RESC Alliance will coordinate professional development activities to integrate SLDS technical training for teachers and other district staff to effectively use the enhanced SLDS.

Teachers and administrators will be trained to utilize student assessment data to draw valid inferences from the data to improve their curriculum and the instruction they provide individual students. The enhanced system will also pilot a module matching teachers to students and courses.

***Timeframe*:** July 2010 through June 2014, phased-in over the four-year period to reach all districts, based on district technology capacity

***Responsible Parties*:** The CSDE and the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development

Goal 4: LEA implementation of multiple pathways to graduation including Board Examination Systems, Virtual High School Courses, expanded advanced placement courses and dual enrollment options for high school students.

As the result of this goal, Connecticut's students who meet college- and career-readiness standards will be able to accelerate their learning through new options for post-secondary education during their high school years.

Activities

Board Examination System

Section 17 of Public Act No. 10-111 authorizes the CSDE to implement, on a pilot basis, the National Center on Education and the Economy's Board Examination System, allowing students to complete high school at the end of 10th grade and enroll in post-secondary schooling the following fall (see Appendix (A)(1)(c) for specific statutory language). It is anticipated that this alternate pathway to a diploma will be of interest to students pursuing a career in health, business, science, technology, engineering, mathematics or other emerging 21st century professions. See Appendix (B)(3)(c) for information on Board Examination Systems that was made to the SBE.

Programs that are a part of the Board Examination System are:

- ACT Quality Core;
- Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) Exams and Advance International Certificate of Education (AICE) Exams;
- Edexcel International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) Exams;
- College Board Advanced Placement; and
- International Baccalaureate.

Each program offers a comprehensive system of high school course curriculums, instructional materials, professional training for teachers, and formative and summative assessments. Nineteen LEAs opted to participate in this new opportunity as part of their RTTT Memorandum of Understanding with the CSDE. For specific language see Appendix (A)(1)(g). Ten to 15 schools are expected to be selected to become pilot sites.

***Timeframe*:** Beginning in the fall of 2010, pilot high school staff will begin training to be able to implement the system for grade 9 and 11 students in September 2011. A second cohort of teachers from the pilot districts will be trained in 2011 to implement the system for grade 10 and 12 students beginning in September 2012.

***Responsible Parties*:** CSDE, NCEE, pilot districts

Virtual High School and College Courses

Connecticut is working with other states in the New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC) to coordinate each state's virtual online course offerings to expand enrollment opportunities for students and adults and reduce duplication of offerings. These courses can be used for credit recovery, enrichment or to suit students' interest in disciplines that are not part of their local district's curriculum offerings. The virtual high school programs offer most standard high school courses and provide the capacity to expand district offerings of Advanced Placement courses and courses for college credit.

***Timeframe*:** June 2011

***Responsible Parties*:** LEAs; CSDE; NESSC Working Group; and the Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment

Concurrent and Dual Course Enrollment

Working with the High School, College and Workforce Partnership, CSDE will expand its focus on effective transitions from high school to post-secondary education and productive careers. We will place renewed emphasis on developing regional consortia of high

schools and two- and four-year colleges to enroll students in dual and concurrent programs, including increasing mastery of STEM skills and interest in STEM courses. With the Partnership, we will monitor the alignment of new Common Core standards and curriculum to college- and career-ready standards, research and identify best practices and models for districts to support high school graduation of low-achieving students--including dual/concurrent enrollment in community colleges, job shadowing, and before and after-school internships emphasizing STEM and 21st century skills and behaviors. Efforts are already underway to create a more formalized "pipeline" between the CT PreEngineering Program, Project Lead The Way and CT Career Choices, to establish a smooth engineering-related transition from middle school into high school and into the community college's College of Technology program.

Goal 5: Access to constantly expanding digital library – www.CTcurriculum.org.

As the result of this goal, LEAs, parents and community organizations will have free access to standards, curriculum units, assessments, home schooling materials and other information and resources related to student learning and achievement.

Activities

Connecticut's digital curriculum and assessment library will be housed at the state's online curriculum Web site – www.CTcurriculum.org. Development of CTcurriculum.org has continued in the period January 2010 through May 2010, and a first public version of the site and its contents is accessible online now. The CSDE worked with master teachers to create the Web site. The purpose of the Web site is to help educators and parents understand how standards can guide and energize student learning. As the site is increasingly populated with content related to the common standards, we expect that teachers will use the information for professional development purposes and to explore the future direction of model curriculum development in Connecticut.

The Web site enables the user to access student assessment tasks, scoring scales and student work based on the standards. Educators can also use this site to share their own curriculum ideas with other teachers, by entering new tasks. The multimedia student work brings curriculum to life, by enabling users to see and hear the level of performance called for by Connecticut's current standards. New to the site is the addition of two-year college and high school curriculum projects submitted by mathematics, science and technology educators participating in a National Science Foundation (NSF) Advanced Technological Education (ATE) grant administered by the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA). The projects were inspired by the educators' experiences in the workplace, and help students make the connection between what they are learning in class and what is expected on the job.

Parents report in national surveys that they have little information about their children's curriculum and lack strategies for supporting learning. Empowering parents to support learning outside of school is a critical strategy for reducing Connecticut's

achievement gap. The Web site www.CTcurriculum.org will contain links to information written in parent-friendly language describing what students should know and be able to do, by grade, for mathematics and English language arts initially.

Timeframe: Ongoing 2010-2014

Responsible Parties: CSDE, with the Partnership for Curriculum Innovation and Technology; the Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Readiness; Partnership for Family and Community Engagement; LEA teachers; and students.

Goal 6: Expanded access to high-quality STEM learning opportunities for students and LEA faculty.

As a result of this goal, students in all participating school districts will have access to high-quality STEM teaching, courses and engaging resources.

All Connecticut students need to graduate high school with strong skills in the STEM areas. Currently, STEM requirements and expectations, instruction, curriculum, course availability and teaching resources vary greatly by district. Public Act 10-111 calls for increased emphasis on standards-based STEM skills, and greater credits and specific course requirements for both math and science. The new law also includes a requirement for at least one more credit in science, technology, engineering or mathematics, with the flexibility to add additional credits in these areas to accommodate student interests and goals as established in their individualized Student Success Plans. Model curricula and end-of-course assessments, all connected to the CCSS, will be developed for STEM courses of Biological/Life Sciences, Algebra, Geometry, Algebra II and Probability and Statistics, as well as hybrid courses (online and face-to-face) BIO21, CHEM21, PHYS21. Additionally, model curricula in Scientific Inquiry and Experimentation for students in grades 6-8 will be developed. These model curricula will serve as a base to ensure that, regardless of the Connecticut school a student attends, he or she will be provided rigorous, standards-based STEM content and course expectations.

To assure greater equity of resources, elementary and middle school students in all participating LEAs will be provided with standards-based online multimedia resources in science. An easy-to-use accompanying online tool will help teachers find simulations, demonstrations, activities, reading passages in English and Spanish, assessments and other resources for the standards they must teach. Currently, Connecticut makes these available for middle school and they have been extremely well received and widely used. Now, similar resources will be provided to elementary students. Professional development in using the resources effectively is available online and regionally through the RESC Alliance.

The availability of STEM courses will be expanded through support for online course access. Through RTTT funds administrated on a scholarship basis, students from high-poverty districts will have the opportunity to continue STEM learning beyond courses offered in their schools, including advanced science and mathematics courses, robotics, nanotechnology, AP courses and others. Section 6 of Public Act 10-111 requires LEAs to develop policies to assure that these on-line courses are rigorous, structured to engage students and taught by highly qualified teachers skilled in teaching in an online environment.

Through the Next Generation of Teachers and Leaders professional development modules (see section D-5), teachers will learn how integrating the use of technology and other 21st century skills can facilitate students' abilities to meet standards. Specific modules will target teaching elementary mathematics and science standards. Other modules will be designed for secondary school teachers specific to their content areas.

Activities (Activities listed here are addressed and budgeted for in section D)

- Acquire/develop model curricula and end-of-course assessments, based on CCSS
- Expand access to hybrid BIO21, CHEM21 and PHYS21 courses
- Expand online science resources to grades 3-8 for all students in participating LEAs
- Develop online STEM course scholarship program for students from high-poverty districts

- Provide professional development for teachers in teaching to the new standards through new curricula, online resources, and engaging methodologies specific to each content area and student development level

***Timeframe*:** September 2010–June 2014

***Responsible Parties*:** RESC Alliance; Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development; Partnership for Curriculum Innovation and Technology; and Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment

Targeted Changes in Student Performance Attributed to Adoption and Implementation of CCSS and the State's RTTT Plan

The following contains the annual performance targets that Connecticut expects its students to achieve as the result of the state's transition to the CCSS and new assessment system.

Performance Measures Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the state wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.	**Actual Data: Baseline (2008 - 09)**	**End of SY 2009-10**	**End of SY 2010-11**	**End of SY 2011-12**	**End of SY 2012-13**	**End of SY 2013-14**
The percentage of all students scoring at the goal level on the CMT increases by 2 percentage points per year for reading.	66	68	70	72	74	76
The percentage of all students scoring at the goal level on the CMT increases by 2 percentage points per year for writing.	64	66	68	70	72	74
The percentage of all students scoring at the goal level on the CMT increases by 2 percentage points per year for mathematics.	66	68	70	72	74	76
The percentage of all students scoring at the goal level on the CAPT increases by 3 percentage points per year for reading.	48	51	54	57	60	63

Performance Measures Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the state wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.	**Actual Data: Baseline (2008 - 09)**	**End of SY 2009-10**	**End of SY 2010-11**	**End of SY 2011-12**	**End of SY 2012-13**	**End of SY 2013-14**
The percentage of all students scoring at the goal level on the CAPT increases by 3 percentage points per year for writing.	55	58	61	64	67	70
The percentage of all students scoring at the goal level on the CAPT increases by 3 percentage points per year for mathematics.	48	51	54	57	60	63
The state graduation rate increases by 2 percentage points per year.	79	81	83	85	87	90

Appendices Referenced in Section (B)(3)

Appendix (B)(3)(a) The Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform

Appendix (B)(3)(b) Connecticut's Initiative to Support a Comprehensive Assessment System: Guidelines for Implementing Formative Assessment at the District Level

Appendix (B)(3)(c) Information on Board Examination Systems (March 2010)

(C) Data Systems to Support Instruction

State Reform Conditions Criteria

(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system *(24 points – 2 points per America COMPETES element)*

The extent to which the State has a statewide longitudinal data system that includes all of the America COMPETES Act elements (as defined in this notice).

In the text box below, the State shall describe which elements of the America COMPETES Act (as defined in this notice) are currently included in its statewide longitudinal data system.

Evidence:

- Documentation for each of the America COMPETES Act elements (as defined in this notice) that is included in the State's statewide longitudinal data system.

(C) DATA SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT INSTRUCTION

Introduction

Over the past four months Connecticut has been awarded two federal education reform grants, all of which rely on a robust and accessible longitudinal data system to support instruction and other key functions of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE): policy development, operations, management, resource allocation and overall effectiveness (see Race to the Top criteria and guidelines). These new funding awards are: a State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) grant and a Title 1(g) School Improvement Grant (SIG). We have examined and coordinated the data development and reporting requirements of each and will reference the various grants throughout this section as we work to ensure complete data and policy integration across them.

To address data development from PK through postsecondary education, Connecticut established in December 2009 a P-20 Council Data Working Group to create an inventory of data needed and policy questions to answer in order to better inform and improve the educational system. The P-20 Council Data Working Group works closely with the Interoperability System Council (ISC)

which is comprised of members from the CSDE, Department of Higher Education (DHE) and the Department of Labor (DOL). The ISC was created initially to address the work outlined in the federal Institute of Educational Sciences (IES) Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) Grant Connecticut received in August 2009; specifically, to develop a plan and protocol for sharing data from PK-12 education, into postsecondary education, and the workforce.

In addition, Public Act No. 10-111 included in Appendix (A)(1)(c) passed by the Connecticut General Assembly and signed by the Governor in May 2010, includes several new sections that further define information to be collected by Connecticut's (SLDS), how that information is to be used, and how it is to be made accessible to the public and educators. We summarize these new statutory requirements in Section (C)(2). We also launched our redesigned Connecticut Education Data and Research Web site (CEDaR) in May 2010. Finally, having identified the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) along with Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) as our core instructional improvement processes, we include references throughout Section C related to the fundamental role of data development, analysis and use in both. A summary of our progress between our Phase 1 and Phase 2 Race to the Top (RTTT) application is presented in the table below.

State Progress on Data Systems Development and Use January through May 2010		
Action/ Result	**Date**	**Responsible Party**
Federal Grant Awards • SFSF grant • SIG grant	 April 2010 April 2010	 CSDE
Statutory Change Public Act No. 10-111 adds new data requirements	 May 2010	 CT General Assembly
CT Education Data and Research Web site Launch expanded site	 May 2010	 CSDE
P-20 Council Data Working Group	December 2009	P-20 Council Working Group, including CSDE and DHE
Coordination of Data Requirements across Grants RTTT, SIG, SFSF	 May 2010	 CSDE

(C)(1): FULLY IMPLEMENTING THE STATEWIDE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM

Connecticut has accomplished six of the 12 America COMPETES requirements and has made significant progress in implementing the six remaining requirements, all of which will be completed by the end of the 2011-12 school year. Evidence is provided below for each of the 12 requirements. In addition, statewide actions to be taken as part of Section C include: developing a student growth measurement model; completing SLDS modules linking teacher and principal records to student information; developing a professional development system that enables educational professionals as well as parents and community organizations to make better use of available data; and increasing the availability of state data to better engage academic and applied researchers evaluating the efficacy of newly implemented programs relative to their effectiveness in improving the performance of high-needs students. The table below provides evidence of completion or progress for each requirement.

Status of Connecticut's Completion of the Twelve America COMPETES Data Requirements

Requirements	Status	Evidence
#1. Unique SASID	Complete	Connecticut General Statute (CGS) section 10-10a requires the department to assign public PK through grade 12 students a student identification number (SASID). (See Appendix (C)(1)(a) for this statute.) Annually, each new student entering the state's public school system is assigned an SASID. In 2007, the statute expanded to include all preschool students who were in nonpublic school programs who received state and/or federal funds. This is now being accomplished through the prekindergarten information system (PKIS).
#2. Student demo-graphic, enrollment and program participation information	Complete	For Connecticut PK-12 public school students, the Public School Information System (PSIS) collects enrollment data, demographic information (gender, race/ethnicity, free/reduced-price lunch status, special education status, English language learner status, date of birth). Program information is also collected on the PSIS for all students enrolled in public schools and publicly-funded school programs. The SASID is included in every PK-12 state data file collected at the individual student level (assessment, discipline, special education, etc). Recognizing the importance of collecting data about a student's prekindergarten experience, beyond that provided in the public schools, the CSDE created the PKIS (see element 1) to obtain information

Status of Connecticut's Completion of the Twelve America COMPETES Data Requirements		
		about the type of prekindergarten program in which the student is enrolled, the length of time the student spends in the program and other basic demographic characteristics of the student.
#3. PK-16 Student transition information (enter, exit, transfer, dropout, graduate)	Complete for PK-12. In progress for post-secondary. Target completion date for Higher Education: August 2012	The PSIS has a "real time" register/unregister module. When a student leaves a school/local education agency (LEA), the LEA must unregister that student and specify a reason for leaving. LEAs must register new entrants into the PSIS when they arrive. This allows the state to track student transfer patterns within and across LEAs. The system does not contain postsecondary education information. With support from a second IES grant, data sharing will become possible between the CSDE, public higher education institutions and DOL. A memorandum of agreement (MOA) with each entity has been developed for this project. In addition to the work detailed above, the CSDE is working together with the Department of Higher Education (DHE) to contract with the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). The NSC project will provide data to the SLDS regarding postsecondary student enrollment, program participation and completion. By June 2010 the contract with NSC will be finalized, with the first data upload to NSC occurring in July 2010. The NSC data will be loaded into the SLDS in August 2010, using the SASID as the key. Analysis will occur from August to October 2010, with public dissemination in November 2010. This process will be repeated annually.
#4. Capacity to communicate with higher education data systems	In progress. Target completion date: September 2011	With support from the second IES grant, the ISC consisting of the CSDE, DHE, public higher education institutions and the DOL will develop a data interoperability framework. Working through the ISC and to ensure this assurance under SFSF is achieved, the state's public institutions of higher education agreed in April 2010 to incorporate the SASID as a field in their student information systems. This will allow for the linking of student information longitudinally from PK-12 through higher education and across higher education institutions. With the SASID included in postsecondary data systems, the SDE and DHE will be able to link student-level data between the two.
#5. Audit system to ensure data quality	Complete	The CSDE applies a set of validation rules to the data before they can be formally accepted for all data collections, does statistical checking and produces reports for LEAs that identify outliers in their data, including significant changes from the previous year as well as missing data. LEAs must address their data exceptions prior to the CSDE officially accepting their data. The CSDE also invokes penalties under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), where applicable, for those data LEAs do not submit in a timely and accurate fashion.

Status of Connecticut's Completion of the Twelve America COMPETES Data Requirements		
#6. Yearly test records for assessment required under the ESEA	Complete	The CSDE maintains test records for all required assessments, and the SASID is a field in all state assessment files. Connecticut has a fully federally-approved system of grade-level standards and assessments (Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)) for mathematics, reading and writing for grades 3 through 8 and 10, and for science in grades 5, 8 and 10. An alternate assessment system (Skills Checklist) exists for the state's most cognitively-disabled students, based on alternate achievement standards in the same subjects and grades. Together these constitute the foundation of the state's approved accountability plan under NCLB. A modified achievement standards (MAS) assessment in mathematics and reading became operational in March 2010 for a second group of students with disabilities and will undergo the federal peer review process. In addition, the CSDE has created online grade-level Connecticut Benchmark Assessment System (CBAS) tests for grades 3 through 8 in mathematics and reading, which teachers may use to chart student progress against the grade-level expectations identified in the pacing guides for the state's curriculum frameworks (see Section (B)(3) and Section (D)(2).
#7. Information on students not tested by grade and subject	Complete	The student assessment file contains SASIDs for each student tested so the state can identify annually, by grade and subject, any students not tested.
#8. Teacher identifier to match students to teachers	In progress. Target completion date: April 2011	In 2008-09, the state upgraded its educator certification system to begin collecting the Social Security number of each certification applicant and then assigning a unique educator identification number (EIN). The EIN will be included in the CSDE's upgraded, annual certified-staff data file of the professional staff members who work in the state's public schools and programs beginning in late 2010. Interim plans are in place to match mathematics and language arts teachers to their students, and the EINs will be included in the testing file for the 2010 administration of the CMT and CAPT. Districts will have student performance level and vertical scale growth associated with the children in each teacher's class in 2011. The final step is to link the teacher identifier with the student identifier (the SASID) for *all* students and all subjects. One of the objectives of the IES SLDS grant awarded in August 2009 is to pilot the matching of teachers to students, *and in addition, link students to the courses in which they are enrolled*. This grant and pilot project are spread out over three years. To speed up the timeline and

Status of Connecticut's Completion of the Twelve America COMPETES Data Requirements		
		meet this same assurance under SFSF, and expand this to all districts outside of the pilot, the following milestones and timelines are planned: • August 2010: LEAs ingest the EIN into their local data system. • August 2010: Business requirements document and functional specifications documents are created. • August-November 2010: Districts conduct the crosswalk to match their course identification numbers with the NCES course codes. Using National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) course codes will ensure consistency across districts. • September 2010-December 2010: Development of system to collect student-teacher-transcript (schedule) data from every district in Connecticut. • January 2011: Pilot the collection system; teachers matched with students and their courses. • February-April 2011: Training and roll-out.
#9. Student-level transcripts containing courses and grades	In progress. Target completion date: April 2011	Elements 8 and 9 are closely related, and the work is occurring simultaneously to achieve completion. The department will be adopting NCES course codes and conducting a pilot effort to match students to courses to teachers as a Phase II IES grant (awarded August 2009) component. The grant will be used to develop and pilot a scheduling module that will connect teachers to students, create a transcript of the courses students took and explore integrating the grades students earn. This will create the state's capacity to track student course-taking patterns and grades by LEA, school and teacher. To accelerate this work and meet the SFSF assurance, the timeline articulated in Element 8 will be implemented for Element 9.
#10. Student scores on college readiness tests (Scholastic Aptitude Test/Advanced Placement)	In progress. Target completion date: September 2011	This is in place for students planning to attend colleges and universities that require a college entrance exam such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Test (ACT) or Advanced Placement (AP) exam. The state receives individual student results for the SAT and AP tests annually for Connecticut public school graduates. To improve efficiency, the CSDE is requesting that the College Board add a field to its registration form for the SASID. At present, the SASID is not part of the form that students must complete to register for these assessments. Currently, the CSDE is able to connect these college readiness assessments to the SASID and then to other data in our system by creating a pseudo-identifier using first name, last name, date of birth and high school/LEA. Addition of the SASID will increase efficiency and reduce the need for additional matching efforts.

Status of Connecticut's Completion of the Twelve America COMPETES Data Requirements		
		The CSDE has prepared a plan to develop a mathematics and English language arts standard for "on-track to college and career readiness" based on the grade 10 CAPT. In order to have a statewide on-track to college and career readiness standard for all graduates of its public schools, not just those who take the SAT or AP assessments, the department will collaborate with the Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment to develop a plan for college and career standards based on the CAPT, administered to all grade 10 students in the state's public high schools and grade 11 and 12 students who elect to retest in subsequent years (see Section (B)(1) and (B)(3).
#11. Transition data from secondary to higher education, including remedial course-taking	In progress. Target completion date: Fall 2010	CSDE is providing funds from the Phase II IES grant to the DHE to match the PK-12 longitudinal data to postsecondary and workforce data. The CSDE has developed an MOA with the DHE and the DOL to collaborate on this work. The linking of student longitudinal data from PK-12 to college, and then to the state's workforce, will permit researchers to examine which programs are most effective in preparing students for success beyond secondary schools. As a result of the work of the ISC and the P-20 Data Workgroup, the Connecticut State University System and the Connecticut Community College System will be providing data at a high school level on the numbers of students arriving in the fall placing into remedial or developmental mathematics, English or both. This will be provided on an annual basis beginning in the fall of 2010.
#12. Data on the alignment and adequacy of student preparation for postsecondary education	In progress	This work will be undertaken with the Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment and the RTTT Knowledge Network. Together, the groups will assist the department to identify research studies that will inform stakeholders how well students who enter either postsecondary education or the workforce are prepared for success.

<u>Appendices Referenced in Section (C)(1)</u>

Appendix (C)(1)(a) Connecticut General Statute on Public School Information Systems

Reform Plan Criteria

(C)(2) Accessing and using State data *(5 points)*

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan to ensure that data from the State's statewide longitudinal data system are accessible to, and used to inform and engage, as appropriate, key stakeholders (*e.g.*, parents, students, teachers, principals, LEA leaders, community members, unions, researchers, and policymakers); and that the data support decision-makers in the continuous improvement of efforts in such areas as policy, instruction, operations, management, resource allocation, and overall effectiveness.[1]

The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

(C)(2): ACCESSING AND USING STATE DATA

Introduction

The CSDE has long embraced the value and power of data to drive education reform, improve instruction at the district and classroom level, and support both local and statewide accountability. Enormous amounts of student achievement data are already online at the CSDE's CEDaR Web site, and in May 2010, the CSDE deployed the first iteration of this newly enhanced public web resource. CEDaR allows Internet users to access the department's aggregate school and LEA data to perform basic search and compare functions. Online reports are now available as a traditional report format or by using a series of new graphing capabilities. This public access to various types of education data to inform and engage key stakeholder groups such as parents, community leaders and practitioners, researchers and policymakers in decisions related to policy, operations, management, and resource allocation will dramatically improve with the launch of the redesigned CEDaR Web site.

[1] Successful applicants that receive Race to the Top grant awards will need to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including 34 CFR Part 99, as well as State and local requirements regarding privacy.

LEA access to secure student, staff and facility data through an online portal, one of the most salient features of Connecticut's Statewide Longitudinal Data System, is under development and is described in more detail later. In addition, the Connecticut General Assembly included in Public Act No. 10-111 a series of expanded data requirements to be implemented no later than July 1, 2013 (see Appendix (A)(1)(c)). The new law also requires the Commissioner of Education to report by July 1, 2011, (and annually thereafter) on the status of implementation progress including those remaining data elements to be added and accessible by July 1, 2013. A summary listing of new data requirements follows:

- Track and report data related to student, teacher, school and district performance and make that information available to boards of education for evaluating the educational performance and growth of teachers and students (see Section (D)(2) for more information).
- In addition to state mastery assessment scores, include in the student data collection information on, for example, primary home language, student transcripts, attendance and mobility and entry to kindergarten readiness.
- Teacher-related data will include teacher credentials, preparation programs completed, certification levels and endorsement areas, along with teacher performance assessments related to "effectiveness" criteria (see Section (D)(2)). Other data to be collected and reported include presence of substitute teachers and/or teacher aides in the classroom and class absenteeism.
- Data related to school districts will include student enrollment in and graduation from post-secondary education.
- Develop the means for access to and data sharing with the data systems of higher education in the state.

Finally, as described at the beginning of Section C, Connecticut has established a P-20 Data Working Group that interfaces closely with the CSDE's ISC to identify leading data issues and recommend a P-20 data development agenda.

Over the period January through May 2010, we have expanded the goals we seek to accomplish related to Section (C)(2). Phase 2 goals are summarized below with dates and responsible parties. Detailed information for each goal follows:

Connecticut's Plan to Support Broad Data Access and Use				
Goal	**2010-2011**	**2011-2012**	**2012-2013**	**2013-2014**
Goal 1: LEA access to CMT and CAPT Data • Assessment Forum • Student Growth Data	Complete	Reading & math data delivered	Annual Updates	Annual Updates
Goal 2: LEA secure access to data and its use improved through new CEDaR Web site; LEA feedback survey	May 2010 Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal 3: Expanded LEA training on CALI data components and use	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal 4: Parent and public CEDaR orientation, training and outreach	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal 5. P-20 Data Working Group supports data development efforts	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing

The Plan for Section (C)(2) in Detail

Goal 1: The CSDE will improve access to CMT and CAPT data available to LEA personnel to provide constituents with the data necessary to improve instructional effectiveness.

As a result, LEA district personnel will be more knowledgeable in the use of data, including as related to assessment. LEA personnel will also have access to reading and math information on student growth in grades 3 through 8.

Activities for LEA Personnel

- The Bureau of Student Assessment will conduct an Assessment Forum on August 12 and 13, 2010, to provide district personnel with training in new features of the Web site and strategies for using the data more effectively. Assessment staff members will also continue to work with the Regional Educational Service Center (RESC) Alliance to provide a series of assessment workshops annually on customizing the use of testing data to meet district needs, including providing resources for teachers and parents (see Goal 2 in Section (B)(3)).
- Consistent with Connecticut's State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Phase 2 Application, to improve access and use of these data to improve instruction, the department will require LEAs to provide teachers with student growth data on their current students and the students they taught in the previous year. Beginning in 2011, the CSDE will provide these data to each LEA which, in turn, will share the data with its reading/language arts and mathematics teachers in grades in which the state administers assessments in those subjects, in a manner that is timely and informs instructional programs.

Timeframe*:* August 2010 through July 2011, with annual updates each year thereafter

Responsible Parties: CSDE Bureau of Student Assessment; Measurement Incorporated (testing vendor); eMetric (CTReports contractor); RESC Alliance

Goal 2: CSDE will improve the access to the education data in the SLDS via the CEDaR Web site; LEAs will have access to secure data on the CEDaR Web site; LEAs and other constituents will have the opportunity to provide feedback.

As a result, new data and types of analysis will become possible, including ability to provide for in-depth analysis of student performance on state standardized tests, additional student-level variables (e.g., discipline, attendance) and aggregate facility and LEA information.

Activities

- To ensure LEA constituents know how to access and use CEDaR, regional training sessions, conducted by CSDE staff members from the Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation, will teach participants how to access the enhanced CEDaR Web site and how to use the various data tools to meet their needs, whether policy or research related. The RESC Alliance will work with staff from the Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation to develop resources to support data interpretation and manipulation through training modules, both for online and in-person workshops, for educators, parents and the public (See Section (B)(3) SLDS/CEDaR Training).
- Through the secure portal, the bureau will provide LEA leaders, principals and teachers with the ability to control, query and summarize educational data specific to the students they educate, in a secure, user-friendly environment. The portal will include the ability to provide for in-depth analysis of a student's educational history, including type of PK program attended, student performance on state standardized tests, additional student-level variables (e.g., discipline, attendance) and aggregate facility and LEA information.
- The Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation will survey its LEA and statewide education constituents annually to determine the level of use of the CEDaR site, how the Web site is used and how it could be improved. The results of this feedback from constituents will be used to inform CSDE staff about the enhancements needed for CEDaR in order to better meet the needs of users.

Timeframe: May 2010 and ongoing annually through 2014

Responsible Parties: CSDE's Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation; the Bureau of Information Technology; Choice Solutions Group (the SLDS vendor); Regional Education Resource Center Alliance

Goal 3: Continue to implement the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) data-driven decision-making (DDDM) component to ensure LEAs are using available education data to inform practice.

As a result, LEAs will know the data that are available to them and how to use these data to improve their policies, instruction and overall effectiveness.

Using data to inform policy and practice is a key component of the CALI Program. CALI is designed to provide a comprehensive model for instructional improvement, based on the use of data, at the LEA and state level. The key components of the CALI training and technical assistance that support the use of data to improve instruction include: (1) Data-Driven Decision-Making (DDDM) which requires ongoing review of data by LEA leaders, building leaders and teachers to determine the strengths in areas that need improvement at the LEA and school level; and (2) local Data Teams which conduct ongoing analysis of data from state, benchmark and common formative assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses in student learning (particularly in areas in reading, mathematics, and science), and identify instructional strategies that will best address student learning objectives in the classroom. This feature of CALI is described even further in Section (C)(3).

Activities

- As noted later in (C)(3)(i), participating LEAs will sign the required Memorandum of Understanding (see Appendix (A)(1)(f)) requiring and supporting their full participation in the CALI beginning in year one of the RTTT reform agenda. Not all LEAs will start in year one.

- The RESC Alliance and SERC will provide professional development on Data-Driven Decision-Making and CALI modules for 280 schools in year one, 560 schools in year two, 280 schools in year three and 580 schools in year four of the RTTT effort.

Timeframe: Beginning September 2010 and then ongoing

Responsible Parties: Bureau of Accountability and Improvement; RESC Alliance, and State Education Resource Center (SERC)

Goal 4: Parent and public CEDaR training and outreach.

Parents and other interested members of the public will have access to outreach, orientation and training on the use of CEDaR and will have the opportunity to provide online feedback on the usability of the Web site and suggestions for improvement.

Activities

- These activities are part of a larger agenda to inform and involve parents and the community in student learning and public accountability for educational reform. Part of this agenda was presented in Section (B)(3) with regard to educating parents and the community in the new national and state standards and in the state's evolving systems of student assessment.
- The Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation will survey its LEA and statewide education constituents annually to determine the level of use of the CEDaR site, how the Web site is used and how it could be improved. The results of this feedback from constituents will be used to inform CSDE staff about the enhancements needed for CEDaR in order to better meet the needs of users.

Timeframe: Beginning in the fall of 2010 and continuing beyond 2014

Responsible Parties: CSDE Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation, with the Partnership for Family and Community Engagement, the Knowledge Network

Goal 5: Work with P-20 Data Group to improve the capacity to share data across the P-20 continuum, and determine best practices for disseminating the information.

As a result, state and local education leaders have information to make better informed policy and practice decisions.

Activities

- Identify the information needed by key state and local education leaders and the data elements necessary for such.
- Develop MOAs between PK-12, higher education constituent units and labor for the regular and on-going sharing of student level data based on the recommendations of the Interoperability System Council.
- Develop the secure data environment for the sharing of data from PK-12, higher education institutions and labor.
- Develop capacity to analyze, report and disseminate the data. Develop basic metric reports and begin producing the reports on a regular schedule. Design and develop Internet-based dissemination capabilities for these reports, providing drill-down and timeline data views.

Timeframe: Complete by August 2013

Responsible Parties: P-20 Data Group, CSDE, State Department of Higher Education

Performance Measures Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.	**Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
No Performance Measures for (C)(2).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction *(18 points)*

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan to—

(i) Increase the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness;

(ii) Support participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) and schools that are using instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) in providing effective professional development to teachers, principals and administrators on how to use these systems and the resulting data to support continuous instructional improvement; and

(iii) Make the data from instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice), together with statewide longitudinal data system data, available and accessible to researchers so that they have detailed information with which to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students (*e.g.*, students with disabilities, English language learners, students whose achievement is well below or above grade level).

The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note the location where the attachment can be found.

(C)(3) USING DATA TO IMPROVE INSTRUCTION

(C)(3)(i) Support LEAs in acquiring and using local instructional improvement support systems

Connecticut currently provides data support for instructional purposes to local school districts through two core programs: the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) and Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI). Each has a somewhat different point of focus but each represents instructional systems accessible to LEAs participating in Connecticut's comprehensive reform agenda. Each is described below in some detail to support goals associated with Section (C)(3)(i).

CALI as a Data-Driven Instructional Improvement Process

The Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) has been described throughout Connecticut's Phase 2 RTTT application as a core component of our instructional improvement process (see Section (A)(1)(i) as well as Sections (B)(3) and (C)(2)). CALI is designed to provide a comprehensive PK-12 model for instructional improvement and accountability based on the use of data at the state, LEA, building and classroom level. The use of district data teams at the LEA, school and classroom levels builds capacity to use data to improve instruction from a variety of resources including state, LEA and school assessment data from the statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS). A prekindergarten CALI model is under consideration for development for 2010-2011.

As the CALI accountability framework is expanded to RTTT participating LEAs, each LEA will be required to have a District Improvement Plan (DIP) with a limited number of high leverage, measurable targets. Data used to set and monitor targets come from both the state and LEA data systems as described above. In addition, data on adults in the system, such as attendance, qualifications, office referrals, years of experience and student progress, are analyzed and used in setting targets. Each LEA is also required to have an LEA Data Team that meets monthly to monitor implementation and progress on the DIP based on interim measures in the DIP. Each school develops a School Improvement Plan (SIP) aligned to the DIP based on an analysis of data for the school. Each *school* is also required to have a School Level Data Team that meets on a monthly basis to monitor implementation and progress on the SIP. The SIP strategies and activities are implemented through instructional or grade-level data teams that meet regularly, at least twice monthly.

The effectiveness of the LEA, school and instructional data teams is monitored using rubrics for effective data teams at each level. In addition, based on district self-assessments, selected schools in LEAs will have a Data Team Facilitator assigned to coach the school- and instructional-level data teams as well as an Executive Coach to work with the leadership team in implementing the accountability system. The state team assigned to each LEA works with the LEA data team to monitor the effectiveness of the data teams. Standards have been identified for each team and state-designed rubrics are used to assess effectiveness and provide ongoing feedback for improvement. CALI training and technical assistance supporting LEAs in the use of data to improve instruction include:

- *Data-Driven Decision-Making* – ongoing review of student data by district leaders, building leaders and teachers to determine strengths and areas in need of improvement at the district and school level.
- *Data Teams* – ongoing analysis of data from common formative assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses in student learning and instructional strategies that will best address student and learning objectives in the classroom.
- *Making Standards Work* – Aligns district and school expectations to state standards by developing classroom based instruction and assessment to improve student performance.
- *Common Formative Assessments (CFA)* – build knowledge and skills of educators on how to develop CFA to inform instruction.
- *Effective Teaching Strategies* – applies the nine research-based effective instructional categories identified in *Classroom Instruction that Works* (Marzano et al. 2001) and nonfiction writing and STEM to develop lesson plans that best meet student needs.
- *Improving School Climate to Support Student Achievement* – Provides both a context and concrete direction enabling teams to gain the understanding necessary to collect appropriate data and create school climate improvement plans and strategies for implementation.

Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI)

SRBI is Connecticut's framework for Response to Intervention. It emphasizes successful support for teachers and instruction for all students through high-quality core general education practices, as well as targeted interventions for students experiencing learning, social, emotional or behavioral difficulties. Data development and use at the classroom level plays an important role in the identification of differentiated instruction for students at Tier II and Tier III of this intervention process (see Appendix (A)(1)(e) for a description of Tiers in the SRBI Executive Summary). The SRBI process builds on the work of the data teams. During instructional level data team meetings, staff review the results of universal screening and additional student level data to examine the current state of students' understanding of concepts and application of skills. Once strengths and challenges are assessed, trends and patterns in student performance are analyzed. Students are identified for specific, measurable goals, and the team examines which research-based teaching strategies for intervention, including STEM, will result in the greatest gain in student achievement. Data on progress

monitoring is reviewed frequently throughout the intervention and students are moved up or down through tiers of intervention, as they progress or regress.

CALI training and technical assistance supporting LEAs in implementation of the SRBI process includes:

- School self-assessment on components of SRBI;
- SRBI Basic Training;
- SRBI Implementation; and,
- SRBI for specific cohorts of schools such as SRBI at the Secondary Level.

Through these and other data collection efforts, the CSDE provides access to a rich base of publicly-reported and secure-access information about students, teachers and programs offered in the public schools. We earlier described the secure access features of CEDaR in Section (C)(2). The table below provides a summary of the sources and types of data available to LEA professionals for use in the improvement of instructional quality.

Sources of Data Available to Connecticut LEAs for Instructional Improvement	
Source	**Types of Data Available**
Connecticut Benchmark Assessment System (CBAS)	State and LEA student performance data (see Section (B)(3)
Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS)	Student indicators such as drop out, graduation, attendance, truancy, student mobility, discipline, special education data
Student Data collected by LEAs	As examples: LEA-developed benchmark assessments, teacher attendance, student involvement and results from AP courses, students attending postsecondary education, students who drop out and enter into adult education system
Staff Data collected by LEAs and Schools	As examples: staff attendance, staff years of experience, staffing demographics, retention of staff, office disciplinary referrals
Family and Community Qualitative Data collected locally and, under Public Act 10-111, reported annually by the SLDS	As examples: parent participation, parent satisfaction, student satisfaction, community surveys
LEA Instructional Data collected by grade or course	As examples: benchmark assessments, common formative assessments, end-of-term and end-of-year course exams, group scoring of student work, progress on implementation of effective teaching strategies, progress monitoring data for students receiving SRBI

As is true throughout Connecticut's Phase 2 application, we have worked hard over the period January through May 2010 to enrich our goals for Section (C)(3) to accommodate new requirements in state law; modify requirements in the Race to the Top LEA Memorandum of Understanding; and build a stronger emerging relationship with Connecticut's higher education community. These goals are summarized below and then presented in detail.

Connecticut's Plan to Support LEA Implementation of Broad Data Access and Use				
Goal	**2010-2011**	**2011-2012**	**2012-2013**	**2013-2014**
Goal 1: LEAs are trained, adopt and use instructional improvement models • CALI • SRBI	Ongoing Begin Fall 2010	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal 2: LEAs will use data from the local instructional improvement systems and the SLDS as a means to determine the effectiveness of the CALI Theory of Action and make these results publicly available.	Report due Summer 2010	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal 3: State and LEA data are available to researchers.	As requested beginning in 2010	As requested	As requested	As requested

(C)(3)(i) The Detail

Goal 1. All participating LEAs will implement the CALI and SRBI instructional improvement processes.

- All LEAs will participate in CALI professional development and technical assistance on use of data.
- All LEAs will establish a three-tiered system of accountability (LEA-school and instructional-level data teams.)
- All LEAs will embed the work of their SRBI process into the instructional data teams.
- All LEAs will implement a three-tiered system of intervention for students (SRBI).

Activities

- Participating LEAs sign the required Memorandum of Understanding (see Appendix (A)(1)(f)) requiring and supporting their full participation in the CALI, beginning year one of the RTTT reform agenda.

- The CSDE Bureau of Accountability and Improvement will work with the Regional Educational Service Center (RESC) Alliance and the State Education Resource Center (SERC) to increase the capacity of CALI trainers and technical assistance providers within six months of receiving the RTTT grant.
- CSDE and RESC Alliance staff will provide needs assessment in all districts in year one.
- CSDE and RESC Alliance staff will provide CALI professional development based on needs assessment for 280 schools in year one, 560 schools in year two, 280 schools in year three and 580 schools in year four of the RTTT effort.
- LEAs will establish data teams and begin to use data for instructional and management improvement.
- The CSDE Bureau of Accountability and Improvement will provide resources for executive coaches and data teams to select LEAs as part of the CALI model based on district and school assessments.
- CSDE staff (state technical assistance teams assigned to the LEA) and external coaches will support districts in developing a District Improvement Plan with annual targets.
- The CSDE Bureau of Accountability and Improvement will expand the use of the Technical Assistance Services Tracking (TAST) system to all participating LEAs within three months of receiving the RTTT grant.

***Timeframe**:* Beginning September 2010 and ongoing

Responsible Parties: CSDE's Bureau of Accountability and Improvement, the RESC Alliance and LEAs, in collaboration with the Partnership on Pre-Service Training and Professional Development and the Partnership on Educator Effectiveness and Accountability

(C)(3)(ii) Support participating LEAs and schools that are using instructional improvement systems

Goal 2: LEAs will use data from the local instructional improvement systems and the SLDS as a means to determine the effectiveness of the CALI Theory of Action and make these results publicly available.

This will enable the CSDE to conduct an evaluation study on the fidelity with which CALI is being implemented and the effectiveness of the CALI theory of action.

RMC Corporation Evaluation Study

The CSDE issued a competitive request for proposals for an external evaluation of CALI 18 months ago. This evaluation, being conducted by the RMC Research Corporation, is in the final stages of a two-year evaluation. The evaluation included a review of data from various sources, including statewide evaluation and student data, local student performance data, review of data from the Technical Assistance Service Tracking (TAST) system, and qualitative data from extensive interviews and focus groups with state, LEA central office and school staff, as well as site visits to and observations of LEAs and schools. The evaluation is designed to determine the effectiveness of the CALI Theory of Action. The following questions guided the evaluation study: (1) To what extent and degree of fidelity is CALI being implemented at the LEA and school levels in LEAs identified as being in need of improvement, corrective action or restructuring under NCLB? (2) Do the components/interventions support each other? If so, how and to what degree? (3) What impact is CALI having on LEA, school, teacher and student performance?

A summary of the September 2009 Interim Report is included in Appendix (C)(3)(a). Highlights from the evaluation are promising and include:

- "This first phase of the evaluation focused at the LEA level, where leaders have worked in earnest and made progress in reaching fidelity. The fifteen CALI Partner Districts that are knowledgeable of CALI buy-in to the CALI model as a viable way to bring about school and district improvement and have participated in CALI activities to a degree of depth."
- "Fidelity of implementation is extremely important at the school level simply because it is in the interactions of teachers and students in classrooms that improvement will ultimately happen or not. The partnership between districts and their schools in

reaching fidelity in using data-driven improvement is the real arena of change, and the second phase of the evaluation will seek insights into how implementation occurs at this level."

- "The CALI components and interventions support one another in the model as designed. CALI is fundamentally a data-driven, continuous improvement model…. As conceptualized the CALI components and interventions are cohesive and coherent."

The CSDE will use the findings of the final evaluation report due in 2010 to further enhance and refine CALI. The CSDE will use the resources of the RTTT to issue, within one year, a competitive request for proposals to evaluate the effectiveness of CALI implementation and progress in closing the achievement gap.

Activities

- CSDE will design and contract for an ongoing series of evaluation studies related to the implementation of the CALI and SRBI instructional improvement models.

***Timeframe*:** 2011-2013

Responsible Parties: CSDE's Bureau of Accountability and Improvement and external evaluator as identified

(C)(3)(iii) Make the data from instructional improvement systems, together with statewide longitudinal data system data, available and accessible to researchers.

Goal 3: Ensure data from the statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS) and from LEA-specific sources are available and accessible to researchers.

Attainment of this goal will enable researchers to conduct studies of effectiveness as related to groups of students and to present these data to the CSDE for use in policy, program and funding decisions.

Activities

- Connecticut will deploy its new data dissemination Web site, CEDaR, which will provide public access to all education data the CSDE collects, aggregated to the school, LEA and/or state levels.
- Section 10-10a(e) of the Connecticut General Statutes requires the CSDE to provide within 60 days state student-level education data to tax-exempt non-profit organizations operated for educational purposes. (See Appendix (C)(1)(a)). This statute provides an additional means for researchers to gain access to education data should it not be available on CEDaR.
- As part of the LEA Memorandum of Understanding, participating LEAs agree that any data from their local instructional improvement system that is *not* part of the SLDS (e.g., local benchmark assessments, student satisfaction surveys) will be shared upon request. LEA contact persons for data requests are identified in each LEA's formal RTTT work plans.

Timeframe: Beginning 2010 and continuing beyond 2014

Responsible Parties: Members of the Knowledge Network; CSDE staff members from the Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation; Bureau of Grants Management; Bureau of Information Technology; and Bureau of School Improvement and Accountability

Performance Measures Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.	**Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
No performance measures for (C)(3).	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Appendices Referenced in Section C-3

Appendix (A)(1)(c) Public Act 10-111

Appendix (A)(1)(e) Scientific Researched Based Interventions Executive Summary

Appendix (A)(1)(f) Memorandum of Understanding with Local Education Agencies

Appendix (C)(1)(a) Connecticut General Statutes on Public School Information Systems

Appendix (C)(3)(a) Evaluation of Connecticut Accountability and Learning Initiative (CALI)

(D) Great Teachers and Leaders *(138 total points)*

(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals *(21 points)*

The extent to which the State has—

(i) Legal, statutory, or regulatory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) for teachers and principals, particularly routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education;

(ii) Alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) that are in use; and

(iii) A process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and for preparing teachers and principals to fill these areas of shortage.

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (D)(1)(i), regarding alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals:

- A description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents, including information on the elements of the State's alternative routes (as described in the alternative route to certification definition in this notice).

Evidence for (D)(1)(ii), regarding alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals:

- A list of the alternative certification programs operating in the State under the State's alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice), and for each:
  - The elements of the program (as described in the alternative routes to certification definition in this notice).
  - The number of teachers and principals that successfully completed each program in the previous academic year.
  - The total number of teachers and principals certified statewide in the previous academic year.

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

(D)(1) PROVIDING HIGH-QUALITY PATHWAYS FOR ASPIRING TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

(D)(1)(i) Alternative Routes to Certification

The Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) authorize alternate routes to certification (ARC) to exist for both teachers and school administrators. (See 10-145b(c) of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS as well as CGS sections 10a-10a, 10a-19d, and 10-155d at Appendix (D)(1)(a)). In addition, Public Act 10-111, passed by the General Assembly in May 2010 and signed into law by the

Governor, *requires* the State Board of Education to review and approve proposals for alternate route to certification programs for school administrators. (See section 1 of Public Act 10-111 at Appendix (A)(1)(c)).

Each approved ARC program in Connecticut must address the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards that require high quality instruction in pedagogy and addressing the needs of all students in the classroom, including English language learners and special needs students. In addition, as laid out in further detail below, section 10-145b(c) of the CGS and Public Act 10-111 assure that each approved ARC program in Connecticut meets the following criteria for alternate route to certification programs, as defined in this application:

- Various providers are approved to offer ARC programs
- Each is selective in admissions
- Each provides supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support
- Each significantly limits required coursework or has course test-out options
- Each awards the same level of certification as traditional programs

Authorized Providers

Under state law, providers both within and independent of Connecticut's institutions of higher education are authorized to offer ARC programs for both teachers and school administrators. (See 10-145b(c) of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS in Appendix (D)(1)(a) and Public Act No. 10-111 in Appendix (A)(1)(c)). Connecticut currently offers eight ARC programs for teacher certification. Providers independent of the state's institutions of higher education offer four of these programs. In addition, an ARC program for school administrators that is currently under development, and described in more detail below, will be offered by a regional education service center, which is also independent of the state's institutions of higher education. See Table (D)(1)(ii)(a) below for a summary of Connecticut ARC programs and the type of providers that offer such programs.

Candidate Selection Criteria

Section 10-145b(c) of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS defines the requirements for alternative route candidates to obtain certification and allows a 90-day temporary permit to be issued to any individual who successfully completes a Connecticut ARC program. Therefore, Connecticut's ARC programs are required to adopt the following requirements as the minimum selection criteria for each of its candidates, based on that provision in statute:

- Each candidate must hold a bachelor's degree from an institution of higher education accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher Education or regionally accredited.
- Candidates must have a major or closely related major in the subject area for which they are seeking certification. State statute provides an exception to this requirement: the State Board of Education must allow applicants seeking teacher certification in a subject shortage area to substitute an excellent score on a subject area assessment in lieu of the subject area major requirement for certification. (See section 10-145 of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS at Appendix (D)(1)(a)).
- Each ARC candidate must possess an overall undergraduate grade point average of at least "B," or if the candidate has completed at least 24 hours of graduate credit, possess a graduate grade point average of at least "B." (See 10-145b(c)(1)(B)(v) of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS at Appendix (D)(1)(a)).
- Each ARC candidate must present supporting evidence of appropriate experience working with children (See 10-145b(c)(1)(B)(vi) of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS at Appendix (D)(1)(a)).
- ARC candidates must also meet the testing requirements pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-145f of the CGS, which requires all candidates for teacher certification to successfully complete the Praxis I and Praxis II exams in the content area in which they are seeking certification. (See CGS 10-145f(b) and 10-145b(c)(1)(B)(ii) at Appendix (D)(1)(a)).

To address the unique standards that an ARC program for school administrators should possess, Public Act No. 10-111 additionally requires that a candidate for such a program have at least 40 months of teaching experience, 10 of which must be in a

certified position at a public school, and the individual must be recommended by a supervisor or district administrator to participate in the program, based on the candidate's performance.

Supervision of Candidates

Once an ARC candidate successfully completes the ARC program, he or she is issued a temporary 90-day certificate, or, beginning in the 2010-11 school year, a "resident teacher certificate." (See 10-145b(c) and 10-145m of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS at Appendix (D)(1)(a)). This type of certificate serves as a substitute for the typical full-time student teaching required of traditional certification programs and requires that the ARC candidate be provided supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support.

The employing agent of a local or regional school board must request in writing a temporary 90-day certificate on behalf of the ARC candidate. In making the request, the employing agent for the board must attest to the existence of a special plan for supervision of the temporary 90-day certificate holder. (See 10-145b(c)(1)(A) of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS at Appendix (D)(1)(a)). In addition, each ARC candidate serving under a temporary 90-day certificate is required to participate in a beginning support and assessment program that the CSDE specifically designed for holders of temporary 90-day certificates. (See 10-145b(c)(1)(C)(2) of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS at Appendix (D)(1)(a)).

A resident teacher certificate allows ARC candidates to work within the public schools for one full year prior to completing the ARC program. (See 10-145m of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS at Appendix (D)(1)(a)). Under the resident teacher certificate, the ARC candidate must work "under the supervision of the superintendent of schools or of a principal, administrator or supervisor designated by such superintendent who shall regularly observe, guide and evaluate the performance of assigned duties by such holder of a resident teacher certificate." As with the temporary 90-day certificate, upon successful completion of the one-year residency, the candidate will be issued a three-year initial certificate. The resident teacher certificate may be extended for up to one year for good cause upon request of the superintendent of schools for the school district employing such person.

Similarly, Public Act 10-111 requires participants in an ARC for school administrators to participate in a one-year residency program. The candidate must fulfill the residency requirement by serving in a full-time position requiring an intermediate administrator or supervisor endorsement for 10 school months at a local or regional board of education in the state under the supervision of a certified administrator and a supervisor from the ARC program. The residency requirement may be waived if the candidate has 10 months' experience in a full-time position as an administrator in a public or nonpublic school in another state.

Limited Coursework Requirements

As noted above, to enroll in an ARC program, candidates are required to have only a bachelor's degree with a major either in or closely related to the certification endorsement which the candidate is seeking. In addition, if an ARC candidate seeks to teach in a subject shortage area, the subject major requirement may be waived entirely if the candidate achieves an excellent score on the subject area assessment (Praxis II). (See 10-145l of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS at Appendix (D)(1)(a)).

All ARC programs in Connecticut are noncredit bearing programs that are shorter in duration than traditional educator preparation programs. Generally, full-time ARC programs for teachers last from five to 10 weeks over the summer. As one example, the Department of Higher Education's summer ARC program is nine weeks long. *Teach for America's* ARC program requires five weeks of training. By the end of these summer sessions, ARC program participants are eligible for the temporary 90-day certificate to begin working in a classroom. Part-time, weekend ARC programs may last for one school year or less. For example, the Department of Higher Education's part-time ARC program runs from late October into mid-May, meeting for about 10 hours a weekend, three or four weekends a month. The ARC program for school administrators currently under development (and described in more detail below) will last for a 14-month period.

Level of Certification upon Completion

Pursuant to 10-145b(c)(3), when an ARC candidate successfully teaches under a temporary 90-day permit for the 90-day period, upon Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) receipt of a proper application, the individual is eligible for a three-year

initial certificate equivalent to any traditional teacher program candidate who completes a minimum of 10 weeks of full-time student teaching. Similarly, under the new resident teacher certificate and section one of Public Act 10-111, an ARC candidate will be eligible for the three-year initial certificate as long as the candidate has successfully completed the ARC program and has submitted a proper application to the CSDE (See 10-145m in the 2010 Supplement to the CGS at Appendix (D)(1)(a) and Public Act 10-111 at Appendix (A)(1)(c)).

(D)(1)(ii) Alternate Routes to Certification Now in Use

Currently, Connecticut has eight alternate route program providers for teachers. In fiscal year 2008-2009, 323 teachers successfully completed certification through these ARC programs, which equals 15 percent of the total number of teachers certified in that year. Of the 323 ARC completers, almost all (296) attended programs operated by providers other than institutions of higher education. Table (D)(1)(ii)(a) summarizes current ARC programs offered in Connecticut.

While Connecticut currently has no ARC program to prepare school administrators , Public Act 10-111 requires the State Board of Education to review and approve ARC programs for school administrators. Notably, the Regional Educational Service Center (RESC Alliance (a statewide non-profit educational organizations that support districts in their region), led by Capital Regional Education Council (CREC), an independent provider, is already in the process of developing an Advanced Alternate Route to Certification (AARC) in response to an urgent need for highly effective administrators in high-need schools – a need that is not being met by existing preparation and recruitment strategies.

CREC's AARC program is designed as an intensive, residency-based approach to preparation of intermediate administrators (all certified administrators, except superintendent). The program's aim is to build district leadership capacity within Connecticut's 17 high need districts by partnering with eligible districts to identify potential AARC candidates and place them in a year-long residency as an intermediate administrator within the district. AARC applicants must be recommended by the partnering district, hold a master's

degree, have successfully taught for 40 months, pass all interview and application requirements, and commit to working as a leader in the identified district for three years.

The 14-month program will provide candidates an opportunity to learn theory and best practices through classroom, mentor, and online learning experiences and to apply information through a residency job-embedded opportunity. Candidates will be required to demonstrate leadership competencies within their residency program and document these competencies in a digital portfolio which they will defend at the end of the program. The program will have a six-to-one mentor-mentee ratio to allow for frequent review and support in portfolio assignments, residency activities and preparation for the state required Connecticut Administrator's Test (CAT). The AARC will employ experienced administrators to focus on the essential skills required for effective leadership in high need districts such as reflective judgment, instructional leadership, and change practices that turn around schools. The AARC is scheduled for an accreditation visit next fall, with approval by the State Board of Education scheduled for February 2011 and implementation in June 2011.

Table (D)(1)(ii)(a) Teacher ARC Programs Operating in Connecticut			
Name of Program	**Provider Type**	**Certification Type**	**Completers 08-09**
Teach For America	Independent Organization	Initial Certificate: Multiple Subjects	70
Area Cooperative Education Services	Regional Educational Service Center	Advanced Endorsements in TESOL/ Bilingual and Library Media	1
Capitol Region Education Council	Regional Educational Service Center	Advanced Endorsement in Special Education	9
CT ARC Program	Department of Higher Education	Initial Certificate: Multiple Subjects	216
Charter Oak State College	Public Higher Education Institution	Initial Certificate: Early Childhood Education, Birth-K	10
Albertus Magnus College	Private Higher Education Institution	Advanced Endorsement: Remedial Reading	14
Quinnipiac University	Private Higher Education Institution	Advanced Endorsement: Middle/Secondary Mathematics	3
Eastern Connecticut State University	Public Higher Education Institution	Advanced Endorsement: Early Childhood Education, PK-Third Grade	0

(D)(1)(iii) Process for Filling Shortage Areas

Monitoring, Evaluating and Identifying Areas of Teacher and Principal Shortage

For 20 of the past 21 years, the CSDE has conducted a survey to determine teacher and administrator shortage areas. Each fall the CSDE surveys each of its public school districts, charter schools, regional educational service centers, endowed and incorporated academies, state-approved non-public special education programs, the Connecticut Technical High School System and the Connecticut Departments of Correction, Children and Families, and Developmental Services. The annual Fall Hiring Survey collects information about the vacancies these constituents sought to fill in order to bring their staffing numbers to appropriate levels in time

for the start of the school year. Data are collected with respect to teaching vacancies in all endorsed subject areas, administrator vacancies, pupil support and paraprofessionals.

Information about each vacancy includes: (a) the month in which recruiting began (e.g., if recruiting began in the spring of the previous school year, these vacancies would be reported); (b) the median number of applications received; (c) the quality of the applicant pool as judged by employers; (d) the number of vacancies remaining after the school year has started; and (e) whether these vacancies remaining were the result of not finding any qualified applicants. These data, together with data from the Bureau of Teacher Certification's Connecticut Educator Certification System, form the basis for identifying teacher shortage areas in Connecticut.

The first step in identifying shortage areas is assigning ranks to each endorsement from least to most severe for each of the following four factors: number of vacancies due to the lack of qualified candidates; median number of applicants per position; number of first Connecticut certificates and renewals divided by the number of available positions; and the sum of Durational Shortage Area Permits, long-term substitutes, minimally qualified hires, and Temporary Authorizations for Minor Assignments (TAMAs). These four ranks are placed in the CSDE's formula to produce a shortage score for each endorsement. Finally, these shortage scores are ranked to identify the top 10 shortage areas. Table (D)(1)(iii)(a) describes in more detail the factors that are used to determine teacher shortage areas.

Table (D)(1)(iii)(a) Factors Used to Determine Teacher Shortage Areas	
Factor	**Description**
Durational Shortage Area Permits (DSAP)	Issued by the CSDE to LEAs so they may staff positions for which there was a shortage of available qualified candidates. Teachers working under a DSAP must hold a bachelor's degree, have 12 semester hours in the subject area being taught and meet the state's testing requirements. DSAPs are issued for a year and may be conditionally reissued for an additional two years.
First issued or renewed Connecticut certificates per position	The number of people receiving or renewing Connecticut certificates between October 1, 2008 and September 30, 2009 divided by the total number of available positions in each endorsement area.
Long-term substitutes	Person serving in the employ of a board of education in the same assignment for more than 40 school days.
Median number of appropriately credentialed applicants per available position	Median is the middle number in a distribution, e.g. the number of applicants per position for which half of all available positions had more applicants and half had fewer applicants.
Minimally qualified hires	Those hired from an applicant pool of fewer than 20 which also received the lowest quality rating from the LEA ("Few or no minimally qualified applicants").
October vacancies due to the lack of qualified applicants	Positions that are vacant because the LEA could not find any available qualified applicants as of October 1.
Temporary Authorizations for Minor Assignments (TAMA)	Issued by the CSDE to districts which cannot find an appropriately credentialed applicant with certification in the subject area of the minor assignment. The minor assignments supplement a primary assignment. Teachers working under a TAMA must be certified in another area and have 12 semester hours of credit in the subject being taught. TAMAs are issued for a year and may be conditionally reissued for an additional year.

Most recently, in April 2010 the CSDE produced a *Data Bulletin: Fall Hiring Report* summarizing the vacancy and employment data from fall 2009 and providing comparative data over the past two decades. Since 1991, the total number of teacher and administrator positions in Connecticut has grown from 41,733 to 52,718. Similarly, annual positions to be filled rose to 2,957 from 1,281, of which 89 percent were full-time positions. (See the complete *Data Bulletin* in Appendix (D)(1)(b)).

In the latest year of data (fall 2009), 91.4 percent of vacancies were filled by October of the school year, leaving 255 vacant. Of these, 112 were vacant due to the inability of the LEA to find a qualified candidate. A summary of shortage areas for the fall of 2009 is shown in Table (D)(1)(iii)(b), along with a shortage "acuteness" ranking with "1" being most acute (see also Section D-3).

Table (D)(1)(iii)(b) Connecticut PK-12 Shortage Areas and Status as reported in the fall of 2009

Subject	Number of Positions Available	Number of Positions Remaining Vacant, No Qualified Person Found	Shortage Area Acuteness Ranking
Bilingual Education (PK-12)	25	9	4
Special Education (K-12)	422	23	2
English (7-12)	205	8	6
Mathematics (7-12)	188	3	8
Music (PK-12)	101	4	7
Remedial Reading/Language Arts	62	3	10
Speech and Language	118	26	1
School Psychologist	61	5	9
World Languages (7-12)	163	7	3
Intermediate Administrator	175	11	4

Preparing Educators to Fill Areas of Shortage

On an annual basis, Connecticut currently takes a series of actions to assist LEAs to address vacancies in these shortage areas. Connecticut's primary strategy to address these shortages is by approving ARC programs that seek to certify more individuals in these areas of shortage. In addition, some of the ARC programs in the state limit their offerings to those candidates seeking certification in subject areas most in need. For example, the ARC program offered by the Department of Higher Education (the largest ARC provider in the state), does not offer certification in general elementary education, given the abundance of qualified candidates in the state, but does offer certification in K-12 world languages and music, as well as secondary science, mathematics, and English.

The CSDE also seeks to assist in addressing these areas of shortage by offering incentives to educators to teach in these areas and providing flexibility in our state statute to increase the workforce of available teachers certified in these areas.

Incentives

The CSDE annually receives U.S. Department of Education designation of official shortage areas, enabling Stafford and Supplemental Loans to students who teach in one of these areas to possibly qualify for deferral of loan repayments. In addition, the CSDE – acting through the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority – may designate shortage areas that enable a teacher in a Priority School District or in a subject-matter shortage area to qualify for mortgage assistance.

Flexibility

Section 10-145m of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS requires that the State Board of Education allow certification applicants to substitute an excellent score on subject area assessments in shortage areas determined by the Commissioner in lieu of the subject area major requirement for certification. In other words, a candidate who may not have a degree in science or math may seek certification in that endorsement area if they achieve an "excellent" score on the Praxis II exam. In addition, state statute allows for LEAs to re-employ retired teachers for up to two years to teach in a shortage area, if no other qualified candidates are available, and such teachers

are then exempt from the statutory pension earnings limit. (See CGS 10-183v at Appendix (D)(1)(a) and Section 8 of Public Act 10-111 at Appendix (A)(1)(c)).

To further address the issue of preparing educators to fill the shortage areas, Connecticut has formulated two goals, listed below in Table (D)(1)(iii)(c). In addition, Section (D)(3)(ii) of this application outlines an aggressive agenda to address teacher shortage areas through four strategies: (1) expanding the supply of new teachers in shortage areas; (2) scholarships for substitute teachers to earn cross-endorsements in hard-to-staff subjects; (3) incentives to districts to hire and retain effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects; and (4) policy changes as outlined in Section (D)(3)(ii).

Table (D)(1)(iii)(c) Connecticut's Plan to Support Teacher and Principal Recruitment in Shortage Areas

Goal	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Goal 1: Expand teacher ARCs program to additional highly qualified ***and effective*** teachers in seven key LEAs	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal 2: Design a new ARC for administrators program that specifically trains potential principals for specific assignments in urban districts, turnaround school models and other innovative models of school restructuring				
• Cost and program models analyzed	Completed			
• Begin ARC for principals		Implement	Ongoing	Ongoing

Section (D)(1)(ii) The Plan in Detail

Goal 1: The Department of Higher Education will expand its teacher ARC to provide additional highly qualified and effective certified teachers in seven key LEAs.

Attainment of this goal will result in an increase in the numbers of teachers rated as effective and highly effective in seven districts with persistently low-performing schools.

Background

The Department of Higher Education proposes an expansion of its Alternate Route to Certification Program to support the recruitment and training of teachers in areas that are designated by the State of Connecticut as shortage areas. This program will be coordinated with goals and activities of the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (see Sections (A)(1)(i), (C)(2), (D)(5), and Section (E)) and with the recently awarded federal School Improvement Grant awarded to Connecticut and operative in most of these LEAs. From pools of eligible applicants – qualified mid-career professionals, including highly qualified professionals, those rated using the Connecticut "effectiveness proxy indicator" (see Section (D)(2-3)) and recent exceptional graduates from institutions of higher education – the project will provide teacher preparation, certification and supportive services to 120 participants annually for three years during its four-year period.

Project activities include applicant recruitment, applicant assessment, participant selection and placement, teacher preparation and participant support and retention strategies.

Activities

- Coordinate a satellite program location for ARC expansion; hire staff and faculty; recruit, assess and select candidates; plan and develop all training and retention initiatives (2010-2011)

- Administer satellite program; train candidates; assist with job placement activities; launch professional development and support for new teachers (2011-2012 through 2013-2014)

Timeframe: Begin upon grant award in 2010-2011; Implement beginning 2011

Responsible Parties CSDE and the Connecticut Department of Higher Education working with the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development, LEAs in selected districts, the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative and the Scientific Research Based Initiative

Goal 2: The Partnership for Teacher and Principal Effectiveness and Accountability and the Partnership for Pre-service Training and Professional Development will design a new ARC program for administrators that trains potential principals for specific assignments in urban districts, turnaround school models and other innovative models of school restructuring.

Attainment of this goal will enable Connecticut to take proactive steps to design and develop or solicit one or more new ARC programs for administrators with a specialty focus on meeting the needs of Connecticut's Race to the Top comprehensive reform agenda.

Activities

- Review national, other state and notable Connecticut work on principal development and prepare a brief for the P20 Shared Leadership Council on the most effective and cost efficient models for preparing school-level administrative leaders, by December 2010
- Prepare cost model scenarios and issue an RFP for development of one or more ARC programs specifically designed to meet the needs of urban leadership within the context of school restructuring, by July 2011

- For year two, contract for the implementation of at least one ARC for principal development that conforms to the specifications outlined in Public Act No. 10-111 and that includes all five components specified in the Race to the Top guidelines

Timeframe: Begin 2010; launch new program in 2011-2012; continue through 2014

Responsible Parties: Partnership for Teacher and Principal Effectiveness and Accountability and the Partnership for Pre-service Training and Professional Development with the CSDE and the Department of Higher Education

Appendices Referred to in Section (D)(1):

Appendix (A)(1)(c) Public Act 10-111

Appendix (D)(1)(a) Connecticut General Statutes on Alternative Routes to Certification and Teacher Shortage Areas

Appendix (D)(1)(b) *Data Bulletin: Fall Hiring Report*

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance *(58 points)*

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to ensure that participating LEAs (as defined in this notice)—

(i) Establish clear approaches to measuring student growth (as defined in this notice) and measure it for each individual student; *(5 points)*

(ii) Design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth (as defined in this notice) as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement; *(15 points)*

(iii) Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback; as part of such evaluations, provide teachers and principals with data on student growth for their students, classes, and schools; *(10 points)* and

(iv) Use these evaluations, at a minimum, to inform decisions regarding— *(28 points)*

(a) Developing teachers and principals, including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development;

(b) Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals, including by providing opportunities for highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities;

(c) Whether to grant tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures; and

(d) Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and ensuring that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.

The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

(D)(2) IMPROVING TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS BASED ON PERFORMANCE

Introduction

Research has consistently documented the significance of strong principals and effective teachers as the foundation of high student achievement. Excellent schools are places where principals and teachers focus almost entirely on instruction and are continuously in search of new programs and ways to present complex subject matter to all children. Paradoxically, as important as effective teachers and principals are, measuring their effectiveness reliably is enormously difficult, given all the factors that play a part in making a teacher or principal strong. In fact, good arguments can be made that American educators have never measured teacher and principal effectiveness adequately, but must do so now if, as a nation, we expect our workforce to compete in the knowledge-based economies of a "flat world."

Getting to the core of teacher and principal effectiveness means identifying which indicators of a student's academic growth are the most important to measure, determining how these indicators can be quantified and measured reliably and efficiently, and then linking those measurements to an evaluation framework that can be used to produce a judgment or determination of whether a teacher or principal is effective, highly effective or ineffective. While the overarching purpose may be the same, making these determinations for principals and teachers is markedly different. For teachers as a category, dozens of different areas of certification and content expertise must simultaneously be addressed, given the different factors that must be considered. Subject matter knowledge, pedagogy, differentiated instruction, properly equipped classrooms all play a role, and in this context, the systems that have served Connecticut in the past must now be readapted and upgraded to reflect new research and the urgent needs of our own failing economy.

Connecticut needs and will build a new system, one with the following characteristics.

- A revised state regulatory framework for awarding teachers and administrators certificates to practice in Connecticut based on such factors as coursework, a range of assessments and experience
- Rigorous teacher preparation programs that will lead to certification in all areas of teaching and administration, as prescribed by the new regulatory framework

- New protocols for *mentoring* beginning teachers during their first two years of practice
- New protocols for *supervising* and *evaluating* all teachers, PreK-12, in all certificated areas, as well as for principals and other public school administrators
- New mechanisms to enable schools serving high percentages of minority and/or poor children to recruit and retain highly effective teachers and principals
- New mechanisms to recruit, induct and retain effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects or shortage areas
- New models for developing teachers' *professional competencies* through continuing education requirements (CEUs) and/or additional coursework at the undergraduate or graduate levels

Throughout Section (D), we describe the components of Connecticut's ambitious plan to prepare, hire and retain highly effective teachers and leaders in our schools. This reform agenda will guide the state's efforts to improve instructional quality, boost academic achievement and narrow the achievement gaps that persist so tenaciously in our poorest schools. How we will use the new public-private Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability to realize these aims will also be described in the pages that follow.

Advances from January through May

Over the past five months, Connecticut has left the land of steady habits to design a landscape for change that is dramatic, bold and achievable. We credit reaching this tipping point in no small measure to our experiences as a Phase 1 Race to the Top applicant, the active role of our legislative and executive branch in support of needed policy and statutory change, the emergence of a much more public and stronger parent voice on behalf of this state's disadvantaged students, the willingness of all members of the preschool to post-secondary educational sector to come together on behalf of reform, and the commitment of many partners to take a new and more active leadership role in the changes we describe throughout this application. We have described accomplishments over these critical five months throughout our Phase 2 application. We summarize those related to our focus on strong principals and effective teachers below in Table (D)(2)(a).

Table (D)(2)(a) State Progress on Great Teachers and Principals January through May 2010		
Action/Result	**Date**	**Responsible Party**
Statutory Change: Public Act No. 10-111 • New school administrator ARC authorized • Requirements for teacher and principal performance assessment linked to student achievement • Increases in high school rigor and requirements *(The CT Plan*)	May 2010	CT General Assembly Governor
Leadership Structures Established • P-20 Shared Leadership Council • P-20 Common Core Principles adopted • Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability • Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development • Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment	February through May 2010	Commissioner of Education Commissioner of Higher Education
Methodology for Effectiveness Proxy Established • Pilot implementation in Key Needs Improvement LEAs	May 2010	CSDE
Expanded Role for Higher Education • Expansion of teacher ARC to address key LEA workforce needs • Deans of Education work on teacher preparation improvements	January through May 2010	Connecticut Department of Higher Education Connecticut State University System

Key Overarching Goals of Connecticut's Education Reform Agenda for Effective Teachers and Principals

The state's plan for great teachers and leaders will focus on the goals as summarized in Table (D)(2)(b) below. As noted, the system for supervising and evaluating teachers and principals must now be designed, written, piloted and validated, drawing on what we have learned from research and from Connecticut's past statewide work. Our system will provide pertinent data to make personnel

and policy decisions about teachers and principals, document educator performance more thoroughly than in the past, and publicly and transparently report school-wide and district-wide data to parents and the public at large. Our work will be aided by the Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability and by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, a subset of the partnership, created by section 5 of Public Act 10-111.

Table(D)(2)(b) Connecticut's Goals for Section (D)(2)

Goal	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Goal 1: Revise Connecticut's (1999) Teacher and Administrator Standards and Evaluation Guidelines and other policy/regulations **(D)(2)(ii)**	Begin Fall 2010	Complete by June 2012	Train Districts	Implement
Goal 2: Build a New Model to Measure Student Growth **(D)(2)(i)**	Develop prototype, pilot in 18 SIG schools	Operational by June 2012	Train Districts	Implement
Goal 3: Design a New System to Evaluate Connecticut Principals and Teachers **(D)(2)(ii)**	Develop	Develop	Complete	Implement
Goal 4: Conduct Evaluations **(D)(2)(iii)**	NA	NA	Pilot Statewide	Implement
Goal 5: Use Evaluations to Inform Decisions **(D)(2)(iv)** for: • Developing Teachers and Principals • Compensating, promoting, retaining • Granting tenure • Removing ineffective personnel			Pilot Statewide	Implement

(D)(2): The Plan in Detail

Section (D)(2)(ii)

Goal 1: Revision of Connecticut's (1999) Teacher and Administrator Standards and Evaluation Guidelines and related policy and regulatory documents (necessary foundation for designing evaluation systems, further described below in (D)(2)(i)).

As the result of this goal, a series of key policy and regulatory documents that frame Connecticut's teacher and leader system will be revised to align with the Connecticut educational reform agenda.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), along with the State Board of Education (SBE), is in the process of reviewing and revising core policies, guidelines and regulations related to teaching and leadership in Connecticut. (See Appendix (D)(2)(a) for SBE Notice of Intent to Adopt Proposed Regulations Concerning State Educator Certificates, Permits, and Authorizations). The documents listed below are among those that must now be revised with the full involvement of key stakeholders. Emerging from this work will be a new set of *Teacher and Administrator Standards and Evaluation Guidelines*, to be implemented in 2011, that will be comprehensive and include clear, reliable procedures and multiple indicators of teacher and principal performance.

Table (D)(2)(c) Introduction to Great Teachers and Leaders
Status Update on Connecticut Regulatory and Policy Work Now in Progress

Document	Last Publication	Current Status	Anticipated Publication
Common Core of Leading	2009	Adopted and issued in 2009	Complete, 2009
Common Core of Teaching	1999	Revised and adopted by SBE	April 2010
Certification Regulations	1998	Goes to SBE in July 2010 for approval	October 2010
Connecticut School Leader Standards	1999	Revision to be completed over calendar year 2010	January 2011
Evaluation Guidelines for Teachers and Administrators	1999	Revision to be completed within one year	June 2011
Teacher and Administrator Standards	1999	Revision to incorporate documents also listed	June 2012

and Evaluation Guidelines		on this table	

Activities

- Working with the Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability, review all documents identified in Table (D)(2)(c), revise as needed, then produce and adopt the *2012 Connecticut Teacher and Administrator Standards and Evaluation Guidelines.*

Timeframe: 2010-2012

Responsible Parties: CSDE, with the Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability, and SBE

Section (D)(2)(i)

Goal 2: Building and implementing a new model to measure student growth.

As the result of this goal, Connecticut will have developed and implemented a comprehensive model of student growth that will serve as a foundational element in Connecticut's new teacher and principal evaluation system.

Over the next six months, CSDE's Bureau of Student Assessment will complete its work to measure student growth for every student tested through our Connecticut Mastery Tests (CMTs). Although this work will not begin as a *comprehensive*, K-12 model for measuring student growth, significant parts of that model will be in place for grades 3-8 by 2011. We will begin piloting part of our model in each of the 18 schools identified under our Title I (g) School Improvement Grants (SIG) (See Section E); shortly thereafter, the bureau will finish the development indicators and measures of academic growth for grades K-2, and 9, 10, 11 and 12. The data gathered through our pilot, will move into the supervision and evaluation system we are building to determine who among our teachers and principals statewide is effective, highly effective or ineffective. The comprehensive system envisioned will be one that parents and the public can easily understand and teachers and administrators can reliably administer.

Our process for building the growth model will include five steps:

1. Building on the Connecticut Mastery Test Vertical Scales

Connecticut will build upon the Connecticut Mastery Test vertical scales as the starting points for development of our new student growth measurement system. The vertical scales were developed in 2008 to measure growth (or change) across grades (i.e., from grade 3 to grade 4, from grade 4 to grade 5, etc.) on tests that have different characteristics and items, but have similar content. The vertical scales are constructed so that each vertical scale score represents the same theoretical achievement level, whether derived from a grade 3, grade 4, grade 5, grade 6, grade 7 or grade 8 CMT scale score.

The vertical scales will now be used to interpret growth for individual students, schools or school districts and for various subgroups (e.g., ethnicity, lunch status, special education), in these initial pilot schools. Data from this pilot will guide the creation of the comprehensive plan for measuring growth K-12. The CSDE will support the implementation of the vertical scales in the participating LEAs, while piloting a prototype growth model in Connecticut's 18 schools identified as among 5 percent of the lowest performing schools in the state.

2. Expanding Implementation of the Connecticut Benchmark Assessment System

As described in Section (B)(3), Connecticut has an online system of grade-level benchmark assessments for grades 3 through 8 in mathematics and reading, which will be piloted in 11 LEAs. Teachers may administer the assessment three times per year to chart student progress against the grade-level expectations identified in the pacing guides for the state's curriculum frameworks. As part of our Race to the Top reform agenda, the CSDE will support the implementation of the Connecticut Benchmark Assessment System to include all participating LEAs across the state.

3. Integration of LEA student growth and performance measures

Based on the availability of state and other federal funds, the CSDE will provide the capacity to allow LEAs to integrate local measures of student performance, such as scores on standardized tests for grades that are not currently tested at the state level, and other formative and benchmark assessment results into the SLDS.

4. Developing K-2 Interim Assessments

The CSDE has collaborated with the Capitol Region Education Council to develop a series of developmentally appropriate interim assessments for kindergarten through grade 2 in the areas of literacy, numeracy and science, which will be made available to districts in 2010, while building new forms of assessment for Board Examinations in grade 10, and other student performance measures such as "Capstone Projects." Assessment tools growing out of Connecticut's participation in the Balanced Assessment Consortium will also have a place in the system of assessments we intend to use.

5. Expanding the Capacity of the State's Longitudinal Data System

The CSDE will continue to expand its ability to track student progress from preschool (includes any prekindergarten receiving state or federal funding) through public K-12 programs utilizing our Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) for all participating LEAs. Based on the availability of state and other federal funding, the CSDE will begin work to build a secure data store linking state student and teacher data, and include the following data variables:

- student demographic information, including attendance and disciplinary records;
- student CMT performance;
- student/class and/or teacher ID (to match a student to a teacher);
- teacher demographic information; and
- teacher certification and preparation information, years of experience, etc.

Timeframe: The CSDE will have the supports and resources in place for a student growth model to be fully operational at the LEA level during the 2011-2012 school year, at the conclusion of the anticipated pilot.

Responsible Parties: CSDE, LEAs, Regional Educational Service Centers

Section (D)(2)(ii)

Goal 3: Designing a New System to Evaluate Connecticut Principals and Teachers.

As the result of this goal, Connecticut will have developed and implemented a rigorous, fair and transparent evaluation system capable of differentiating effectiveness and including student growth indicators.

Connecticut's performance evaluation system for teachers and principals will be built on core constructs from the revised *Guidelines* and other accompanying policy documents presented in Table (D)(2)(c). To this end, the Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability will convene its fourth meeting since November 2009 to determine how to incorporate all of the essential components of an evaluation protocol for each group. To date, the work started by the partnership has focused on using instructional domains identified in the *Common Core for Teaching* as a starting point for framing out the competencies and growth indicators that will be used to define and evaluate teacher effectiveness. Similarly, the evaluation of principals has moved toward consideration of how systems proposed by Kim Marshall (See Appendix (D)(2)(b) for Marshall's Principal Evaluation Rubrics and Appendix (D)(2)(c) for the Teacher Evaluation Rubrics) and/or the evaluation protocols developed by Vanderbilt University might factor into the final tools planned for implementation in 2012-13.

Activities

Building the Teacher Performance System

As described, the CSDE now plans to develop an evaluation system based on the same domains specified in *Common Core of Teaching*, but firmly grounded in the process of supervising and evaluating teachers' performance via classroom observations, agreed-on indicators of student growth and other measures. Such other measures may include peer reviews, student/parent surveys or effective use of student success plans. The full group of design constructs for teachers and principals are offered below (See Table (D)(2)(d)), followed thereafter by the timeline planned for implementing Connecticut's new Teacher Evaluation Instrument.

Table (D)(2)(d) – Core Constructs in Revised Policy Documents: Teaching, Leading and Evaluating	
Connecticut Common Core of Teaching *(to be adopted in 2010)* *Six key domains:* 1. Content Knowledge 2. Classroom Environment, Student Engagement 3. Planning for Active Learning 4. Instruction for Active 21st Century Learning 5. Assessment for Learning 6. Professional Responsibilities and Leadership	**Connecticut Common Core of Leading** *(adopted and issued in 2009)* *12 standards:* 1. The Educated Person 2. The Learning Process 3. The Teaching Process 4. Diverse Perspective 5. School Goals 6. School Culture 7. Student Standards and Assessment 8. School Improvement 9. Professional Development 10. Staff and Professional Development, School Improvement 11. Organization, Resources, School Policies 12. School-Community Relations

Table (D)(2)(e) Evaluation Guidelines for Teachers and Administrators (*Published in 1999, to be revised and reissued in June 2011)*

LEA evaluation and professional plans must address the following nine criteria:

1. Affirm the clear links among teacher evaluation, professional development and improved student learning, and employ *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching, The Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curricular Goals and Standards*, the CMT/CAPT Assessments, as well as locally-developed curriculum standards, as the basis for establishing learning goals at the district and school levels.
2. Employ *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching* as Connecticut's definition of effective teaching to underscore essential linkages among the competencies identified in the *Common Core of Teaching*, a district's teacher evaluation and professional development plan, and improved student learning.
3. Ensure the district-wide teacher evaluation and professional development plan provides opportunities for educators to receive Continuing Education Units (CEUs) based on work directly related to district goals and objectives for students.
4. Include a clear, written statement describing the connections among teacher evaluation, curriculum development, professional development and student assessment.
5. Provide opportunities for self-evaluation by teachers.
6. Recognize peer assistance as integral to the ongoing support of teachers in improving teaching and learning.
7. Provide for the training of administrators about the evaluation criteria established by the local school district.
8. Provide for the allocation of time to facilitate teacher evaluation, collaboration and professional growth.
9. Provide for both individual and collaborative evaluation and professional development.

Table (D)(2)(f) Development of New Evaluation System for Teacher Effectiveness		
Benchmark	**Timeline**	**Responsible Parties**
Develop guidelines and policies for: 1) New statewide system of teacher evaluation and professional development based on the *Common Core of Teaching* (2010). 2) Methods of measuring teacher efficacy that can be monitored by the CSDE and reported quantitatively on an annual basis. 3) Performance criteria and rubrics ranging from "emerging to highly effective" for guiding evaluation decisions about teacher efficacy, using student growth measures as a significant criterion and a decision guide to determine how one "measure" should be weighted, contrasted with, or compared with other measures of performance beyond observation. 4) Statewide data reporting system to collect annual teacher evaluation data based on the methods and performance criteria established. 5) Professional development and training for administrators/principals targeted at both supporting the development of teachers and evaluating them rigorously for effectiveness.	Begin 2010. Complete by February 2011	The CSDE will be the primary agency overseeing development and implementation of the key goals, in conjunction with the Teacher, Principal Effective Partnership and the legislatively-created Performance Evaluation Advisory Council. The six regional educational service centers (RESCs) will be the secondary parties responsible for deliverables related to training and external support for LEAs. Other cooperative entities, private or public professional organizations or foundations such as the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), Institutions of Higher Education (IHE), teacher unions (American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and Connecticut Education Association (CEA), and others will be invited to become partners in the implementation of this plan.
Roll out plan and prepare for piloting with select Participating LEAs	March through August 2011	CSDE, RESCs, LEAs
Pilot implementation with select Participating LEAs	Sept. 2011 to June 2012	CSDE, RESCs, LEAs
Full implementation with *all* participating districts	2012-13 school year	CSDE, RESCs, LEAs

Building the Principal Performance System

The CSDE will develop and implement new administrator/principal evaluation methods and criteria by 2011-12. To accomplish this, the state's school leadership standards document developed in 1999 will first be reviewed and updated to ensure that high standards are being set for the next generation of learners. Methods identified for evaluating principals will include use of student growth measures and multiple sources of data, including but not limited to:

- achieving school improvement goals and adequate yearly progress (AYP) on an annual basis;
- supporting teacher efficacy through the use of data-driven decision-making by teachers to improve student learning;
- developing structures and teacher skills to address the learning needs of students with disabilities, English language learners and students in need of interventions;
- maintaining a safe and positive school climate;
- building internal capacity, developing distributed leadership (using teacher leaders) and a collaborative culture;
- developing and increasing parent and community involvement;
- developing and retaining high numbers of effective teachers; and
- working effectively with the CALI system for continuous school improvement.

Table (D)(2)(g) Development of New Evaluation System for Administrator/Principal Effectiveness

Benchmark	Timeline	Responsible Parties
Develop guidelines and policies for: *1)* New statewide system of administrator/principal evaluation and professional development based on the revised *1999 Connecticut School Leader Standards*, the *Connecticut Common Core of Leading* (2009).	Begin January 2011, Complete by December 2011	The CSDE will be the primary agency overseeing development and implementation of the key goals. The Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability and the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council

Table (D)(2)(g) Development of New Evaluation System for Administrator/Principal Effectiveness		
Benchmark	**Timeline**	**Responsible Parties**
2) Methods of measuring administrator/principal efficacy based on criteria above that can be monitored by the CSDE and reported quantitatively on an annual basis. 3) Performance criteria and rubrics ranging from "emerging to highly effective" for guiding evaluation decisions about administrator/principal efficacy, using student growth measures as a significant criterion. 4) Statewide data reporting system to collect annual administrator/principal evaluation data based on the methods and performance criteria established. 5) Training for LEA superintendents and administrators targeted to supporting and evaluating school based administrators/principals.		will collaborate with the CSDE to develop the new evaluation tools for principals, and teachers. Other cooperative entities, private or public professional organizations or foundations such as CAS, CAPSS, IHE, teacher unions (AFT and CEA), and others will be invited to become partners in the implementation of this plan.
Roll out plan and prepare for piloting with select Participating LEAs	March through August 2011	CSDE, Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability, LEAs, et al.
Pilot implementation with select Participating LEAs	September 2011 through June 2012	CSDE, Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability, LEAs, et al.
Full implementation with *all* participating districts	2012-2013 school year	CSDE, Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability, LEAs, et al.

Timeframe: March 2011 and ongoing thereafter

Responsible Parties: CSDE and the Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability

Section (D)(2)(iii)

Goal 4: Conduct Evaluations.

As the result of this goal, Connecticut will provide teachers and principals with data on student growth for their students, classes and schools.

As described in section (D)(2)(ii), the CSDE will develop and implement a teacher and administrator/principal evaluation system to be consistently monitored in all participating LEAs. Connecticut will use the RTTT application definitions of effective and highly effective teachers and principals in creating its evaluation system. The CSDE will require participating LEAs to annually evaluate all teachers and principals and report data into the data systems established to monitor teacher effectiveness and report target data in 2012-13 and 2013-14.

Activities

- Develop a statewide data reporting system to collect annual teacher and administrator/principal evaluation data based on the methods and performance criteria established.
- Develop an electronic data collection process to monitor individual teachers and aggregate evaluation data for each LEA to ensure that LEAs conduct evaluations annually.
- Require the review and approval of all plans, and conduct focused monitoring of school districts on the implementation of the teacher and administrator evaluation processes; in so doing, identify needed supports such as training, external coaching or data analysis.
- Provide LEAs and the SBE annual student growth data based on state standardized tests, aggregated and disaggregated, as well as other measures that can be tracked at the state level.
- Analyze and report on teacher and administrator/principal performance statewide.
- Monitor the progress of districts in reporting of evaluation data that has been tracked separately by each LEA.

Timeframe: These activities will commence in March 2011 and continue thereafter.

Responsible Parties: CSDE

Section (D)(2)(iv)

Goal 5: Use evaluations to inform decision making.

As the result of this goal, the processes of educator development, compensation, tenure and removal will be guided by the new educator performance evaluation system and data on student growth.

(D)(2)(iv)(a) Developing Teachers and Principals

In addition to the aforementioned activities, the CSDE and the Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability will develop and implement training programs for teachers, principals and central office personnel on how best to use the new evaluation tools. The system we envision will be tied to a multiyear initiative to train principals and central office administrators in how to fairly and appropriately implement the new protocols when supervising and evaluating teachers and building principals. Since the mean age of most principals in Connecticut is now 55, large numbers of educators will need this training. Departmental data clearly forecast principal shortages by 2015 if Connecticut is not proactive in recruiting, training and supporting new principals.

Such activities will focus on:

- Job-embedded and summer training for administrators/principals who evaluate teachers based on the new evaluation plan, the specific methods for evaluating and the performance rubric. Training will be piloted and then implemented statewide, giving priority to the participating LEAs but making it available to administrators in all LEAs.
- Follow-up calibration, training and external coaching for administrators in the use of the process and monitoring consistency and accuracy of implementation.

- Focused monitoring of evaluation activities for selected districts and others needing external support in implementing the new teacher/administrator evaluation process and criteria.
- Central office training for LEA-level administrators (superintendents, assistant superintendents, etc.) who evaluate the efficacy of principals and vice principals. Training will be focused on the implementation of the process and the application of the administrator/principal performance criteria.
- Annual data collections from participating districts on the results of using the new evaluation system. Focused monitoring and external coaching will be provided if data indicate the need for state monitoring or intervention, or if the LEA requests such support.

All administrators in Connecticut are required to have a minimum of 15 hours of training in teacher evaluation. To ensure consistency and reliability of the application of the teacher evaluation process (methods), analysis of student growth data and the application of the performance rubric, the SBE plans to require that all practicing administrators must:

- Complete the new training based on the new teacher evaluation plan and performance rubric.
- Be recalibrated every other year to ensure consistency of application.
- Be retrained with the system every three years to keep pace with changes and new knowledge underwriting supervision, evaluation and retention of effective teachers.

To complete this work:

1. The CSDE will monitor LEA evaluation data as it relates to each LEA's capacity to ensure effective implementation of the statewide TEAM program to induct beginning teachers; and to ensure that evaluation data is used to design and guide school-wide, individual or team-based professional development. See Section (C)(3) for additional detail.
2. Through focused monitoring protocols, the CSDE will review how effectively each district's evaluation system and professional development are working to support teachers and principals and beginning teachers in particular. The protocols will also examine

how relevant professional development programs focus on the analysis of student learning data to improve instruction or better support students in need of instructional or behavioral interventions.

3. Based on student growth data used in the evaluation process, teachers and administrators will jointly plan professional development needs. State guidelines for professional development will encourage models that are already in use in districts that have implemented the CALI in which collaboration and job-embedded training are integral components.
4. In tandem with the Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability, the CSDE will coordinate and organize all of the professional development activities planned by each of the six partnership committees.

Timeframe: These activities will commence in September 2010 and continue thereafter.

Responsible Parties: CSDE; Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability; Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development*;* and LEAs.

(D)(2)(iv)(b) Compensating, Promoting and Retaining Educators

1. With the input of key stakeholders (e.g., Connecticut Association of Schools, Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents and others that make up the state's Performance Evaluation Advisory Council), the CSDE will develop a framework for designing compensation systems that can, through collective bargaining, be agreed upon and adopted locally by each district/LEA. The new framework may include guidance for such areas as: team- or building-level performance pay for teachers and administrators whose students exceed performance expectations in any given year; stipends for mentoring beginning teachers in the summer; stipends for serving on district-wide data teams; stipends for demonstrated acquisition of relevant skills and knowledge; or other such constructs.
2. The Performance Evaluation Advisory Council will meet at least four times each year to consider and amend the state's strategies for rewarding highly effective teachers and encouraging them to work in high-priority schools. At a minimum, the council will provide guidance on such topics as:

- levels of cooperation required and relinquishing of previous, traditional positions and policies in order to achieve system reform;
- linkages between the evaluation process and improved student performance, and incentives, financial or other, for teachers and administrators; and
- linkages between the incentive system with goals to support recruitment and retention, particularly differentiated pay for teachers taking on additional leadership responsibilities.

3. The council will consider the New Haven Public School contract recently negotiated with the New Haven Federation of Teachers as a case study of how districts might link school reform, improved student achievement, and teacher evaluation to a fair and appropriate compensation system for teachers and administrators.
4. Finally, the council will also support and encourage salary reform based on differentiated assignments or staffing (teacher leaders, team leaders, coaches, curriculum leaders, etc.) rather than the accumulation of credits beyond the master's degree.

Timeframe: 2012-2013

Responsible Parties: CSDE with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council

(D)(2)(iv)(c) Tenure and Certification

1. Together with the Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability and the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, the CSDE will develop and promulgate effective evaluation processes, instruments, criteria and training; ensure consistency of standards statewide; and wherever possible, streamline processes that are historically time-consuming and labor intensive.
2. The partners will next review and discuss conditions for tenure based on identified criteria for teacher effectiveness, and, as needed, call upon the 18 schools working under Title I (g) to report on the impact SIG funds are having on tenure discussions and the expansion of highly effective teachers during the first two years of turnaround work.

3. With these insights and data acquired from these schools, the CSDE will issue policy guidelines for local boards of education to ensure that they have a sound teacher and administrator/principal evaluation system based on state professional standards, demonstrating that they can teach students to learn and achieve at high levels and to show growth over specific, predetermined timeframes.
4. In carrying out this work over the next three years and thereafter: (a) Connecticut's current statutory authority, Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) 10-151 (see Appendix (D)(2)(d)), will continue to outline the due process requirements for both LEAs and teachers; and (b) all teachers and principals will be trained or "recalibrated" in the use of the evaluation guidelines describing effective practice.
5. Through data collection and focused monitoring, the CSDE will report on its work each fall to the SBE to ensure transparency of both the implementation and analysis of teacher and administrator evaluation processes.

(D(2)(iv)(d) Educator Removal

1. The CSDE will include in the new teacher and administrator evaluation guidelines protocols for implementing and enforcing an "intensive" evaluation phase for teachers and/or administrators whose performance is significantly below acceptable levels of performance. Data from the analysis of the 18 SIG schools will be used to support these guidelines.
2. The CSDE will require LEAs to provide focused and intensive supervision for individuals identified for the "intensive" phase on a frequent and ongoing basis, for a specific timeframe. The intensive phase will also require significant peer professional development opportunities.
3. The CSDE will, within available state funds, make external coaching available to LEAs that need assistance with implementing the intensive phase. This will involve experienced, objective external evaluators to assist in supervision efforts. Practitioners identified by the Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability will be hired to assist in this effort. If

efficacy is not demonstrated within the specified timeframe, state guidelines will outline the steps for termination of tenured or non-tenured teachers and principals.

4. The SBE may, under the authority granted to it under Section 10-223e of the CGS, require underperforming districts to direct the transfer of teachers in high-need schools to other schools within the district to ensure the equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals. (See Public Act 10-111 at Appendix (A)(1)(c) for a complete copy of CGS 10-223e, as amended).

Timeframe: Beginning in 2010 and ongoing thereafter

Responsible Parties: CSDE, LEAs, and SBE

Performance Measures for (D)(2)

The baseline percentages shown in the table below for (D)(2)(i) through (D)(2)(iii) indicate the results of a survey conducted of LEAs in April 2010. The baseline for the percentage of participating LEAs that measure student growth captures those LEAs that currently use their own measure of student growth that is consistent with the definition provided in this application. The subsequent annual targets reflect the effects of our plans to develop a prototype of our State student growth model in the 18 SIG schools in 2010-11, and to use that data to help design the larger system that we will pilot in 11 school districts in 2011-12, followed thereafter by full implementation in 2012-13. Only one LEA, the New Haven Public Schools, will open the 2010-2011 school-year with its own district-designed growth model and teacher evaluation system. District leaders in New Haven will pilot this evaluation alongside the second tool being designed in collaboration with other SIG districts: New Britain, Hartford, Bridgeport, and Windham.

The remaining targets in the table below reflect the phased-in implementation of the teacher and principal evaluation systems described in (D)(2)(ii).

Performance Measures Notes: Data should be reported in a manner consistent with the definitions contained in this application package in Section II. Qualifying evaluation systems are those that meet the criteria described in (D)(2)(ii).		**Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
Criteria	**General goals to be provided at time of application:**	**Baseline data and annual targets**				
(D)(2)(i)	Percentage of participating LEAs that measure student growth (as defined in this notice).	41.1%*	50%	65%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for teachers.	22.2%*	30%	45%	60%	100%
(D)(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for principals.	30.67%*	40%	60%	80%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems that are used to inform:					
(D)(2)(iv)(a)	• Developing teachers and principals.	Not available	6%	6%	8%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Compensating teachers and principals.	Not available	1%	1%	8%	100%

(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Promoting teachers and principals.	Not available	1%	1%	8%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Retaining effective teachers and principals.	Not available	1%	1%	8%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	• Granting tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals.	Not available	1%	1%	8%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	• Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals.	Not available	1%	1%	8%	100%

*90 out of 162 participating LEAs responded to the survey that was utilized to collect the baseline information above.

General data to be provided at time of application:	
Total number of participating LEAs.	162
Total number of principals in participating LEAs.	960
Total number of teachers in participating LEAs.	35,631

The number of principals also includes vice principals and assistant principals.

Criterion	**Data to be requested of grantees in the future:**	
(D)(2)(ii)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems.	

(D)(2)(iii)[1]	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.	[redacted]
(D)(2)(iii)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.	
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems whose evaluations were used to inform compensation decisions in the prior academic year.	
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better and were retained in the prior academic year.	
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	Number of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were eligible for tenure in the prior academic year.	

[1] Note that for some data elements there are likely to be data collection activities the State would do in order to provide aggregated data to the Department. For example, in Criteria (D)(2)(iii), States may want to ask each Participating LEA to report, for each rating category in its evaluation system, the definition of that category and the number of teachers and principals in the category. The State could then organize these two categories as effective and ineffective, for CSDE reporting purposes.

(D)(2)(iv)(c)	Number of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems whose evaluations were used to inform tenure decisions in the prior academic year.	[redacted]
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs who were removed for being ineffective in the prior academic year.	

Appendices Cited in (D)(2):

Appendix (A)(1)(c) Public Act 10-111

Appendix (D)(2)(a) SBE Notice of Intent to Adopt Proposed Regulations Concerning State Educator Certificates, Permits, and Authorizations

Appendix (D)(2)(b) Kim Marshall's Principal Evaluation Rubrics

Appendix (D)(2)(c) Kim Marshall's Teacher Evaluation Rubrics

Appendix (D)(2)(d) Connecticut General Statutes on Teacher Employment

(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals *(25 points)*

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—

(i) Ensure the equitable distribution of teachers and principals by developing a plan, informed by reviews of prior actions and data, to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools (both as defined in this notice) have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) and are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students; *(15 points)* and

(ii) Increase the number and percentage of effective teachers (as defined in this notice) teaching hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas including mathematics, science, and special education; teaching in language instruction educational programs (as defined under Title III of the ESEA); and teaching in other areas as identified by the State or LEA. *(10 points)*

Plans for (i) and (ii) may include, but are not limited to, the implementation of incentives and strategies in such areas as recruitment, compensation, teaching and learning environments, professional development, and human resources practices and processes.

The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (D)(3)(i):

Definitions of high-minority and low-minority schools as defined by the State for the purposes of the State's Teacher Equity Plan.

D(3) EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

Introduction

Like many states nationwide, Connecticut has struggled to place its most effective educators and administrators in the schools where they are needed most, and where, to the surprise of no one, the achievement gaps have proven to be the most persistent: high-poverty urban and rural schools.

The inequitable distribution of certified, highly qualified educators in Connecticut is well represented in the district-wide data the department has collected on teacher shortage areas since 1994. As shown in the table below, Connecticut's poorest and neediest

districts (DRG I) are historically those that have the highest percentages of positions left unfilled each year, as well as the largest percentages of hard-to-staff positions in such areas as world language, bilingual education, special education and secondary mathematics and science. Note that LEAs are grouped into one of nine District Reference Groups (DRGs) based on the characteristics of students' families and that LEAs in a DRG have similar incomes and percentages of families below the poverty level, single-parent families, families with non-English home language, parents with a bachelor's degree and families in white collar or managerial occupations. DRG I districts, moreover, self-report that one of the biggest and most frustrating problems they face each year is retaining new teachers during their first three years of practice. In- and out-migration in urban schools, for a host of reasons, including salary and late-season hiring practices, is widespread.

Table (D)(3)(a): Hiring Statistics by District Reference Groups, 2009-10

DRG	Total Positions	Change in Total Positions 2008 to 2009	Available Positions	Percent Change in Available Positions 2008 to 2009	Available Positions as a Percent of Total Positions	Percent of Available Positions that were Part-Time	Percent of Available Positions Filled by October 1st
A	2,951	-1.4%	187	-36.6%	6.3%	15.5%	97.9%
B	9,007	-1.0%	412	-44.6%	4.6%	17.2%	96.6%
C	3,732	-1.1%	200	-32.0%	5.4%	17.5%	95.5%
D	7,883	-0.4%	336	-47.8%	4.3%	8.9%	94.6%
E	2,504	-2.0%	124	-34.4%	5.0%	21.0%	95.2%
F	2,703	-2.6%	120	-42.6%	4.4%	10.8%	85.8%
G	6,244	-0.6%	297	-41.7%	4.8%	7.7%	92.3%
H	5,832	-2.1%	286	-29.6%	4.9%	4.2%	91.3%
I	8,718	-1.1%	604	-27.5%	6.9%	4.5%	84.1%
NA*	4,231	-0.5%	502	-3.5%	11.9%	13.3%	87.1%

**Includes the Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS), charter schools, Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) and state-approved private special education programs.*

The data shown in Table (D)(3)(a) highlight some of the challenges we face in overcoming the problem of inequitable distribution. First, these data reflect aggregated *district* trends only, and not *school* trends.

Second, these data speak only to the issue of *hiring* and not to induction and retention, two of the most important factors, researchers suggest, that policymakers must consider when confronting inequitable distribution of staff across districts and regions. It is a well-known fact that while compensation is an important reason why teachers will leave a poor district to accept a job in a wealthier one, money alone is not the reason most frequently cited. How teachers are introduced or brought into a school during their first years, whether they are mentored, how they are led, whether the principal maintains a strong climate of respect and support, and whether the school is safe, clean, and adequately provisioned are all important – if not more important – factors that contribute to teacher retention in poor districts. Reasons cited by principals when asked about the reasons they might not stay in a district are not dissimilar. Like teachers, principals are acutely sensitive to the culture of a district, the quality of the superintendent and his/her leadership, the integrity of the board of education, and other factors they look for that extend well beyond what they might earn.

Third, the data in Table (D)(3)(a) do not reveal whether teachers hired each year are teachers of color or are bilingual, particularly if they are *not* teaching in high-poverty schools, where – research shows again – they are most acutely needed by students wanting/needing to be taught by teachers who look and speak like them, and who know what it means to grow up as a minority person in a predominantly white culture.

Finally, Connecticut's current data do not reliably capture who the "effective" and "highly effective" teachers and principals are in our state, if for no other reason than we are just now building the growth models and evaluation system needed to make those determinations and report on them by 2013 (see Section (D)(2)).

How then, can we develop a plan that will ensure that high-poverty and high-minority schools in Connecticut will have equal access to the most effective and highly effective principals and teachers each year? And, further, that these schools will not be hamstrung by the many non-monetary reasons leading to ineffective educators remaining in high-poverty, high-minority schools?

For Connecticut, the answer lies in properly analyzing and defining the variables we want to capture and measure, and taking the time to build and develop the systems needed to gather and report on the data needed by LEA decision-makers and policy leaders. With these systems in place, we propose to use the next four years to launch major initiatives to recruit and retain effective teachers in our highest-poverty schools. We will implement short-term "proxy-based" effectiveness measures for teacher and principal assignment, and through our State Board of Education (SBE) and Bureau of School Improvement and Accountability, we will closely monitor the progress of underperforming schools and districts in recruiting and retaining effective teachers and principals, as part of the improvement planning process called for in the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI).

Table (D)(3)(b) presents the goals by which Connecticut will improve the equitable distribution of effective and highly effective teachers and principals, both in high poverty/high minority schools, and in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas.

Table (D)(3)(b) Connecticut's Plan to Support the Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers and Principals				
Goals related to Section (D)(3)(i)	**2010-2011**	**2011-2012**	**2012-2013**	**2013-2014**
Goal 1: Create and implement the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) database to support the strategies to resolve inequities in the distribution of effective teachers and principals			*Complete September 2012*	
Goal 2: Apply database information to new CT teacher and principal evaluation system and produce first report on equitable assignment of effective teachers				*Complete September 2013*
Goal 3. Implement system of effectiveness distribution based on "proxy" effectiveness measures for teachers and principals	*Begin September 2010*	*Complete September 2011*		*Complete September 2013*
Goal 4: Implement incentives for high-minority and high-poverty schools to recruit and retain highly effective teachers and principals • Parallel incentive systems for teachers & principals • Proactive Hiring	*Begin September 2010*			*Complete September 2013*
Goal Related to Section (D)(3)(ii)				
Goal 1: Increase the numbers and equitable distribution of				

Table (D)(3)(b) Connecticut's Plan to Support the Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers and Principals			
effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas including mathematics, science and special education, ELL and bilingual education and other areas.			
• Expand the supply of new teachers in shortage areas	*June 2011*		
• Scholarships for certified substitute teachers to earn cross-endorsements		*June 2012*	
• LEA incentives for hiring and retaining effective teachers		*June 2012*	
• Policy changes			*June 2014*

(D)(3): The Plan in Detail

Section (D)(3)(i)

Goal 1: Create and implement the CSDE database system to support the equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals to target districts and schools.

Achievement of this goal will ensure availability of data will be available to identify effective and highly effective teachers and principals in Connecticut for recognition as well as to advance their recruitment and retention in high-poverty and high-minority schools.

Currently the CSDE categorizes its public schools by indices of poverty and free- and reduced-lunch counts. Schools falling within the top quartile of all public schools on these indices constitute Connecticut's definition of high-poverty schools. Most of them are Title I schools, and most are in our most economically disadvantaged district reference groups – DRGs G, H, and I. In 2009, there were 238 high-poverty schools in Connecticut, and while this number fluctuates slightly from year to year, these are the primary object of our equitable distribution plan, and our goal is to complete necessary data system enhancements to be able to produce Connecticut's first annual report on highly effective teachers and principals in high-poverty and high-minority schools in September 2013.

Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers and Principals *(D)(3)(i-ii)*

A major part of Connecticut's "effectiveness and equitability" distribution plan is to create the database that will enable all superintendents statewide to know where and in what districts and schools highly effective teachers and principals can be found who may be potentially available for hiring. The state's certified staffing file that will contain all of this information must be made available on a timely basis to ensure hiring decisions can be made in the spring and summer months before the start of school. The file should also indicate which teachers and principals, among the thousands recorded in our system each year, are even interested in making a move from their present assignment. Fortunately, our staffing files do contain hiring data at the school level. However, due to lack of funds and sufficient personnel, we have yet to publish these data and make them directly available to building principals on an annual basis. This will change as recent allocations from the Connecticut General Assembly become available in fiscal year 2011.

Activities

- Complete teacher and principal identification system matched to student data, marrying educator identification numbers (EINs) to state-assigned student identification numbers (SASIDs) by January 2011.
- Begin publishing data specific to schools by July 2011, enabling principals, superintendents and analysts the opportunity to discern trends in tenure decisions, retention rates, reasons stated for leaving the district and the demographic profile of the students enrolled in each school.
- Revise and expand pertinent data elements (e.g., completion of T.E.A.M. or other induction programs, student growth indicators) relevant to determinations of teacher effectiveness by July 2011.
- Develop pertinent data elements for principals (e.g., academic growth, school climate measures, drop-out rates, or other supplemental measures) relevant to the determination of principals' effectiveness by March 2012.
- Integrate of all foregoing elements into Connecticut's certified staff data file by July 2012.

Timeframe: September 2010 through July 2012

Responsible Parties: CSDE; Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability; RESC Alliance; and LEAs

Goal 2: Apply database information to new Connecticut teacher and principal evaluation system and produce first report on equitable assignment of effective teachers.

As the result of this goal, Connecticut will begin the process of annual public reports on the distribution of effective and highly effective educators.

Activities:

- Formal implementation of the Connecticut Evaluation System for Teachers and Principals begins in September 2012.
- The first annual report documenting the distribution of teachers and principals based on effectiveness and equitability is produced in September 2013.

Timelines: September 2012-September 2013

Responsible Parties: CSDE; Partnership for Teacher; Principal Effectiveness and Accountability; and LEAs

Goal 3: Implement interim system of effectiveness distribution based on "proxy" effectiveness measures for teachers and principals.

As the result of this goal, a number of LEAs will realize early improvements in access to highly effective teachers and principals based on the interim use of "proxy" designations for high effectiveness.

Because Connecticut's new evaluation system for teachers and principals will not be implemented until the fall of 2012, two years will elapse before highly effective teachers and principals can be identified under that formal system. Connecticut's Phase 2 Race to the Top application, therefore, provides for the use of "proxy" determinations of effectiveness to begin the process of equitable distribution. Teachers and principals will be designated as candidates for highly effective status according to the following criteria:

1. Teacher candidates who score two deviations above the cut score for the Praxis II exams administered for teacher certification each year in Connecticut

2. Mathematics and reading teachers in grades 3-8, who, as part of the piloting of the state's new growth measures in the 18 School Improvement Grant schools (see Section (D)(2)) show evidence of meeting the criteria for highly effective teachers
3. Graduates of the Elementary and Middle School Mathematics and Science Academy who have been selected and formally trained to serve as math and science coaches in over 50 schools statewide, through a Title II grant awarded Connecticut in 2008
4. National Board Certified Teachers practicing in Connecticut or who are recruited to practice in Connecticut
5. Principal candidates who achieve passing scores for all four modules of the Connecticut Administrators Test (CAT) administered each year for certifying principals to practice in Connecticut
6. Teachers who successfully complete the Urban School Leaders Fellowship (USLF) program offered through the nationally recognized *Center for School Change* in New Haven, Connecticut

Activities

- Begin identification of effective educators based on "proxy" designation in September 2011
- Work with selected LEAs in the use of this information to apply incentive programs described in Goal 4.

Timeframes: September 2011 - September 2013

Responsible Parties: LEAs and the CSDE

Goal 4: Implement incentives for high-minority and high-poverty schools to recruit and retain highly effective teachers and principals.

As the result of this goal, pilot LEAs will have access to a series of incentives to recruit and retain effective teachers and principals from 2011-2013. All participating LEAS will have access beginning 2013.

Barriers and challenges to recruiting and retaining teachers and principals are:

- Late seasonal hiring practices due to budget processes employed by high-poverty and high-minority LEAs creates the situation where the smaller LEAs have already hired most of the candidates graduating from the highly regarded teacher preparation institutions.
- Retention of teachers in these high-poverty and high-minority LEAs is three to five years when newer teachers seek a position in a less stressed suburban LEA.
- Tenure and seniority discourages highly effective teachers/principals from changing LEAs later in their careers when they have developed their teaching strategies and skills.
- Low numbers of teachers, in general, being produced by traditional preparation programs in the identified shortage areas. A key dilemma superintendents face is how – when possible – to recruit teachers and principals *from* schools where they are succeeding *to* high-poverty schools where, potentially, their challenges will be greater.

Connecticut will pursue two strategies to support the efforts of superintendents to recruit and retain highly effective educators in high-poverty schools: Crandall Incentive Grants and Pre-emptive Hiring.

Activities

Crandall Incentive Grants

First, CSDE will design a new system of competitive grants to make resources available to principals in high-poverty schools to recruit, hire, mentor and retain highly effective *teachers*; and to superintendents and boards of education managing these schools to recruit, hire, mentor and retain highly effective *principals*.

The incentives envisioned here will be supported by Crandall grants (in honor of Prudence Crandall, Connecticut's first African-American educator) that will be used by principals and superintendents to design local incentive programs to hire highly effective teachers and principals. Principals and superintendents will apply to the CSDE for funds to be used for signing bonuses, stipends, professional development opportunities, course reimbursement, travel, conferences and more, that may give them a competitive edge in hiring a highly effective teacher or principal. These funds may also be requested to enhance the quality of the work environment in order to make retention a more likely outcome than might be possible within the limited budgets of district leaders. Finally, these funds may be used by superintendents and principals to contract with universities or national organizations – like *Teach for America, New Leaders for New Schools*, or *the Center for School Change* – that could bring highly effective teachers and/or principals to their schools.

As an added incentive, districts and/or schools that agree to form regional consortia to share and exchange highly effective teachers and principals over a period of years will be given added consideration for grant funding, depending on the request and the quality of the long-range proposal.

Pre-emptive Hiring

The CSDE and the Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability will play a central role in helping organize the data and planning tools needed to assist high-poverty schools to have access to and compete for the best teacher and principal candidates. The CSDE will, through its management and implementation of T.E.A.M. (see Appendix (D)(3)(a) for information about the T.E.A.M. program) and the certified staffing file, have the unique ability to identify future teachers for the roles needed.

Connecticut's Phase 2 application provides for a new process to support LEAs by linking data on highly effective educators to likely openings by district and confidentially connecting these individuals to LEAs with openings or vacancies.

Beginning in September 2013, the CSDE will identify all highly effective teachers and principals each fall in order to survey them and determine by January 30 of each year if they are interested in considering applying for a position in a high-poverty school. The department will also survey superintendents and principals in high-poverty schools by March 15 of each year to determine anticipated or potential fall openings for teachers and principals. The CSDE will then link prospective candidates to would-be employers electronically (and confidentially) for preliminary discussions of future employment. In addition, the CSDE will host an annual Statewide Recruitment Fair each April. Its purpose will be to enable employers to hire or to begin the process of hiring highly effective teachers and principals prospectively for the following September. The CSDE will work with the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) on a strategic communications campaign to promote the importance and significance of working in high-poverty schools and the value of developing year-round hiring policies locally. Pre-emptive hiring is extremely difficult to plan and carry out, but evidence from practicing superintendents in Connecticut and other states strongly suggests that aggressive recruitment can and will work, if authorities and policymakers make this strategy a high priority.

***Timeframe*:** Begin 2011 and ongoing

Responsible Parties: CSDE, LEAs

To estimate the number of teachers statewide that might serve as a proxy for a true number the highly effective principals and teachers CSDE must identify by 2013, we analyzed the number of teachers in Connecticut who currently fall into the following categories:

- National Board Certified
- Mathematics Coaches
- Science Coaches
- USLF Completers

In addition to these staff, we further reviewed the 2009 results of the State's Praxis II examinations for all teachers, and the CAT examinations for all principals, to determine the number of test takers for each category.

Finally, as a decision rule, we assumed that of all the teachers and principals practicing in Connecticut in 2009-10, approximately 10 percent, would likely be rated highly effective by their supervisors, based on a normal distribution of ratings. Similarly, we further assumed that of all teachers and principals practicing, 5% would be likely to be rated as ineffective in any given year. We assumed a lower percentage of ineffective teachers, based on the observation that ineffective teachers are usually identified early on in their careers and are counseled out or leave voluntarily during their first three years of employment. Those who do not leave (i.e., those who were marginally effective in the first years of service) constitute the 5 percent that in any given year might be evaluated as ineffective.

These numbers, shown in Table (D)(3)(c) below, provide an estimate of the number of highly effective and ineffective teachers and principals that will be in our public schools over the next three years, assuming a constant number of teachers coming into and out of the system.

Table (D)(3)(c) Estimate of the Number of Highly Effective and Ineffective Teachers and Principals

	Highly Effective 10%					Ineffective 5%			
	2009	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**
High Poverty Schools									
Teachers	9629	960	960	960	960	481	481	481	481
Principals	292	29	29	29	29	15	15	15	15
Total	**9921**	**989**	**989**	**989**	**989**	**496**	**496**	**496**	**496**
Low Poverty Schools									
Teachers	12627	1262	1262	1262	1262	631	631	631	631
Principals	322	32	32	32	32	16	16	16	16

Total	**12949**	**1294**	**1294**	**1294**	**1294**		**1639**	**1639**	**1639**	**1639**
Practicing Teachers										
Board Certified	137	137	137	137	137					
Math Coaches	60	60	60	60	60					
Science Coaches	60	60	60	60	60					
USLF Principals	25	25	25	25	25					
Total	**282**	**282**	**282**	**282**	**282**					
Potential Teachers	Test Takers									
Teacher Candidates Praxis II	7757	305	305	305	305					
Principal CAT (2009)	287	29	29	29	29					
Total	**8044**	**334**	**334**	**334**	**334**					

Application to Performance Measures (D)(3)(i)

The numbers in Table (D)(3)(c), while speculative, provide a glimpse into the percentages of teachers and principals we would hope, minimally, to be present in our high-poverty schools over the next three years (2011-13). We would further hope that our recruitment and redistribution strategies between now and 2013 would show these percentages, as measured by these proxies, to increase over time and continue increasing as recruitment and retention initiatives for poor schools strengthen.

Against that desire, however, we could also find that, as we formally begin implementing the new evaluation system described in Section (D)(2), the more rigorous and thorough processes followed during the pilot and first years of implementation will result in fewer highly effective teachers and more ineffective teachers in 2013-14 and thereafter. We may find that these numbers will readjust

as Connecticut's evaluation system becomes institutionalized in 2014 and beyond. We will need true numbers to know for certain and a careful way of monitoring how teachers and principals are recruited and retained by poor school districts.

Performance Measures for (D)(3)(i) *Note: All information below is requested for Participating LEAs.*	**Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)**	***End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013 (Pilot new System)**	****End of SY 2013-2014 (New Evaluation System Implemented)**
General goals to be provided at time of application:	**Baseline data and annual targets**				
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	Not available	10%	12%	15%	13%
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	Not available	10%	11%	12%	11%
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	Not available	5%	4%	4%	6%
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	Not available	5%	4%	4%	6%
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	Not available	10%	12%	15%	13%

Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	Not available	10%	11%	12%	11%
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	Not available	5%	4%	4%	6%
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	Not available	5%	4%	4%	5%
General data to be provided at time of application:					
Total number of schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	306				
Total number of schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	339				
Total number of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	9,629				
Total number of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	12,627				
Total number of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	292				
Total number of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	322				

*Based on "effectiveness proxy" for years 2010-2011 and 2011-2012

** Based on new teacher and principal evaluation system.

Data to be requested of grantees in the future:	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as highly effective (as defined in this notice) in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as highly effective (as defined in this notice) in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.	

Section (D)(3)(ii)

The goals and activities for Section (D)(3)(i) cast a wide net to bring as many highly effective teachers and principals to Connecticut's comparatively few high-poverty schools. The goals and activities planned for Section (D)(3)(ii), by contrast, are aimed at bringing as many effective teachers as possible to the shortage areas defined each year by the CSDE. While the two problems overlap, they are not identical. While both will share in the use of the data system and strategies outlined above, our approach to increase the number of teachers in shortage areas, described below, will require a different approach and new set of strategies, based on the factors that are unique to this aspect of equitable distribution of teachers.

Section (D)(1)(iii), Table (D)(1)(iii)(b) presents data on fall 2009 shortage areas along with an "acuteness ranking" that described the LEA's sense of how serious each shortage area is. Table (D)(3)(ii)(a) represents these data according to "acuteness ranking" where #1 is rated at the LEA level as most severe:

Table (D)(3)(ii)(a) Shortage Areas 2009 based on Acuteness Ranking			
Certificate Area	**Acuteness Ranking**	**Certificate Area**	**Acuteness Ranking**
Speech and language pathologist	1	English 7-12	6
Comprehensive special education K-12	2	Music PK-12	7
World language 7-12	3	Mathematics 7-12	8
Intermediate Administrator	4*	School psychologist	9
Bilingual	4*	Remedial reading and language arts, 1-12	10

(* Tied)

Connecticut's shortage areas have been quite constant since 2000 and are similar to shortage areas one might find in any state in the country. Importantly, demographic information is not captured in this annual survey, a gap that will be addressed in the plan below. Specifically, we cannot determine from this annual survey how many teachers of color and teachers fluent in a second language other than English are required among the position shortage areas.

For Connecticut, these shortage areas take on new meaning when we consider the staffing needs of our districts as they move to hire the additional world language mathematics and science teachers needed to meet the new 25-credit graduation requirements delineated in section 16 of Public Act 10-111 and the *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* (see Section (A)(1)(i) and Section (B)). The problem Connecticut faces now is how best to expand the "supply lines" that will bring more teachers in these shortage areas to all districts in the state and ensure that they are sufficiently effective to have a strong chance of positively impacting student performance.

As reported in Section (D)(1), Connecticut has relied on a series of strategies to address the recruitment of teachers in shortage areas. These include:

- The approval of alternate route to certification programs in shortage areas such as Comprehensive Special Education (see Section (D(1)) .
- Seeking U.S. Department of Education designation of official shortage areas, enabling Stafford and Supplemental Loan students who teach in one of these areas to possibly qualify for deferral of loan repayments.
- Through the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, designating shortage areas that enable a teacher in a Priority School District or in a subject-matter shortage area to qualify for mortgage assistance.

LEAs may also use state-defined shortage area designations to re-employ teachers who are then exempt from the statutory pension earnings limit. (See CGS 10-183v in Appendix (D)(1)(a)).

Meeting the additional needs for teachers in certain content areas (for example, mathematics and world language teachers who will be needed to comply with increased courses required under Public Act No. 10-111) will require strengthened recruitment and retention strategies. In addition, a connection must be made between simply recruiting, to fill shortage areas and recruiting/retaining effective and highly effective teachers to work in these shortage areas. By 2013, the CSDE will install the systems needed to identify all teachers statewide who have been judged to be effective. But to expand these numbers will require additional strategies and approaches.

Goal 1: Increase the numbers and equitable distribution of effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas including mathematics, science and special education, ELL and bilingual education and other areas.

As the result of this goal, over the next four years, participating LEAs will experience a reduction in shortages of effective teachers in these staffing areas.

Activities

Expanding the Supply of New Teachers in Shortage Areas

- Support an annual, state-sponsored media campaign to alert all prospective teacher candidates in high school, undergraduate training programs, and ARCs in Connecticut as to what the teacher shortage areas are, which schools and districts are reporting

the highest percentages of shortages in the areas cited above and the average teachers' salaries in each district. Incorporate shortage area recruitment into the SDE annual Job Fair in April.

- Bid and award contracts to Connecticut's professional teacher organizations (e.g., the Connecticut Association for Teachers of Mathematics; the Connecticut Association of Teachers of World Language; the Connecticut Association of Special Educators) to work with national and regional affiliates to recruit teachers from other states to work in Connecticut.
- Bid and award contracts to Connecticut's various educational, STEM and business leadership groups to recruit math and science teachers K-12 to practice in Connecticut.
- Expand on-line courses offered by effective teachers in mathematics, science and world language teachers in hard-to-staff areas. Online courses offer a way for students to access high quality teachers and content that may not otherwise be available at their schools.
- Develop post-secondary scholarship programs for high school students willing to acquire hard-to-staff certificates after college, and coordinate these programs with Connecticut's institutions of higher education.
- Contract with the RESC Alliance to double the scope and reach of its effective annual Minority Teacher Recruitment Program that culminates in an annual April Job Fair. (See Appendix (D)(3)(b) for a description of this program); and
- Create various blogs on the SDE's Web site for job-alike groups (e.g., mathematics teachers) and teachers of color to communicate with one another about job openings or impending vacancies in their schools.

Scholarships for Certified Substitute Teachers to Earn Cross-Endorsements in Hard-to-Staff Subjects

Data on teacher hiring in the last decade has consistently shown that the numbers of elementary teachers certified each year through Connecticut's institutions of higher education greatly exceeds the numbers of positions available each year. Often these graduates, despite their promise, end up serving as substitute teachers for a period of time, hoping to gain experience and recognition from district leaders for possible future hiring.

This form of feeder system is not an effective recruitment tool, despite its prevalence, but it could easily be changed to address shortage needs if districts were given "conversion" funds to provide incentives for substitute teachers to undergo additional training while substituting. As conceived here, districts experiencing acute shortage areas would make grant application to the CSDE for funds to be used for scholarships and recognition programs for substitute teachers willing to take the courses needed for cross-endorsement in a hard-to-staff area. While a district's investment may be small and the financial award insufficient to pay for the substitute teacher's added coursework, the incentive and recognition will move new teachers into areas of practice not contemplated.

Olmsted Grants to Districts to Hire and Retain Effective Teachers in Hard-to-Staff Subjects

The Crandall grants, discussed in Section (D)(3)(i), will be a useful vehicle for helping districts recruit and retain highly effective teachers and principals in their high-poverty schools. A second set of competitive grants, Olmsted grants (in honor of Frederick Olmsted, founder of landscape architecture, who lived and studied in Connecticut), will be made available to districts to provide funds to hire, recruit and retain teachers in all of the hard-to-staff areas. The procedures for applying for and awarding grants to participating districts will largely be the same as above. One exception will be that the size of the awards will be based, to some degree, on the nature of a district's need, as measured by the shortage positions sought, and their relative rank on the core shortage list (i.e., districts may be differentially awarded grants on the basis of shortage areas demonstrating the greatest need).

Policy Changes

Finally, to increase the number of teachers in the shortage areas identified annually, the CSDE will work to enact new legislation by 2014 to provide additional financial aid to undergraduates who opt to enroll in a hard-to-staff certification program by their sophomore year of college, and agree, based on MOUs with the CSDE and institutions of higher education, that they will work and practice in a Connecticut public school for a minimum of four years. These new pieces of legislation will expand upon those already written into law in the 2009 and 2010 legislative sessions, the most recent being Public Act No. 10-111.

Public Act No. 10-111. This new law allows a local or regional school board in a priority school district to hire a retired teacher certified in any subject for up to two consecutive years at full salary without loss of pension benefits, provided such board

certifies to the Teachers' Retirement Board that no qualified candidates were available. (See section 8 of Public Act 10-111 at Appendix (A)(1)(c)). Current law authorizes any local or regional board to hire a retired teacher for up to two years for subject shortage areas only. (See 10-183v of the CGS in Appendix (D)(1)(a)). In addition, section 9 of Public Act No. 10-111 allows teachers and administrators who attained tenure in another school district in Connecticut or out-of-state and take a job in a priority school district to attain tenure in the new district in half the time (i.e., after working 10 months in the priority school district rather than 20 months).

Public Act 09-01. This legislation (An Act Concerning Educator Certification and Professional Development and Other Education Issues), enacted by the 2009 Connecticut General Assembly requires that the State Board of Education allow certification applicants to substitute an excellent score on subject area assessments in shortage areas determined by the Commissioner in lieu of the subject area major requirement for certification. In other words, a candidate who may not have a degree in science or math may seek certification in that endorsement area if they achieve an "excellent" score on the Praxis II exam. (See 10-145l of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS in Appendix (D)(1)(a)). The excellent score criteria will be established by the State Board prior to July 1, 2010. In addition, Public Act No. 09-01 allows for the waiver of the competency examination and subject area assessment for certified, experienced teachers who hold a valid certificate equivalent to an initial educator certificate from another state and who (1) have at least three years of successful teaching experience within the 10 years prior to application or (2) hold a master's degree in the academic subject area for which they seek certification. (See 10-145f(f) of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS in Appendix (D)(1)(a)). Finally, this law established a new resident teacher certificate for teachers participating in alternate route programs such as *Teach for America*. (See 10-145m of the 2010 Supplement to the CGS in Appendix (D)(1)(a)).

Performance Measures for (D)(3)(ii)

The table below, for Performance Measures for (D)(3)(ii), provides some insight to what we might expect to see as the percentage of teachers evaluated as effective or better in the identified shortage areas for years 2011-2014. While one might expect to see a normal distribution in these numbers, it is equally reasonable to assume that the percentages of mathematics, science, special education, and ELL teachers will not fall into a neat pattern of performance ratings, given the necessity of significantly basing these

ratings on the *academic growth* of students in these areas. The interaction between teachers' preparation and experience in teaching in these hard-to-staff areas, and the learning needs of the students they teach may result in further variation. Only until we have our growth measures and reliable data in 2013 will we know more. For now the percentages below represent our best estimate.

Performance Measures for (D)(3)(ii) ***Note: All information below is requested for Participating LEAs.***	**Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
General goals to be provided at time of application:	**Baseline data and annual targets**				
Percentage of mathematics teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	Not Available	63%	65%	68%	71%
Percentage of science teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	Not Available	48%	52%	56%	60%
Percentage of special education teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	Not Available	73%	76%	79%	82%
Percentage of teachers in language instruction educational programs who were evaluated as effective or better.	Not Available	42%	44%	46%	48%
General data to be provided at time of application:					
Total number of mathematics teachers.	2,836				

Total number of science teachers.	2,682
Total number of special education teachers.	5,225
Total number of teachers in language instruction educational programs.	4,447
The number of mathematics teachers and science teachers includes those teachers certified and assigned to teach these subjects at the middle and high school levels. Elementary grade level science and math is typically taught by certified elementary school teachers. Connecticut defined teachers in language instruction education programs as those teachers certified and teaching reading/language arts.	
Data to be requested of grantees in the future:	
Number of mathematics teachers in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.	
Number of science teachers in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.	
Number of special education teachers in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers in language instruction educational programs in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.	

Appendices Referenced in Section (D)(3)

Appendix (A)(1)(c) Public Act 10-111

Appendix (D)(1)(a) Connecticut General Statutes on Alternative Routes to Certification and Teacher Shortage Areas

Appendix (D)(3)(a) June 2010 Report to the SBE regarding T.E.A.M.

Appendix (D)(3)(b) Minority Teacher Recruitment Program

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs *(14 points)*

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—

(i) Link student achievement and student growth (both as defined in this notice) data to the students' teachers and principals, to link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, and to publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the State; and

(ii) Expand preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice).

The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

(D)(4) IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Introduction

Over the period January through May 2010, Connecticut has undertaken five significant activities that demonstrably improve the working relationship between K-12 education and Connecticut's teacher and principal preparation institutions.

First, since the development of Connecticut's Phase 1 Race to the Top (RTTT) application, new data have become available from the state's first assessment of the competence of aspiring teacher candidates in the area of reading. In an effort to align the expectations of teacher training programs with new standards for competency in teaching reading, the four universities of the Connecticut State University System engaged in several faculty development initiatives during 2009-2010. For one of these, university faculty analyzed teacher preparation students' performance on the "Foundations of Reading" certification exam to identify those areas where candidates showed weakness. In response to pass rates that did not reach acceptable levels, and the faculty developed additions and changes in the curriculum to address those weaknesses. Each university produced a short-term plan to work with students who did

not do well on the test and a long-term plan to revise its curriculum and make sure that its program is consistent with the needs of Connecticut's school districts going forward.

Second, four Connecticut state universities and nine high schools worked together to align statewide curricula in an effort to reduce the need for mathematics and English language arts remediation for entering freshman from those high schools. Two districts in Litchfield County approached Western Connecticut State University to collaborate on reforming the teacher training curriculum. From the LEA perspective, as part of the teacher preparation process, teacher candidates should have more real world experiences in working in schools. LEAs are also seeking to create opportunities to integrate the theoretical learning students receive at the university with the demands of the classroom well beyond simple student teaching experiences. The university will be collaborating with these districts as it re-examines the kind of training offered through its pre-service program and will utilize the schools for many more "hands on" experiences for its students as an integral part of the curriculum.

Third, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has also been working on a significant, multi-year revision to the state's *Regulations Concerning State Educator Certificates, Permits and Authorizations.* (See Appendix (D)(2)(a) for a summary of these revisions). The regulations establish rigorous expectations of more applied training of teacher candidates based on the learning needs of PK-12 students and pre-service competencies focused on the following: the development and characteristics of learners, especially those with diverse learning needs; evidence-based instruction and behavior management; effective assessment and use of student achievement data to inform instruction; expanded training in literacy for elementary and early childhood candidates; and prerequisite training in general education for special educators. The revised regulations will be adopted by the State Board of Education in July 2010.

Fourth, as part of the new leadership structures established to guide Connecticut's RTTT education reform agenda, higher education leaders and faculty will play a much more significant role than articulated in our Phase 1 application. Specifically, the new Shared Leadership Council will include the Commissioner of Education, Commissioner of Higher Education, Chancellor of the Connecticut State University System, Chancellor of the Community College System and a representative from the University of Connecticut. The role and responsibilities of the Shared Leadership Council are described in Sections A-1(i) and A-2. Additionally,

three of the six new public-private Partnerships for Change – Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development; Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability; and Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment – will include the active participation of higher education faculty.

Fifth, section 3 of Public Act No.10-111 creates the statutory requirement to expand data collection related to teacher preparation experiences as part of the CSDE's Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). Specifically, the new law requires that on or before July 1, 2013, the CSDE expand its statewide public school information system to include: "(B) Data related to teachers shall include, but not be limited to, (i) teacher credentials, such as master's degrees, teacher preparation programs completed and certification and endorsement areas, (ii) teacher assessments, such as whether a teacher is deemed highly qualified pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act , P.L. 107-110, or deemed to meet such other designations as may be required by federal law or regulations for the purposes of tracking the equitable distribution of instructional staff … The CSDE shall assign a unique teacher identifier to each teacher prior to collecting such data in the public school information system." This new statutory language is important for it establishes both the authority and mechanism for the RTTT-required data exchange between LEAs and the higher education institutions that have trained their teachers. The cycle involves both the effectiveness of schools of education in preparing teacher candidates and the effectiveness of K-12 education to produce college- and career-ready graduates to enter these programs of higher education.

Section D-4 (i-ii) Reform Plan Conceptual Framework

The pre-service component for future educators is critical to meeting the needs of the "next generation" learners. Higher education institutions must collaborate with school districts to rethink the way universities prepare educators. Substantive changes in the structure and design of preparation programs and tighter linkages to districts where professors and PK-12 staff can collaborate to develop experiential learning and engagement activities are necessary to produce change agents and advocates for reform (Merchant and Shoho, 2006). Such activities must be grounded in authentic and job-embedded learning opportunities with the expectation that state-of-the-art technologies will be used to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners. These same technologies must also be used for data-driven decision-making to plan and carry out targeted instructional interventions or to assess directly how well teachers add value to student achievement, as measured via benchmark assessments, demonstration projects or other measures, such as end-of-course examinations or student portfolios (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, 2009).

Goal 1: Through the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, identify Connecticut public and private teacher and principal preparation programs that train effective and highly effective K-12 educators.

As the result of this goal, public information will be available that informs prospective student, LEAs and the general public about which Connecticut teacher and principal preparation programs best prepare their graduates for effective teaching and leading in the K-12 public education system.

Activities

Knowledge Research

The CSDE will collaborate with the Partnership on Pre-Service Training and Professional Development and the Knowledge Network to examine the research on effective teacher preparation programs. This group will also receive, analyze and publish data, as described below, linking student achievement and teacher performance to the Connecticut institutions of higher education where

teachers were trained. Based on this review, the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development will recommend strategies to the Shared Leadership Council regarding programs that do and do not produce effective educators over time.

Linking Student and Teacher Data

The CSDE can currently follow and track students from preschool (includes any prekindergarten receiving state or federal funding) through public K-12 programs through Connecticut's SLDS. The SLDS has been populated with historical and current data on student academic performance as measured by such standardized assessments as the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT), Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), along with demographic information about students, their attendance and disciplinary records.

Based on the availability of state and other federal funding, the CSDE will provide the capacity to allow LEAs to integrate into the SLDS local measures of student performance, such as scores on standardized tests for grades not currently tested at the state level and other formative and benchmark assessment results.

Linking Teacher to Teacher Preparation Data

At the same time, the CSDE will develop the technical capacity to link public school students to the teachers and courses they take while that teacher was assigned the specific students. Through the certification system database, the CSDE will then connect the SLDS with data on teachers and administrators prepared by Connecticut institutions and programs and those prepared out-of-state.

Analyzing and Reporting the Data

Using the SLDS and educator preparation data from the certification system, the CSDE will review and report, on an institution basis, the pattern of student growth for all educators, and for educators by certification area, prepared by that institution. Linking the teacher preparation data within the SLDS would provide the CSDE with the opportunity to conduct longitudinal research on the quality of preparation programs and create reports that are publicly accessible via CSDE's Web site. The CSDE also plans to publicly report and link if possible, the Title II Higher Education and Opportunity Act (HEOA) institutional report card and state report card data.

Informing the Higher Education Educator Preparation Process

Using Title II HEOA regarding the licensure assessment pass rates on the Praxis, Foundations of Reading, Connecticut Administrator Test (CAT) and other assessments of candidates completing educator preparation programs, the CSDE will redefine and increase accountability measures for its educator preparation programs to determine if they are "at risk" or "low performing." Criteria and data to be considered in developing a quality index and determining at-risk or low-performing programs will include:

- licensure assessment pass rates by endorsement area;
- follow-up surveys of new teachers and their principals about the quality of the preparation program;
- percentages of candidates completing their programs in shortage areas;
- links to growth measures over time for a school where significant numbers of program completers are teaching;
- hours of school-based experiences (practice, internships, student teaching, etc.) particularly in reading and literacy;
- hours of school-based experiences working with student with disabilities;
- hours of school-based experiences working with students with limited English proficiency; and
- levels of involvement in schools (in-kind, grant work, research, professional development, etc.) assisting in reforming practice and support efforts to improve student learning.

To the extent possible, the CSDE will use this data to inform the approval and accreditation process for educator preparation programs. Programs designated as low-performing will be intensively reviewed to determine if state-level approval should be denied. Further, effective preparation programs will be encouraged and supported to increase their training programs, particularly in shortage areas.

Timelines: Begin linking data by September; first public reports September 2014

Responsible Parties: Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development, Knowledge Network, LEAs, Connecticut institutions of higher education

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most	*End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
General goals to be provided at time of application:	**Baseline data and annual targets**				
Percentage of teacher preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice) of the graduates' students.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Percentage of principal preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice) of the graduates' students.	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
*End of School Year 2011-2012, criteria for public reporting of this data will be developed.					
General data to be provided at time of application:					
Total number of teacher credentialing programs in the State.	21				
Total number of principal credentialing programs in the State.	7				
Total number of teachers in the State.	43,488				
Total number of principals in the State.	1,849				
Data to be requested of grantees in the future:					

Number of teacher credentialing programs in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.	[redacted]
Number of teachers prepared by each credentialing program in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.	[redacted]
Number of principal credentialing programs in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.	[redacted]
Number of principals prepared by each credentialing program in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.	[redacted]
Number of teachers in the State whose data are aggregated to produce publicly available reports on the State's credentialing programs.	[redacted]
Number of principals in the State whose data are aggregated to produce publicly available reports on the State's credentialing programs.	[redacted]

Appendices Cited in (D)(4)

Appendix (D)(2)(a) SBE Notice of Intent to Adopt Proposed Regulations Concerning State Educator Certificates, Permits and Authorizations

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals (20 points)

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan for its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to—

(i) Provide effective, data-informed professional development, coaching, induction, and common planning and collaboration time to teachers and principals that are, where appropriate, ongoing and job-embedded. Such support might focus on, for example, gathering, analyzing, and using data; designing instructional strategies for improvement; differentiating instruction; creating school environments supportive of data-informed decisions; designing instruction to meet the specific needs of high need students (as defined in this notice); and aligning systems and removing barriers to effective implementation of practices designed to improve student learning outcomes; and

(ii) Measure, evaluate, and continuously improve the effectiveness of those supports in order to improve student achievement (as defined in this notice).

The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Recommended maximum response length: Five pages

(D)(5) PROVIDING EFFECTIVE SUPPORT TO TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

Introduction

As can be seen throughout Connecticut's Phase 2 Race to the Top (RTTT) application, Connecticut's education reform agenda is focused on instructional improvement in its broadest sense. Our plan for great teachers and leaders integrates all of the innovations now enacted in law related to high school rigor and increased requirements. (See Public Act 10-111 in Appendix (A)(1)(c)). It anchors the change in school and district improvement in CALI and in secondary school reform. It builds upon nationally recognized programs and practices that have historically placed Connecticut as a leader in teacher quality. Most importantly for teachers and the students

that they teach, our status as a RTTT grantee state will make it possible for virtually statewide implementation of a new framework for professional development and support of teachers and administrators over the next four years.

The Race to the Top opportunity comes at a time when Connecticut is already on course to build and implement a comprehensive quality system for developing supports and evaluation methods for teachers and principals that simultaneously addresses the following six issues:

1. Designing incentives to attract people, principally undergraduates, into the profession (see Section D-3)
2. Revising the state's regulatory framework for awarding teachers and administrators certificates to practice in Connecticut, based on such factors as coursework and a range of assessments of their education, experience and likelihood of becoming effective educators (see (D)(2) and (D)(5))
3. Building strong preparation programs that lead to certification in all areas of teaching and administration, as prescribed by the new regulatory framework (see (D)(1) and (D)(4))
4. Designing new systems for *mentoring* both beginning teachers and new principals and other administrators ((D)(2) and (D)(5))
5. Designing new systems for *supervising and evaluating* beginning and experienced teachers, as well as new principals and other administrators (see (D)(2) and (D)(5))
6. Designing new systems for developing teachers' and administrators' *professional competencies* through continuing education requirements (CEUs) and/or additional coursework at the undergraduate or graduate levels (see (D)(5)).

In Section (D)(5), we present our comprehensive plan to invest in professional development and pre-service training as one of the core elements necessary for the success of our teachers and principals, and thus of our students.

(D)(5)(i-ii) Connecticut's plan for providing effective support for teachers and principals

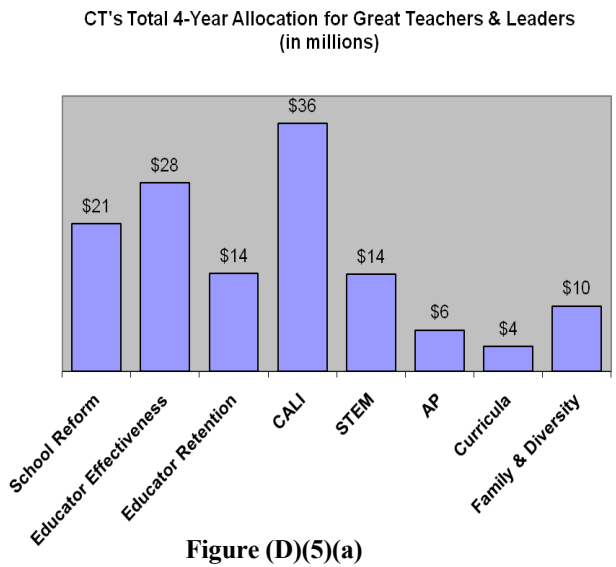


Figure (D)(5)(a)

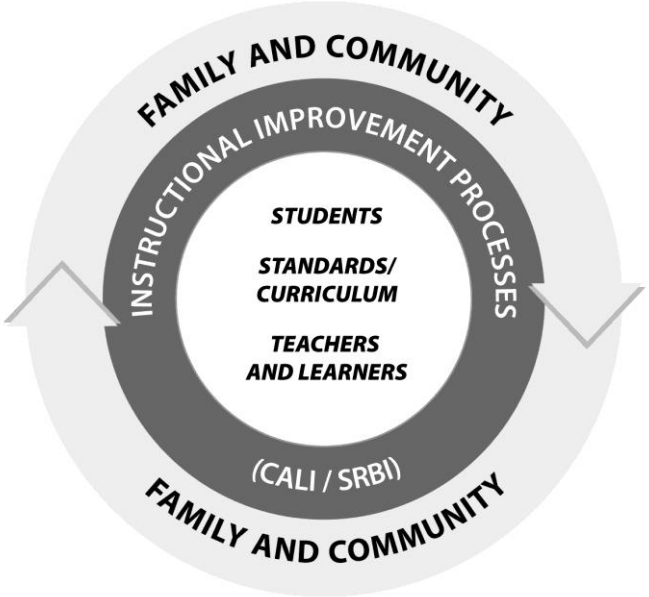
Connecticut has many strong initiatives that provide effective data-informed professional development, coaching, induction and common planning and collaborative time for teachers and principals. Many of these opportunities are job-embedded. RTTT funds will be used to expand participating LEAs access to these essential professional development programs.

To advance our education reform agenda, the Connecticut RTTT application allocates 80 percent of our total funding to the development and support of effective and highly effective teachers and principals. The distribution of this $133 million is shown in Figure (D)(5)(a).

Implementation of CALI (described here and in Sections (A)(1)(i), (C)(3), (D)(2), (E) and (F) will receive the single largest allocation of resources: $36 million over four years. Professional development, informed by a data-driven decision-making process, is the core component in CALI. Teacher and principal effectiveness systems will be funded at a level of $28 million over four years, while educator retention and recruitment programs (a key element of any comprehensive process of educator support) will work with $14 million. Increasing high school course rigor and requirements will receive $21 million. In addition to building the support systems needed to sustain middle and high schools long-term, this work includes a focus on mathematics and sciences and will require professional development support at the school and classroom levels. Model curriculum development and STEM innovation, Advanced Placement courses, and solid linkages with parents and the community related to student support and fostering equity and diversity constitute the balance of Connecticut's investment in developing and supporting great teachers and leaders.

Connecticut's Comprehensive Professional Development Framework

The schematic to the right depicts the professional development framework we will employ in Connecticut to support teachers and leaders in their work to improve school performance and student achievement. At the center of this model are the students, their teachers and principals and the important content students will learn. Surrounding them are the CALI and Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI) instructional improvement processes which equip teachers to create learning environments that better meet all students' needs through targeted strategies and differential instruction. Finally, around the classroom and school-based teaching and learning essentials are the other critically important other contributors (e.g., family and community) to the success of students, teachers and principals. The framework that we will expand through RTTT resources will support pre-service, professional development and other learning opportunities for each of these key audiences.



Connecticut's Professional Development Framework includes the core components identified below. Goals and a brief description of each along with specific proposed activities for the four-year period 2010-14 follows.

<u>(D)(5) Goals</u>

Goals articulated for Section (D)(5) have two purposes: (a) to improve the coordination of professional development opportunities, scheduling and content at the state level and (b) to delineate how LEAs will receive opportunities for professional development articulated in this part of Connecticut's RTTT education reform agenda.

Table (D)(5)(a)(b) Connecticut's Plan to Implement Comprehensive, Coordinated State-Local Professional Development				
Goals	**2010-2011**	**2011-2012**	**2012-2013**	**2013-2014**
Goal 1: LEAs Provide Student Support Systems Necessary for the Success of All Students *(Secondary School Reform)*	*Plan and RFP*	*Phase I Complete*	*Phase II Complete*	*Phase III Complete*
Goal 2: Teachers and Leaders will Provide Learning Environments and Employ Teaching Strategies that Engage All Learners • Teaching and Assessing Next Generation Learners (TANGL) • Initiatives to Foster Equity • Family and Community Engagement • New Leaders Development • STEM • CALI/SRBI	*Plan, begin development of new modules and initiatives and implement training*	*Continue development* *Ongoing training*	*Evaluate and revise* *Ongoing training*	*Evaluate and revise* *Ongoing training*
Goal 3: **Ongoing and planned PD is Mapped Statewide** • Across CSDE divisions and units • As delivered by individual LEAs/RESCs	*Create*	*Update annually*	*Update annually*	*Update annually*
Goal 4: Coordinated PD Schedule/Calendar Available • Across CSDE divisions and units • Across LEAs and education organizations	*Create*	*Ongoing*	*Ongoing*	*Ongoing*
Goal 5: Guidelines for Continuing Education Units are Revised to Promote Engaged Learning of All Students	*Begin*	*Adopt*	*Complete*	*Complete*
Goal 6: External Review of PD Effectiveness and Cost-Efficiency	*Plan and RFP*	*Phase I Complete*	*Phase II Complete*	*Phase III Complete*

The Plan in Detail

Goal 1: LEAs Provide Student Support Systems Necessary for the Success of All Students (Secondary School Reform).

As the result of this goal, key leaders in middle and high school – principals, student support service personnel and department heads – will be trained in models supporting early warning systems for high school dropouts and schedule designs for maximizing before- and after-school remedial programs, and strategies for working with family and community representatives to the implementation of Student Success Plans.

Connecticut's work to implement secondary school reform began in 2009 with the formation of 35 districts volunteering to serve on statewide work groups, each focused on piloting one of four aspects of our Secondary School Reform Plan (See Appendix (B)(3)(a)). Of the four, Connecticut's "integrated approach" to strong student and family support systems is, we believe, one of the most important parts of student success and high academic achievement. The activities outlined below reflect a firm commitment to seeing secondary reform through the lenses of the "whole child."

Activities

- Plan and carry out conference for secondary school administrators and student support service personnel (e.g., guidance counselors, school social workers and school psychologists) on High School Dropout Prevention, including information on identifying students who drop out in high school, and what can be done to prevent early school failure. (spring 2011)
- Provide professional development sessions for middle and high school principals and district leaders on the design of effective before- and after-school academic support programs in literacy, mathematics and working with English language learner (ELL) students. (beginning spring 2011 and ongoing)
- Create and disseminate to participating LEAs a list of research-based computer and Internet-based academic applications that have proven to be effective with high-needs students, including ELL students and others at high-risk for dropping out of school. (spring 2011, updated annually)

- Provide professional development sessions for middle and high school assistant principals, principals and district leaders on the design of effective schedules (e.g., block schedules, trimester school years) to maximize learning time for low-performing students. (spring 2011, fall 2011, fall 2012 and fall 2013)
- Design and disseminate for school use presentations for middle and high school parent communities on assisting with the implementation and management of individual student success plans. (spring 2012)
- Design and present sessions for all members of secondary school communities (including teachers, students, school administrators and parents) on establishing communities of respect and positive school cultures designed to meet the needs of all students. (beginning spring 2011 and ongoing)

Timeframe: 2011 and ongoing

Responsible Parties: The Partnership for Community and Family Engagement; Partnership for Pre-service Training and Professional Development; Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness; and Partnership for Curriculum Innovation and Technology

Goal 2: Teachers and Leaders will Provide Learning Environments and Employ Teaching Strategies that Engage All Learners.

As the result of this goal, LEAs will have timely access to effective professional development that is delivered online, in-person and over the summer.

Our RTTT plan calls for extensive professional development, evidenced in many sections of our application. Here we highlight six major professional development initiatives (some with sub-initiatives) that will help to ensure that all of our teachers are skilled in the most effective methodologies for teaching their students. Initiatives include Teaching and Assessing Next Generation Learners; Initiatives to Foster Equity; Diversity and Inclusion; Family and Community Engagement; New Leaders Development; STEM; and Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI).

Teaching and Assessing Next Generation Learners

All teachers and administrators in Connecticut must become fully knowledgeable about the new technologies of instruction, the power of the Internet, and the essential role data must play in promoting human development and learning. Additionally, educators must understand and ensure that their students develop digital-age literacies essential for effectively navigating the wealth of digital resources encountered in modern daily life. The Teaching and Assessing Next Generation Learners (TANGL) initiative aims to ensure that every teacher and administrator in Connecticut attains basic fluency in each of these areas, particularly as they pertain to engaging and evaluating students at each stage of development, PK-12, and in turn, as they undergo evaluations of themselves under the new comprehensive evaluation system planned for teachers and principals in 2012.

Online learning is a likely necessity for every student after graduating from high school – whether that learning is a college course, required for work, or taken for personal advancement. For this reason, all Connecticut educators, students and students' parents will be given access to the Connecticut Education Network Learning Community (CENLC), an online learning management system that allows for fully-online and hybrid course delivery, resource dissemination, collaborative activities, online professional development, improved home-school communication and more. (It should be noted that Connecticut legislation passed in May 2010 requires LEAs to create policies related to acceptance of online courses taken by students that will ensure that these courses are rigorous, engaging, and taught by a highly qualified teacher.) As part of this initiative, teachers will be prepared to teach in an online environment.

A robust, four-year program of professional development for TANGL is planned for teachers and administrators in all participating LEAs. The program will include these learning modules:

- Great Teaching in the 21st Century – Overview
- Education and the Internet
- Subject Specific Technology Integration
- National Education Technology Standards
- Using Student Data
- Project-Based Learning and Capstone Projects
- Student Success Plans
- 21st Century Supervision and Evaluation

Teachers from participating LEAs will engage in one or two modules each year. Besides intensive multiday summer sessions for each module, online learning communities will be created to provide support and continued learning opportunities for teachers

throughout the year. Teams of teachers from the same school will be encouraged to attend sessions together, thereby enabling additional school-based support from colleagues. Development of the modules will be based in part on the work and with the contributions of Professor Don Leu, the John and Maria Neag Endowed Chair in Literacy and Technology, and Director of the New Literacies Research Lab at the University of Connecticut.

Activities

- Teachers in Connecticut will complete an online survey describing their educational technology skills and understandings related to the ISTE NETS-T (International Society for Technology in Education National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers). The results from this survey will be used to inform TANGL module development and plan local professional development activities and to establish baseline data against which to compare current teacher educational technology skills statewide to those at the end of the RTTT grant period. (September and October 2010)
- Develop or contract for and then pilot learning modules (as described earlier in this section and in the Competitive Preference Priority – Emphasis on STEM); select and train presenters in using the technologies and in presenting the modules. (winter 2010 – ongoing)
- Prepare and disseminate marketing materials in partnership with the RTTT Knowledge Network (Web site, e-mail lists, and brochures). (spring 2011 and ongoing)
- Teachers and administrators will participate in professional development regionally, in their LEAs and online. (spring 2011 and ongoing)

Timeframe: Fall 2010 – ongoing

Responsible Parties: Connecticut Education Network; CSDE/contractor in consultation with the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development; Partnership for Curriculum Innovation; Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment; the Connecticut RTTT Knowledge Network; and LEAs

Initiatives to Foster Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The majority of Connecticut's racial and language minority students reside in seven of the state's 169 cities and towns. Conditions related to how LEAs are funded, the decline of Connecticut's urban centers, inadequate teacher preparation focused on effectively teaching linguistically- and racially-isolated students along with poverty and other structural challenges for families and communities, affect how these students perform in school. Over the past several years, LEAs in suburban and rural areas of Connecticut have also experienced a sharp increase in their ELL student populations and find it challenging to address the needs of these students.

Connecticut's plan for education reform in this area will address issues and conditions that have kept these students isolated and underserved academically. Policy, administration, teaching and classroom services and support to students will be examined. The plan draws heavily upon the nationally recognized program *Courageous Conversations about Race* as well as other research-based programs and methodologies. Programs funded under this component of Connecticut's comprehensive professional development framework will assist those with responsibility to influence student learning in diverse communities by (a) enabling increased understanding of the impact of race and culture on learning, and (b) developing the skills necessary to apply knowledge and strategies that improve learning and career outcomes for racial and language minority students.

Activities

- Facilitate LEAs' understanding and ability to lead discussions and monitor the impact of race on system accountability. (spring 2011)
- Assist schools in meeting the unique needs of racial minorities and ELL students to impact their school success. (fall 2010 and ongoing)
- Assist the CSDE and LEAs in developing effective partnerships with community organizations and civil rights organizations around establishing and maintaining educational equity within Connecticut's diverse student groups. (fall 2010 and ongoing)
- Expand CALI Module: Effective Teaching Strategies – Best Practices for ELL students and develop advanced module. (spring 2011 and ongoing)

Family and Community Engagement

Essential to the success of our students is the involvement of parents and community members. Our RTTT application includes initiatives intended to prepare teachers and leaders to most effectively engage parents in this important work. In addition to professional development for educators, this will include sessions for parents on how to build partnerships with their children's schools and engage in advocating for their success.

LEA Training in Family and Community Engagement

To improve the success of all students, Connecticut's plan invests in key strategies to promote teacher and administrator effectiveness. One of these strategies is building teachers' and administrators' capacity to meaningfully engage families in support of their children's learning. The CSDE established an award-winning professional development and technical assistance program of School-Family-Community Partnerships based on the work of Dr. Joyce Epstein of Johns Hopkins University and the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS). The model, used extensively throughout the nation, is based on a comprehensive framework of the types of involvement that research has shown to support productive relationships between schools and families. It has been implemented in partnership with the state's federally funded Parent Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC). The model is based on six standards: parent education; communicating and creating a welcoming climate; volunteering; supporting learning at home; decision-making and advocacy; and collaborating with the community. Recently Connecticut passed legislation that will lead to the establishment of School Governance Councils for each school identified as in need of improvement. (See Public Act 10-111 at Appendix (A)(1)(c)). These Councils will be recipients of the School-Family-Community Partnership training.

Connecticut Parent Leadership Training

As noted in Section F-3, LEAs need to become partners in providing parent leadership training at the community level. Many credible parent leadership programs exist that strengthen parent knowledge and civic engagement. The plan is to invest in strategies that promote such leadership. For example, as noted in Section F-3, Connecticut has been successful with the nationally recognized Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI). Connecticut will continue to support this research based program. The PLTI program is a two-generation strategy to bolster parental involvement while promoting the lifelong health, safety and learning of children. Parents attend a

20-week program that integrates child development, leadership and democracy skills from the perspective of self, society and civics. Parents develop hands-on projects to impact the health and vitality of their schools and communities. The Parent Trust Fund and state funds have supported PLTI. Pursuant to sections 24 to 27 of Public Act 10-111, the funds have been transferred to the CSDE.

The Partnership for Family and Community Engagement, through the Parent Trust Fund and the RTTT grant, will expand PLTI. It will offer up to eight regional community-based institutes per year, involving a substantial number of children and individuals who promote school practices that increase student achievement.

Activities

- All schools in participating districts will access professional development and technical assistance to implement effective and on-going partnerships with families and communities. (by June 2012)
- All schools in participating districts will participate in training and have conducted a Welcoming Schools walkthrough assessment using SDE model. (by June 2012)
- All Title 1 schools in participating districts will revise parent-teacher compacts. (by June 2012)
- CSDE Teacher and Principal Performance Systems include measures of developing and increasing parent and community involvement. (by June 2012)
- CSDE develops and pilots database of home learning activities aligned to state standards. (by 2012)
- CSDE develops and pilots state accountability system, including LEAs' levels of readiness to assess ability to engage parents and the community. (by June 2011)
- Parents in every community will have access to community-based training and online materials on parent leadership and all components of Connecticut's RTTT education reform agenda. (by June 2011)
- Parents and schools are oriented on early warning signs predictive of school failure (e.g., students' school attendance, discipline offenses, achievement, health and mental health) at critical transition points. (by June 2012)

Timeframe: June 2010- June 2012

Responsible Parties: The Partnership for Family and Community Engagement, CSDE and the CT-PIRC, Parent Trust Fund, SERC

New Leaders Development

Teacher Leader Academies

Connecticut's Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs) provide teacher leader academies for aspirants interested in school administration. One RESC, Cooperative Education Services (CES), has been working with teacher leaders who aspire to enter school administration. The Academy for Teacher Leadership at CES provides a professional learning opportunity for exemplary teachers already displaying the potential to become teacher leaders. This group of teacher leaders will develop essential leadership competencies – consensus building, resolving conflicts, facilitation and presentation skills, and more – while continuing to do what they love most: teach children. After completing the Academy for Teacher Leadership at CES, participants will be able to assist their LEAs in implementing important school improvement initiatives. The Urban School Leadership Fellowship program, sponsored by the Center for School Change, will also be implicated in this application, although no funds will directly fund either initiative. Funds flowing to these programs will come from districts awarded competitive grants (See (D)(3)(ii)).

Activities

- Provide technical and program support as needed to CES and Center for School Change to continue the academy for school administrators. (spring 2011 – fall 2011)
- Upon adoption of the revised certification regulations, the CES program will be recognized as an approved professional development program for awarding a teacher leader endorsement to the academy completers. (fall 2011)

Timeframe: 2011 and ongoing

Responsible Parties: RESCs, in collaboration with the Partnership for Educator Effectiveness and Accountability and the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development

STEM

Connecticut's education reform agenda is committed to increasing the preparation of STEM-trained and knowledgeable educators throughout the PK-12 system. This work has been integrated throughout our RTTT application. Some of the major STEM professional development efforts that advance our STEM agenda follow.

Connecticut Education Network, Online Multimedia Science Resources, Online Learning Management System

Through the Connecticut Education Network (CEN), middle school students and teachers are currently provided with standards-based multimedia science lessons, experiments, simulations and other materials. Through RTTT, similar online multimedia resources will be made available to elementary students in participating districts. Through the RESCs, online and face-to-face professional development will be available in using the resources and integrating them into local curricula. New resources will be directed at development of preschool and elementary science instructional resources. Educators, students and parents will be given access to the Connecticut Education Network Learning Community (CENLC), an online learning management system (Moodle) on the CEN that allows for online and hybrid course delivery, resource dissemination, online professional development, improved home-school communication and more. Professional development will be provided in using the CENLC in a variety of ways, directed by grade level. Templates will be provided to assist teachers in using the CENLC.

Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL)

In conjunction with the National Science Foundation and Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL), the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges (CCIC) manages a new and ongoing effort to enhance faculty teaching in the STEM disciplines. The initiative includes faculty from the allied health and teacher preparation areas, and high school teachers are now also being invited to participate. Since the program began in mid-2008, faculty from all of Connecticut's 16 private colleges and universities as well as each of the state colleges and several of our community colleges have participated in PKAL professional development.

CCIC is one of three groups across the country selected to work in collaboration with Project Kaleidoscope on this NSF-funded project related to sharing best practices in the teaching of undergraduates in the STEM disciplines. PKAL makes a huge collection of online resources available, to provide faculty with ideas, strategies, resources, and advice for engaging students in science learning. Connecticut's RTTT proposal will provide for increased involvement of K-12 and higher education faculty in the PKAL program.

Math-Science Instructional Coaching Academies

In collaboration with Connecticut's institutions of higher education, our plan will establish regional K-8 Instructional Coaching Academies that will prepare classroom teachers for new roles as school-based leaders of STEM improvement efforts. Higher education STEM and college of education faculty have collaborated to develop new content-focused courses and teacher assessments that prepare teacher leaders to help colleagues be effective teachers of mathematics and science. Coaches foster transfer of professional development to practice in areas such as effective inquiry teaching strategies; using scoring rubrics to assess student work on state-developed, curriculum-embedded performance tasks; using data to differentiate instruction and monitor growth; and integrating literacy and numeracy instruction in science lessons. This is a scale-up based on lessons learned and data collected from previous Math-Science Partnership-funded coaching academies that provided evidence of change in teaching practices and improved student achievement in coached classrooms. LEAs may use RTTT funds to support stipends or full positions for STEM instructional coaches.

Other STEM Professional Development

In addition to the significant STEM professional development mentioned earlier in the Teaching and Assessing Next Generation Learners initiative (through CEN initiatives, PKAL and the Math-Science Instructional Coaching Academies), many opportunities will be available to teachers to help develop their abilities to engage students in STEM subject matter. These include targeted professional development for elementary teachers in engaging students in mathematics and science, availability of shared STEM curricular resources through CTCurriculum.org and professional development created to assist teachers in using STEM model curricula, including STEM21 courses (BIO21, CHEM21, PHYS21).

Activities

- Expand online multimedia resources to elementary school. Work with RESCs to provide professional development in using them. (September 2010-ongoing)
- Develop templates for grade spans (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12) for using the CENLC. (October 2010-March 2011)
- Develop and deliver online and face-to-face professional development in the use of the CENLC. (January 2011-ongoing)
- Provide access to the CENLC for teachers who have completed professional development in its use. (March 2011-ongoing)
- Expand PKAL resources and professional development opportunities to additional secondary school science teachers. (January 2011-August 2014)
- Increase availability of professional development for elementary teachers in teaching primary and intermediate mathematics and science. (January 2011-ongoing)
- Expand Math Science Instructional Coaching Academy, toward the goal of one instructional coach in every elementary and middle school. (2010-2012)

Timeframe: September 2010-ongoing

Responsible Parties: Partnership for Curriculum Innovation and the Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Development; Connecticut Knowledge Network; CCIC; RESC Alliance

Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI)

As Connecticut's core instructional improvement process, the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative has been described throughout this application (see Section (B)(3) (Goal 5), Section (C)(2) (Goal 1), Section (C)(3) (Goal 2), Section (D)(2) (Goal 3) and Section E). CALI includes 18 learning modules designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning. While all of the modules are available and will be used, five constitute the core CALI offering (see also Section (C)(3)). Certification training is also offered for each CALI core module, designed to build the capacity in each participating LEA to conduct its own training with fidelity. Additionally, CALI modules for principals will be expanded and made available to all participating districts, including

sessions on *Coaching Instructional Data Teams, Coaching Effective Teaching Strategies, Leading Change, School Climate for Leaders* and *School Improvement Planning*. These sessions will provide principals and teacher leaders with skills and understandings to better support their staff and colleagues as they work together to improve teaching and learning in their schools.

Acknowledging that it will take a minimum of two to three years to demonstrate significant achievement gains in the LEAs and schools, the CSDE funded two demonstration schools in each partner LEA and an additional seven schools in supported LEAs (see Section E.). The purpose of funding the demonstration schools is to highlight that, with an increase in resources, implementation of the CALI model would result in increased student achievement and closing of the achievement gap. The demonstration schools were given an executive coach for the principal and leadership team, a data team facilitator to work with the school and instructional level data teams, and stipends for release time for teachers to work in collaborative professional learning communities. The Executive Coaching Program focuses on the instructional and organizational leadership capacity of principals to increase student achievement. Coaching for the demonstration schools is provided through a contractual relationship with Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) and is funded by the State of Connecticut. The CSDE has assigned staff members to work with CAS on the identification of potential coaches (e.g., retired exemplary school administrators), placement of coaches, training and networking of coaches, monitoring of coaching activities, data collection and evaluation of the coaching program. A minimum of 45 demonstration schools will be in place by the beginning of the 2010-11 school year, with additional demonstration schools added during each year of the RTTT grant.

Activities

- CSDE will work with the RESC Alliance and SERC to increase the number of CALI trainers and technical assistance providers.
- CSDE will review LEA Requests for Service and the CALI Professional Development Plan on an annual basis. This will include a request for executive coaches for principals and data team facilitators for school and instructional data teams.
- Districts will participate in CALI training modules and in-school onsite technical assistance activities (teachers in participating LEAs).
- Monitor the effectiveness of the LEA, school- and instructional-level data teams, using state-created rubrics within one year of establishing data teams.

Timeframe: Begin 2010 and ongoing

Responsible Parties: CSDE, CALI consultants and liaisons, the RESC Alliance, SERC, LEAs in consultation with the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development

Goal 3: Ongoing and Planned Professional Development is Mapped Statewide.

As the result of this goal, LEAs and the Connecticut State Department of Education will be able to coordinate specific courses and their constitute modules to ensure the highly efficient and effective delivery of professional development, maximizing teacher and principal learning opportunities while reducing time away from students, instructional activities and school leadership.

Activities

- CSDE or a contracted entity will design and implement a cost-effective online survey of all professional development opportunities scheduled for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years, collect data, analyze and map findings.
- CSDE will create a formal crosswalk between professional development and training modules included in this RTTT application, identifying redundancies and modules that could be combined. This information will be included in the mapping study described above.
- The mapping study will also present a summary of best practices in professional development with specific regard to offering online courses and modules as well as summer institutes for educators with the goal of reducing the use of part-day LEA professional development events in order to maximize teacher and student instructional time within the school year as now constituted.
- A report on the findings will be prepared and jointly shared with the six Partnerships for Change by January 2011 and with the Shared Leadership Council, along with joint recommendations by March 1, 2011.

***Timeframe*:** Work completed by March 2011

Responsible Parties: CSDE or contracted entity with ongoing communication with the Partnerships for Change, Shared Leadership Council, Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Connecticut teachers unions

Goal 4: Coordinated Professional Development Schedule/Calendar Available.

As the result of this goal, LEAs will be able to most efficiently schedule professional development events that reduce time out of the classroom, afford online access to learning modules, and automatically track professional development units and outcomes.

Activities

- Building off the report from Goal 1 (Section D-5), the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development will work with the Council of Chief State School Officers, other national educational organizations and RTTT states with strong professional development systems to determine best practices at the state and LEA levels for online, automated professional development calendars, scheduling and tracking. Report back by December 2011.
- CSDE will expand the current Technical Assistance Tracking System (TATS) to become a statewide professional development registry capable of delivering a year-long calendar of professional development courses and events (with approved CEUs where appropriate) at the LEA and statewide levels of education.
- The Connecticut Professional Development Education Registry will be developed and online by July 1, 2011.

Timeframe: July 1, 2010 through July 1, 2011 and ongoing

Responsible Parties: Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development in consultation with the Shared Leadership Council and the other five Partnerships for Change, LEA input

Goal 5. Guidelines for Continuing Education Units are Revised to Promote Engaged Learning of All Students.

As the result of this goal, LEAs will have timely access to effective professional development that is delivered online, in-person and over the summer.

Connecticut's Guidelines for Continuing Professional Development were last revised in 1999. The Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development will convene a group of stakeholders, including LEAs, to review and make appropriate revisions to the professional development/continuing education units (CEUs) guidelines. The new guidelines will encourage the move *from* "sit and get" professional development *to* job-embedded learning that focuses on: (a) gathering, analyzing and using data to inform instructional and curricular decisions; (b) designing instructional strategies for improving student engagement and achievement; and (c) differentiating instruction for all students including those who are English language learners and students with disabilities. Additionally, the partnership will pursue efforts to include more specific and rigorous CEU requirements related to technology integration and effective strategies for teaching STEM subjects in the elementary grades. Further, these guidelines will include the criteria for LEAs to develop and implement local quality professional development and supports tied to student needs and growth.

Activities

- Convene working group, develop recommendations for modification of CEU requirements and present to the Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development. (fall 2010 – spring 2011)
- Review of new recommendations for CEU guidelines conducted by CSDE. (spring 2011)
- Present to State Board of Education for adoption by July 1, 2011.

Timeframe: July 1, 2010 to July 1, 2011

Responsible Parties: Partnership for Pre-Service Training and Professional Development, working with the Partnership for Curriculum Innovation and the Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment; SBE; CSDE; LEAs

Goal 6: External Review of Professional Development Effectiveness and Cost-efficiency.

As the result of this goal (coupled with Goals 1-3), Connecticut will have the data and information necessary to make policy and program changes, as required, in its comprehensive professional development system.

Based on the results of the mapping study described in Goal 4 of this section, with the CSDE as the RTTT fiduciary agent, the Shared Leadership Council will award a contract for one or more contractors to conduct a meta-analysis of professional development activities provided statewide and at the LEA levels. The contractor will collect data, analyze and report on impact of the previously described initiatives in this section on school improvement and patterns of student achievement growth associated with professional development provided under Section (D)(5). The State Board of Education will consider this data to determine whether or not the currently required 90 hours of CEUs needed to renew a person's five-year professional certificate (third tier of certification) should include demonstrated acquisition of skills and knowledge models. Grant funds will be allocated under section (D)(2), which focuses on the development of state guidelines for teacher and administrator evaluation and professional development and the use of student growth measures to determine the efficacy of teachers and principals.

In addition to the meta-analysis of all professional development, coaching, induction, and other activities provided, smaller data-informed analyses will be done of each of the initiatives described in this section. Teacher feedback as well as student data will be used to inform the analyses. The results will be used to modify existing programs as necessary to 1) better meet needs of future participants and their students, 2) provide information to principals and district leaders that may be used to inform local job-imbedded professional development and 3) plan and execute new professional development efforts.

Activities

- Collect data and conduct analyses of the effectiveness of each professional development initiative. Work with designers and professional development implementers/presenters to make improvements to programs as indicated by the data (ongoing data collection, analysis done biannually for each initiative beginning in July 2011).
- Design and issue request for proposals and award contract for outside services by July 1, 2011.

- Report completed by June 30, 2013, with recommendations.

Timeframe: July 2011 through June 30, 2013

Responsible Parties: P-20 Shared Leadership Council and the Partnership for Financing Sustainable Progress

Performance Measures Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.	**Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
No measures provided for (D)(5)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

<u>Appendices Cited in (D)(5)</u>

Appendix (A)(1)(c) Public Act 10-111

Appendix (B)(3)(a) The Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform

(E) Turning around the Lowest Achieving Schools

State Reform Conditions Criteria

(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs (10 points)

The extent to which the State has the legal, statutory, or regulatory authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) and in LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status.

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (E)(1):

- A description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.

(E)(1) INTERVENING IN THE LOWEST-ACHIEVING SCHOOLS AND LEAs

Introduction

Over the past three years, Connecticut has pursued an aggressive reform agenda building on new accountability legislation and the implementation of the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) (See Appendix (A)(1)(d) for a comprehensive overview of CALI.) In addition, in the past five months, from January through May 2010, Connecticut has made extensive progress to expand its work in turning around low-performing districts. The passage of Public Act 10-111 (see Appendix (A)(1)(c)) now provides two additional measures that the Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education (SBE) can take to intervene in low-performing schools or districts without legislative or gubernatorial approval: (1) reconstitution of local or regional boards of education and; (2) creation of parent-teacher school governance councils with the authority to petition the local board of education to reconstitute the school. In addition, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has been awarded a three-year $26.5

million federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) that will provide solid funding for adoption of one of the four intervention models specified in Race to the Top (RTTT) in up to seven LEAs: Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, New Britain, Windham, Stamford Academy and Area Cooperative Education Services (ACES).

During this same time period, Governor Rell established a time-limited special commission to examine data and trends in Connecticut's achievement gap and make recommendations for changes in October 2010. The Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement includes largely business and philanthropic leadership and is staffed by a former staff member of The Education Trust. Public hearings are now underway throughout the state as are visits to schools in the CALI Partner Districts (as noted in Section (A) Connecticut's most disadvantaged districts since 2007). CSDE's Bureau of Accountability and Improvement has given the Commission multiple overviews on Connecticut's work in the 15 Partner Districts, CALI, the SIG process and Phase 2 RTTT application to ensure close coordination and high impact leveraging of their multiple efforts to gather information.

State Authority to Intervene

CGS Section 10-223e: Connecticut's Accountability Statute

Section 10-223e of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS), which the state legislature first adopted in 2007 and subsequently revised in 2008 and 2010, gives the State Board of Education (SBE) the authority to intervene directly in both the state's persistently lowest-achieving schools and local education agencies (LEAs). (See section 21 of Public Act 10-111 in Appendix (A)(1)(c) for a complete copy of CGS 10-223e, as amended.) Acting through the Commissioner of Education and the CSDE, the SBE has used this authority by working with the 15 LEAs participating in the CALI that are referred to as Partner Districts.

Subdivision (2) of Subsection (c) of Section 10-223e authorizes the SBE to provide intensive supervision and direction to any school or LEA identified as in need of improvement and requiring corrective action pursuant to the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The SBE may take any of the actions shown in the following table to improve student performance.

Statutory Authority of the Connecticut SBE to Intervene in Persistently Low-Achieving Schools 2007-2010
1. Require an operations audit to identify possible programmatic savings and an instructional audit to identify any deficits in curriculum and instruction or in the learning environment of the school or LEA.
2. Require the local or regional board of education for such school or LEA to use state and federal funds for critical needs, as directed by the SBE.
3. Direct the transfer and assignment of teachers and principals.
4. Provide incentives to attract highly qualified teachers and principals.
5. Require additional training and technical assistance for parents and guardians of children attending the school or a school in the LEA and for teachers, principals and central office staff members hired by the LEA.
6. Require the local or regional board of education for the school or LEA to implement model curriculum, including, but not limited to, recommended textbooks, materials and supplies approved by the CSDE.
7. Identify schools for reconstitution, as may be phased in by the Commissioner, as state or local charter schools, or schools based on other models for school improvement, or for management by an entity other than the local or regional board of education for the LEA in which the school is located.
8. Direct the local or regional board of education for the school or LEA to develop and implement a plan addressing deficits in achievement and in the learning environment as recommended in the instructional audit.
9. Assign a technical assistance team to the school or LEA to guide school or LEA initiatives and report progress to the Commissioner of Education.
10. Establish instructional and learning environment benchmarks for the school or LEA to meet as it progresses toward removal from the list of low-achieving schools or LEAs.
11. Provide funding to any proximate LEA to an LEA designated as low achieving so that students in a low-achieving LEA may attend public school in a neighboring LEA.
12. Direct the establishment of learning academies within schools that require continuous monitoring of student performance by teacher groups.
13. Require local and regional boards of education to (i) undergo training to improve their operational efficiency and effectiveness as leaders of their LEA's improvement plans; and (ii) submit an annual action plan to the Commissioner of Education outlining how, when and in what manner their effectiveness shall be monitored.
14. Any combination of the actions described in this subdivision or similar, closely-related actions.

In addition to the authority listed above, the statute also grants the General Assembly the authority to enact legislation authorizing that control of a district be reassigned to the State Board of Education or other authorized entity, when certain conditions are met. (See 10-233e(d) in section 21 of Public Act 10-111 in Appendix (A)(1)(c)). Lastly, section 10-223e grants the Commissioner the authority to directly intervene under certain conditions as well. Pursuant to section 10-223e(e), any school district or elementary school that fails to make adequate yearly progress for two years in a row must be evaluated by the Commissioner and, depending on the results of that evaluation, the Commissioner may require that such school district or school provide full-day kindergarten classes, summer school, extended school day, weekend classes, tutorial assistance to its students or professional development to its administrators, principals, teachers and paraprofessional teacher aides.

In recognition of some of the limitations of the previous accountability legislation specifically related to parent involvement and the role of local boards of education in closing the achievement gap, in May 2010, Connecticut passed landmark education reform legislation to support the turnaround of low-performing schools: Public Act No.10-111. (See Appendix (A)(1)(c)). Most notably, as mentioned above, the bill allows the SBE to authorize the Commissioner to reconstitute a local or regional boards of education and it provides for the creation of parent-teacher school governance councils that have the authority to petition the local board of education to reconstitute the school. While many aspects of this bill have been previously referenced in the application, the provisions most pertinent to turning around low-performing schools are summarized in the table below.

New Statutory Authority to Intervene in Persistently Low-Achieving Schools Pursuant to Public Act 10-111
1. Track and report data relating to student, teacher and school and district performance growth and make such information available to local and regional boards of education for use in evaluating educational performance and growth of teacher and students enrolled in public schools in the state.
2. Student suspensions shall be in-school suspension unless during the hearing held the pupil being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property or such disruption of the educational process that the pupil shall be excluded from school during the period of suspension.
3. Local or regional boards of education for a school that has been identified in need of improvement <u>may</u> establish a school governance council (SGC), predominately made up of parent representatives, for each school so identified.
4. Local or regional boards of education for a school that has been designated as a low-achieving school due to such school failing to make adequate yearly progress in mathematics and reading at the whole school level <u>shall</u> establish a SGC, predominately made up of parent representatives, for each school so designated. The SGC shall have multiple responsibilities including: a. analyzing school achievement data, b. reviewing fiscal objectives of draft budgets, c. participating in the hiring process of the school principal, d. assisting the principal in making programmatic and operational changes, e. working with school administration to develop and approve a school compact for parents, and f. developing written parent involvement policies. In addition, the SGC may recommend the reconstitution of the school into one of the following models: a) one of the four turn around models required by the federal School Improvement Grant (SIG); b) an innovative school model (described in detail in section (F)(2)(v) below); or c) a CommPACT school model (also described in detail in section (F)(2)(v) below). The SGC informs the local board of education of its recommendation for the reconstitution of the school and the board is required to vote whether or not to accept the model. The local board can adopt or recommend a different model. If no such agreement can be met between the board and the SGC, the Commissioner of Education shall decide which of the alternatives to implement.
5. The SBE may authorize the Commissioner of Education to reconstitute a local or regional board of education.
6. The Act establishes a task force to study and monitor the academic achievement gap between racial and socioeconomic groups in Connecticut considering effective approaches to closing the achievement gap in elementary, middle and high schools.

Sanctions Employed by the CSDE Pursuant to CGS 10-223e

Pursuant to the statutory authority described above, over the period 2007 to 2010 the CSDE has employed the following sanctions:

1. Conducted instructional and financial assessments at the LEA level and in schools in need of improvement in year three and beyond.
2. Required the LEA superintendent and local board of education chair to make a presentation on results of the LEA assessment to a SBE Ad Hoc Committee on Accountability.
3. Assigned CSDE staff and an external consultant to work in identified LEAs.
4. Required revision of the district improvement plan (DIP) facilitated by CSDE staff with LEA stakeholder participation.
5. Required alignment of school improvement plans (SIP) to the DIP.
6. Required the LEA to secure approval of the DIP by the SBE.
7. Required formation of a LEA accountability system and creation of LEA-, school- and instructional-level data teams.
8. Required completion of a request for service (RFS) application and participation in CALI training.
9. Required the identification and implementation of two demonstration schools in each LEA.
10. Set aside a portion of state education funds to be directed by the CSDE to support the implementation of the DIP.
11. Conducted two annual monitoring visits to monitor implementation of the DIP.
12. Provided for attendance of CSDE staff at monthly LEA data team meetings to monitor implementation of the DIPs.

In addition to the above sanctions for all Partner Districts, two LEAs were assigned external consultants to work with their local boards of education, one LEA was required to complete a comprehensive evaluation of the special education programs and services and the CSDE assisted one LEA with identifying an interim superintendent for a two-year period to develop and implement a DIP and the district accountability system.

As part of its intervention in the 15 CALI Partner Districts, the SBE exercised its authority under the state accountability legislation and took steps to sanction districts in the ways described above. In many instances, Partner Districts have replaced staff members or

principals as part of restructuring, although the CALI process did not require that this action be taken. As part of school restructuring, Partner Districts provided high-quality, job-embedded professional development designed to ensure that staff members are equipped to facilitate effective teaching and learning and promoted the continuous use of student data to inform and differentiate instruction. Some LEAs established schedules and strategies to increase instructional time for students and planning time for teachers. All Partner Districts were required to identify time for collaboration and professional development for staff. CALI focused on leader effectiveness through professional development, executive coaching and monitoring the effectiveness of the Partner District and school data teams.

As part of the CSDE's involvement with local boards of education, the CSDE is working in collaboration with the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) to introduce a research-based training model on the Roles of Boards of Education in an Accountability Era. This training, "The Lighthouse Project," was originally developed by the Iowa State Board of Education. CSDE and CABE have been extensively trained in the model and are currently conducting this training for five local boards of education. The project requires a two-year training and five-year collection of data commitment on behalf of the local board to complete the training and contribute to the research base. Connecticut is the only state in this nationwide project conducting the training collaboratively with the state education agency and the state's local board of education association. To date, the feedback from local board members and superintendents is extremely positive regarding the alignment between our school reform efforts, the CALI initiative and the essential contribution of local boards of education to this work.

Lastly, the CSDE has also forged a stronger relationship with the philanthropic sector and expanded several initiatives involving the same communities and LEAs now engaged in school turnaround efforts. One group in this sector is intensely focused on young children in economically distressed municipalities and the other on designing strategies for improving the early health and early learning of children from birth through the third grade, in an attempt to create conditions that eliminate the school readiness "preparation gap" and support early academic success.

Appendices Cited in (E)(1)

Appendix (A)(1)(c) Public Act 10-111

Appendix (A)(1)(d) Comprehensive Overview of CALI

(E)(2) TURNING AROUND THE LOWEST-ACHIEVING SCHOOLS

(E)(2)(i) Identification of Persistently Low-Achieving Schools

The CSDE has identified the persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in the notice) using a detailed methodology as outlined in Appendix (E)(2)(a). Application of this detailed methodology resulted in identification of 18 schools as constituting the lowest 5 percent among low-achieving Title I schools (Tier I). In addition, five non-Title I high schools were identified in Tier II. A list of the Tier I schools follows. A complete list of the Tier I, Tier II and Tier III schools is included in Appendix (E)(2)(b).

A List of Tier I Persistently-Lowest Achieving Schools

Title I	Elementary or Secondary	District	School	District Name	School Name	Years In Need of Improvement	2009 Unadjusted Math*	2009 Unadjusted Reading*	2009 Average Unadjusted (Math & Reading)*
Yes	Secondary	282	60	Stamford Academy	Stamford Academy	3	14.3	9.5	11.9
Yes	Elementary	93	51	New Haven School District	Urban Youth Center Middle School	6	11.5	14.8	13.2
Yes	Elementary	64	19	Hartford School District	Milner Core Knowledge School	9	27	14.2	20.6
Yes	Elementary	64	6	Hartford School District	Burns Latino Studies Academy	6	32.8	14.2	23.5
Yes	Secondary	64	63	Hartford School District	Weaver High School	7	17.5	31.6	24.6
Yes	Elementary	244	61	Area Cooperative Educational Services	Collaborative Alternative Magnet School	4	29	23.1	26.1
Yes	Elementary	64	1	Hartford School District	Sand School	6	27.8	25.8	26.8

A List of Tier I Persistently-Lowest Achieving Schools									
Title I	**Elementary or Secondary**	**District**	**School**	**District Name**	**School Name**	**Years In Need of Improvement**	**2009 Unadjusted Math***	**2009 Unadjusted Reading***	**2009 Average Unadjusted (Math & Reading)***
Yes	Elementary	64	51	Hartford School District	Fox Middle School	6	28.3	28.7	28.5
Yes	Elementary	64	52	Hartford School District	Quirk Middle School	6	31	26.3	28.7
Yes	Elementary	15	1	Bridgeport School District	Barnum School	6	36.6	25.3	31.0
Yes	Elementary	89	9	New Britain School District	Northend School	2	35.4	26.9	31.2
Yes	Elementary	15	26	Bridgeport School District	Roosevelt School	6	42.1	20.7	31.4
Yes	Elementary	89	3	New Britain School District	Chamberlain School	6	37	26.1	31.6
Yes	Elementary	93	4	New Haven School District	Katherine Brennan School	3	39.2	26.9	33.1
Yes	Elementary	64	28	Hartford School District	Dr. Ramon E. Betances School	5	46.2	20	33.1
Yes	Elementary	15	41	Bridgeport School District	Dunbar School	6	37.9	28.6	33.3
Yes	Elementary	64	30	Hartford School District	Sanchez School	6	46.1	21	33.6
Yes	Elementary	163	1	Windham School District	Natchaug School	3	45.2	23	34.1

**Using a federally mandated formula, the unadjusted rate is calculated by dividing the number of students scoring proficient or above by all tested students who are not absent for the exam or are considered English language learner(ELL) exempt.*

(E)(2)(ii) Support for LEAs Implementing One of the Four Turnaround Models

The CSDE is well positioned to support LEAs in turning around schools based on its history and results with CALI and the recently awarded federal School Improvement Grant (SIG). Funds from the School SIG will support implementation of the specific RTTT school intervention models in up to seven low-performing districts: Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, Windham, ACES and Stamford Academy. We also take this opportunity to report here on recent results of CALI to boost student achievement and advance districts out of adequate yearly progress (AYP) Needs Improvement status.

The Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI)

CALI has been described and integrated throughout our Phase 2 application as one of the two core instructional improvement processes; see Appendix (A)(1)(d) for complete overview of CALI. The CSDE has developed a vision, mission and theory of action to take CALI to the next level in supporting systemic LEA reform (see Section (D)(5)).

Although this effort has only been implemented as a transformational process for a few years, we are seeing important gains at various grade levels that have led us to commit to its statewide implementation within the RTTT context. Some of these findings are presented below.

Student Achievement Results in CALI Demonstration Schools

Understanding that it would take a substantial human investment (that is, in time, expertise, energy and leadership) and a minimum of two to three years to make changes resulting in student achievement gains, over the period 2007-2010, the CSDE funded two demonstration schools in each of the CALI Partner Districts. The purpose of the demonstration schools was to examine the impact on student performance if provided additional resources beyond the traditional CALI supports. These additional resources included an executive coach for the principal and leadership team, a data team facilitator to work with the school- and instructional-level data teams and stipends for release time for teachers to work in collaborative professional learning communities. This strategy of “learning as we work to change” is core to the CALI process.

As reported in Section (C)(3), while statewide gains in mathematics and reading have been positive but generally "minimal or less" except in mathematics, CALI districts and demonstration schools have shown one-year gains that outpaced the statewide average. More importantly, in some of these "CALI plus demonstration schools" with extra resources, one-year gains in the proportion of upper elementary school students scoring at the state proficiency level or above ranged from 6 percent to 29 percent across both math and reading. These data are presented in the table below. Gains were also made among CALI districts in AYP status. This past year, among the 15 CALI Partner Districts, five schools (of which three were demonstration schools) were removed from the federal NCLB In Need of Improvement status. An additional 36 schools that had not made AYP in the previous year made AYP or Safe Harbor status in 2009. Eight of these schools were demonstration schools.

One Year (2008-2009) Sample of Student Gains in CALI Schools

District	School	Gains from 2008 to 2009 CMT
Ansonia	Meade School	Grades 3-5: students proficient or better in math increased by 4%
Ansonia	Middle School	Grades 6-8: students proficient or better in math increased by 13%
Danbury	Roberts Avenue School	Grades 3-4: students proficient or better in math increased at least 5% Grades 3-5: student proficient or better in reading increased 14%
Meriden	John Barry School	Grades 3-5: students proficient or better in math increased by at least 4% Grades 3-4: students proficient or better in reading increased by at least 4%
Meriden	Roger Sherman School	Grade 3: students proficient or better in math increased by 16% Grades 3-5: students proficient or better in reading increased by 8%
New Britain	Vance School	Grades 3-5: students proficient or better in math increased at least 9% Grades 4-5: students proficient or better in reading increased at least 6%
New London	Harbor School	Grades 3-4: students proficient or better in math increased at least 8% Grade 4: students proficient or better in reading increased by 28%
New London	Nathan Hall School	Grades 3-4: students proficient or better in math increased at least 5% Grade 4: students proficient or better in reading increased 6%
Norwalk	Silvermine Elementary School	Grades 3-5: students proficient or better in math increased at least 4% Grades 3-5: students proficient or better in reading increased at least 5%
Norwich	Samuel Huntington School	Grade 3: students proficient or better in math increased by 20% and in reading by 18%
Windham	W.B. Sweeney School	Grades 3-4: students proficient or better in math increased at least 14% Grades 3-4: students proficient or better in reading increased at least 11%

Student Gains in CALI "Supported" Districts

In 2008-09, the CSDE also identified an additional seven LEAs that were in year three or longer in need of improvement for a subgroup of students. These LEAs are referred to as "Supported Districts." With support from the CSDE, these LEAs completed a self-assessment using the *Decision Support Architecture Consortium Framework II* (DSAC II), developed collaboratively with the Council of Chief State School Officers and Center on Leadership in Technology. The LEAs were required to use the results of the self-assessments to revise their district improvement plans (DIPs). They also were offered access to the CALI training modules and each LEA was awarded one (rather than two) demonstration school. Following receipt and use of these additional resources, 17 schools in the supported districts that had not made AYP in the past year made AYP or Safe Harbor.

Prior Use of One of Four Mandated Intervention Models and Lessons Learned

Connecticut has not yet implemented any one of the four intervention models as described in RTTT. We have required LEAs to restructure schools under the NCLB requirement for schools in year five in need of improvement as outlined below in Table (E)(2)(ii)(b). It is important to note that many of the elements of CALI, required of all restructured schools, are also core components of each of the four mandated intervention models. As we move forward with implementation of the SIG, schools will be required to implement all requirements of the mandated models as well as CALI. In addition, CSDE's Bureau of Accountability and Improvement will monitor progress of the SIG schools on an annual basis using the newly developed student growth model.

Table (E)(2)(ii)(b) Restructured Schools		
Approach Used	**# of Schools since SY 2004-05**	**Results and Lessons Learned**
Restructuring required by NCLB	84	Narrative Below

Lessons Learned from NCLB Restructuring Work

While there are obviously no lessons learned (yet) from adopting one or more of the specified models, Connecticut has learned a lot from restructuring 84 schools under NCLB and from the implementation of the CALI reform model. The first learning is clearly that the requirements for restructuring schools under NCLB alone were not sufficient to turn around low-performing schools. Rather, restructuring or turnaround needs to be done in the context of systemic change within the LEA through the use of a comprehensive reform model aligned across the state, LEAs and schools to create and sustain change. Restructuring also requires strong leadership at the LEA and building level and the willingness to move from a culture of isolation to one of collaboration anchored in an identified accountability model.

In some instances, in order to overcome systemic barriers, there needs to be external pressure from the state to move a change agenda forward at the LEAs and school-level, but the priority goals for the restructuring or turnaround need to be established by a strong credible stakeholder group, including parents and union representatives. Resources must be specifically allocated to sustain priorities set in the restructuring or turnaround plan and there must be ongoing evaluation and research of interventions to allow for continuous improvement of the model and efficient use of resources. There must be an identified accountability model to oversee implementation of the restructuring. To assure that change occurs at the classroom level, professional development must be of high-quality and integrated into classroom work where effective teaching strategies in the use of standards-based curriculum must be modeled and implemented with fidelity. Finally, for true systemic change, there needs to be a significant redesign of the school day and expansion of the school year.

Connecticut's Reform Plan

The CSDE is fully prepared to support LEAs in incorporating one of the four school intervention models -- the turnaround, restart, school closure or transformation model – and has already begun planning for the use of the four intervention models in addition to CALI through Section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) School Improvement Grant (SIG). Specifically, LEAs on the list with the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools identified in Section (E)(2)(i) will continue to participate in CALI and are in the process of applying for SIG using one of the four school intervention models.

Goal 1: Support LEAs in implementation of specific school reform models over the period 2010-2014.

As the result of this goal, 18 individual schools will be restructured with evidence of improvements in student achievement that exceed the statewide average by 2014.

Over the period January through May 2010, staff from the CSDE provided eligible LEAs with a formal overview of the requirements of the SIG and met with them individually to identify specific requirements of the turnaround models. On May 14, 2010, LEAs submitted formal applications for funding from the SIG. Of the 25 Tier I and Tier II schools eligible for the funding, 18 have applied. Applications are currently being reviewed and funds will be awarded within 30 days of the grant submission. Final SIG awards will not be made until after the RTTT application is submitted; however, Table (E)(3)(ii)(c) provides a listing of schools and the specific intervention model that each has selected. The CSDE will be working with the SIG schools over the summer in preparation for the fall 2010 and will begin in the fall assigning technical assistance teams from the CSDE to each school and convening the principals of the SIG schools as a professional learning community.

Table (E)(3)(ii)(c) Applications Received for SIG Schools and Models Chosen

District Name	School Name	Tier	Intervention Model
Bridgeport School District	Barnum School	I	Transformational
Bridgeport School District	Dunbar School	I	Transformational
Bridgeport School District	Roosevelt School	I	Transformation
Hartford School District	Dr. Ramon E. Betances School	I	Turnaround
Hartford School District	Burns Latino Studies Academy	I	Turnaround
Hartford School District	Milner Core Knowledge School	I	Turnaround
Hartford School District	Sanchez School	I	Turnaround
Hartford School District	Sand School	I	Turnaround
Hartford School District	Weaver High School	I	Turnaround
New Britain School District	Smalley Academy	I	Transformational
New Haven School District	Katherine Brennan School	I	Turnaround
Stamford Academy	Stamford Academy	I	Transformational
Windham School District	Natchaug School	I	Transformational
Bridgeport School District	Bassick High School	II	Transformational
Bridgeport School District	Harding High School	II	Restart
New Haven School District	James Hillhouse High School	II	Transformational
New Haven School District	Hill Central Music Academy	II	Turnaround
New Haven School District	Wilbur Cross High School	II	Transformational

Performance Measures	**Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
The number of schools for which one of the four school intervention models will be initiated each year.	0	18	TBD	TBD	TBD

Connecticut's SIG funding for FY 09 is only sufficient to fund Tier I and Tier II schools. Nonetheless, in an effort to expand this work and to reach a limited number of Tier III schools, the CSDE will collaborate with the philanthropic sector by supplementing their work in select SIG communities with funds known as "RTTT Resources."

The Connecticut Early Literacy Project is currently partnering with the Graustein Memorial Fund, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the CSDE in a demonstration project contributing more than a million private dollars over a three-year period in the target community, New Britain, to support community and family literacy in a two-generation approach that coordinates community and school elements to "Third Grade Level Reading," a national initiative supported by Annie E. Casey Foundation. Technical assistance and support will be provided to both the early childhood providers in the district and in the community in a partnership with the Department's New Britain Technical Assistance Team in order to align efforts. There is a high expectation that this grant will be renewed for an additional two years if adequate progress is made.

Since all of the CALI communities with which the CSDE is working are also part of the Graustein Discovery communities and recipients of the Early Childhood Community Co-Investment Partnership Grants, the opportunity to take the lessons learned from the Early Literacy Project and use them as catalysts for the CALI high-need communities presents an opportune time to streamline and integrate multiple efforts and best practices that ensure success for children. RTTT resources will be used to expand the current literacy efforts with the Connecticut Early Literacy Project to the unfunded Tier III SIG schools. A competitive request for proposals (RFP) will be issued for these schools in order to expand their current work with CALI to an increased emphasis on family literacy and community involvement.

Activities

- District SIG applications approved by CSDE
- Provide technical assistance for planning to SIG schools
- Convene Professional Learning Community (PLC) – SIG Principals
- Assign technical assistance team from Bureau of Accountability and Improvement to each SIG school for ongoing monitoring and assistance in implementing SIG
- On an annual basis, monitor the progress of SIG schools utilizing student growth data
- CALI training and technical assistance – ongoing – see application sections (C)(3) and (D)(5***)***

Time Frame: June 2010-2014

Responsible Parties: The Partnership for Pre-service Training and Professional Development, Bureau of Accountability and Improvement, RESC Alliance, State Education Resource Center (SERC) and the Connecticut Association of Schools.

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools *(40 points)*

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—

(i) Identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) and, at its discretion, any non-Title I eligible secondary schools that would be considered persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) if they were eligible to receive Title I funds; and *(5 points)*

(ii) Support its LEAs in turning around these schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models (as described in Appendix C): turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model (provided that an LEA with more than nine persistently lowest-achieving schools may not use the transformation model for more than 50 percent of its schools). *(35 points)*

The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (E)(2) (please fill in table below):

- The State's historic performance on school turnaround, as evidenced by the total number of persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) that States or LEAs attempted to turn around in the last five years, the approach used, and the results and lessons learned to date.

Goal 2: Expand turnaround work to Tier III SIG schools through partnership with the Connecticut Early Literacy Project.

As the result of this goal, the Connecticut Early Literacy Project will be expanded to schools identified as Tier III for persistently low-achieving schools.

Activities:

- Develop RFP for Tier III schools for the Connecticut Early Literacy Projects
- Coordinate the Connecticut Early Literacy Project awards with the Graustein Memorial Fund and plan training and technical assistance

Time Frame: Fall 2010 - 2014

Responsible Parties: The Partnership for Pre-service Training and Professional Development, the Bureau of Accountability and Improvement, SERC, the Graustein Memorial Fund and Annie E. Casey Foundation

Goal 3: Design and pilot Connecticut's student growth model, using student data gathered in the 18 SIG schools and the input of teachers, school principals and district leaders.

As the result of this goal, the Bureaus of Student Assessment, Accountability and Improvement and Educator Certification and Standards, will establish the research base and essential knowledge necessary to design a reliable, valid evaluation system for Connecticut's teachers and principals (See Section (D)(2)).

Activities

- CSDE will set targets for each SIG school based on the student growth model.
- CSDE will provide training to SIG schools on use of student growth model.
- CSDE will monitor the progress of the SIG schools on an annual basis using the newly developed student growth model.

***Time Frame**:* 2010-2014

Responsible Parties: The Partnership for Teacher, Principal Effectiveness and Accountability**,** the Bureau of Accountability and Improvement, the Bureau of Student Assessment and the Bureau of Educator Certification and Standards

Appendices Referenced in this Section

Appendix (A)(1)(c)	Public Act 10-111
Appendix (A)(1)(d)	Comprehensive Overview of CALI
Appendix (E)(2)(a)	Methodology for Selection of Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools.
Appendix (E)(2)(b)	Complete listing of Tier I, II and III Schools

(F) General *(55 total points)*

State Reform Conditions Criteria

(F)(1) Making education funding a priority *(10 points)*

The extent to which—

(i) The percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice) that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for 2009 was greater than or equal to the percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice) that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for 2008; and

(ii) The State's policies lead to equitable funding (a) between high-need LEAs (as defined in this notice) and other LEAs, and (b) within LEAs, between high-poverty schools (as defined in this notice) and other schools.

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (F)(1)(i):

- Financial data to show whether and to what extent expenditures, as a percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice), increased, decreased, or remained the same.

Evidence for (F)(1)(ii):

- Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.

(F)(1): MAKING EDUCATION FUNDING A PRIORITY

Introduction

Education funding in Connecticut is and has always been a priority. Traditionally, when compared with other states Connecticut is among the highest spenders in elementary and secondary education. The latest information from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) shows that for 2005-06, Connecticut had the third highest per pupil expenditures for both total expenditures as well as for instruction. Under capital outlay for school facilities, Connecticut was the highest in the country.

Not only does Connecticut have a long-standing tradition of supporting education at the highest levels, the state has been equally sensitive to the issue of funding equity. Since the late 1970's our major education funding formulas have been predicated upon districts' ability to raise local tax dollars to support public education as well as needs of subgroups of students, particularly in terms of poverty, English language learners (ELL) and academic performance. Below is a summary of the results of our equalized education funding formulas by District Reference Groups ("DRG").

Table (F)(1)(i)(a): 2008-2009 Connecticut Data by District Reference Group

DRG	Number of School Districts	October 2008 Student Enrollment	Enrollment Percent of Total	2008-09 State Grant Payments	State Grant Percent of Total	State Grant per Pupil
A	9	30,470	5.61%	24,565,773	0.86%	$ 806
B	21	99,638	18.35%	146,270,347	5.14%	1,468
C	30	39,636	7.30%	129,764,468	4.56%	3,274
D	24	86,296	15.89%	279,508,802	9.83%	3,239
E	34	25,677	4.73%	126,264,666	4.44%	4,917
F	17	29,953	5.51%	186,477,510	6.56%	6,226
G	15	68,560	12.62%	432,433,932	15.21%	6,307
H	9	65,823	12.12%	355,950,746	12.52%	5,408
I	7	97,048	17.87%	1,162,579,255	40.88%	11,979
Totals	166	543,101	100.00%	$2,843,815,499	100.00%	$5,236

Despite the economic challenges that continue to plague Connecticut and much of the nation, from year to year we continue to increase revenues for elementary and secondary education, including a $126.6 million increase in fiscal year 2009.

(F)(1)(i) Revenues Available to Support Education

The percentage of total revenues that Connecticut made available to support elementary, secondary and public higher education for 2008 and 2009 were virtually flat at 23 percent. Overall, from 2008 to 2009, the state's support in these areas increased by almost $126.6 million, or 3.25 percent. Additionally, during this time period, the State did not waiver from its deep commitment to maintaining the infrastructure for public education. For example, through the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) school construction grant program, approximately $650 million in each year of the biennium was provided to the school districts for building improvements and new construction. Despite the increase in education revenues, due to Connecticut's economic downturn in 2009 and various state and federal safety net requirements, the state did have a slightly disproportionate increase in many of its welfare and social services programs (i.e., Medicaid, Medicaid Part D, Husky (children's medical care) and housing for the homeless), which effectively rendered education expenditures as flat for this time period.

Table (F)(1)(i)(b)
State Revenues for Elementary, Secondary and Public Higher Education as a Percentage of Total State Revenues

	FY2008	FY2009
A. State Revenues for Elementary, Secondary and Public Higher Education	$3,892,795,885	$4,019,380,727
B. Total State Revenues	$16,627,447,407	$17,234,854,884
C. Education Revenues as a Percent of Total Revenues (Item A/Item B)	23.41%	23.32%

(F)(1)(ii) Equitable funding between high need LEAs and other LEAs and within LEAs between high poverty schools and other schools

For fiscal year 2009-10, almost $2.9 billion has been appropriated to the CSDE for grant programs supporting elementary and secondary education, including preschool programs and construction activities (see FY 10 and FY 11 Department of Education Budget in Appendix (F)(1)(a) for further detail). Of that amount, nearly $2.6 billion (87 percent) is distributed through an equalizing formula in which the distribution is affected by towns' ability to support education (i.e., town "wealth") and student need.

Under state equalization, the wealthier the town and lower the student need, the lower the state funding. Conversely, the poorest towns with the highest student need will generally receive the highest rates of state support. While there are a number of wealth definitions in our funding formulas, all of our wealth definitions are predicated on two underlying premises. First, wealth is determined based on a town's property tax base and the income of its residents. Second, the property tax base is the value of taxable real and personal property (net grand list) at 100 percent fair market value and is called the equalized net grand list.

Property tax base is used because it is the form of wealth taxed by Connecticut towns. Both definitions of wealth also use income because the income that taxes are paid from has an important effect on town taxing capacity. Student need is measured through the numbers and concentrations of poverty, English language learners and, in some instances, student performance.

Connecticut's Major Equalized Funding Formulas

For 2009-10, there are nine state grants totaling nearly $2.6 billion whose distribution is driven by equalization. The nine grants fit into two major funding distributions: Education Cost Sharing (ECS) and Categorical Reimbursements.

Education Cost Sharing (ECS)

The ECS grant, which has been in existence since 1989-90, continues to be Connecticut's primary education equalization aid program. With funding set at $1.9 billion in 2009-10, ECS will continue to represent the largest state contribution to public elementary and secondary education. Under the fully-funded ECS formula, LEAs are entitled to a percentage of the state's foundation multiplied by an LEA's "need students." (See CGS 10-262i in Appendix (F)(1)(b)). The foundation is currently set at $9,687 per student. Need

students represent resident students weighted for Title I poverty and English language learners. The percentage of the foundation that a town is entitled to is based on town wealth. For 2009-10, the percentage of the foundation that the state funds ranges from 9 percent for the wealthiest town to 91 percent for the poorest town.

Table (F)(1)(ii)(a) reveals the effect of ECS equalization by comparing the wealthiest-lowest need and poorest-highest need District Reference Groups (DRGs). Local education agencies (LEAs) are grouped into DRGs based on the characteristics of students' families. LEAs in a DRG have similar incomes, percentages of families below the poverty level, percentages of single-parent families, percentages of families with non-English home language, percentages of parents with a bachelor's degree and percentages of families in white collar or managerial occupations. DRG A represents those LEAs with the highest income and education levels and the lowest poverty levels. Conversely, DRG I has the lowest income and educational levels and the highest poverty. Coincidently, the seven LEAs that compose DRG I are also the same LEAs that would fall under the definition of High-Need LEAs when using Title I poverty as a percent of the age 5-17 population. While no LEA in Connecticut serves 10,000 children in poverty, there are seven LEAs in which Title I poverty constitutes at least 20 percent of the student population.

Table (F)(1)(ii)(a)
2009-10 ECS Grant per Pupil for DRG A, DRG I/High-Need LEAs and Statewide Average

DRG	# LEAs	# Resident Students (October 2008)	ECS grant per pupil	DRG I to DRG A and State Ratios
A (Wealthiest)	9	30,578	$358	
I (High-Need LEAs)	7	96,582	$7,551	21 to 1
State	166	553,066	$3,417	

The ratio of the ECS grant per-pupil difference between the wealthiest and poorest DRG is in excess of 21 to one. On a per-pupil basis, the ECS grant per pupil in the high-need LEAs (DRG I) is more than double the state average.

Categorical Reimbursements

The state has a number of categorical grants that reimburse LEAs for local tax dollars expended in eligible program areas. These grants include adult education, school construction, public and non-public pupil transportation and health services to private not-for-

profit schools. (See CGS 10-71, CGS 10-285a, CGS 10-266m and CGS 10-217a in Appendix (F)(1)(b)). The state-support percentage assigned to an LEA will depend on LEA wealth and the range of state support percentages. In every case, the higher the wealth rank, when sorted in descending wealth order, the lower the state-support percentage. Table (F)(1)(ii)(b) below provides the current ranges of state-support percentages for 2009-10.

Table (F)(1)(ii)(b)
Proportion of State Categorical Reimbursement by LEA Wealth Ranking

	Start Range (Highest Wealth Rank)	End Range (Lowest Wealth Rank)
Pupil Transportation	0%	60%
School Construction	20%	80%
Adult Education	0%	65%
Health Services	10%	90%

Targeted State Aid

For 2009-10, in addition to the nearly $2.6 billion in equalized state education aid, another $367 million in targeted grants is available for purposes such as magnet schools, school readiness, Head Start, family resource centers, interdistrict cooperation and attendance programs, breakfast initiatives and summer- and after-school programs. (See CGS sections 10-264l, 10-16p(c), 10-16n, 10-4o, 10-266aa, 10-266w, 10-74d, 10-266p, 10-266t, 10-265m and CGS 10-16x in Appendix (F)(1)(b)). While the distribution formulas under these programs are not necessarily equalized, the goals of these programs are targeted to the students in the state's poorest and neediest LEAs.

Targeted State Aid for High Poverty Schools

In Connecticut, state funding formulas are generally LEA-based rather than school-based. The effects of heavy equalization and targeted aid at the LEA level ensure that the neediest schools, located within the poorest LEAs, will receive the appropriate and

commensurate share of state funding. However, there are two important state funding initiatives targeted at the poorest schools rather than at the LEA level: School Breakfast and Early Childhood Education. (See CGS 10-266w and CGS 10-16p(d) in Appendix (F)(1)(b)).

Connecticut supplements the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) funded breakfast programs in those schools where at least 40 percent of the lunches served are free or at reduced price based on family income. For 2009-10, the state anticipates supporting over 10 million breakfasts in 408 high-poverty schools. Connecticut also funds early childhood programs to the 19 communities with the highest numbers or concentrations of poverty and remedial performance. In that program, the state provides funding at the community level for more than 9,700 3- to 5-year-olds. In addition, there are also early childhood grants for those communities that are not among the 19 LEAs already funded and that have elementary schools where at least 40 percent of the lunches served are free or at reduced price or are among the 50 poorest districts. Under that program, for 2009-10, the state will fund an additional 800 3- to 5-year-olds in 64 towns.

The Effects of Equalized State Funding Formulas

For 2008-09, the $2.85 billion of equalized and targeted aid represents more than 95 percent of state elementary and secondary education aid. The eligibility and distribution of these funds take into account wealth, student need and the desire to allocate a disproportionate share of state aid to those towns that can least afford to support education given their level of poverty and student need.

Table (F)(1)(ii)(c)
State Funding per Pupil for DRG A, DRG I and Statewide 2003-04 and 2008-09

DRG	2003-04	2008-09
A (High Wealth/Low Need)	932	806
I (Low Wealth/High Need)	8,454	11,980
State	3,936	5,276
DRG I to DRG A Ratio	9.07	14.86
DRG I to State Ratio	2.15	2.27

Table (F)(1)(ii)(c) reveals the wide funding differential between the wealthiest and poorest DRGs and how state funding continues to increase the share to the poorest and neediest LEAs, from nine times to nearly 15 times during the past five years. Additionally, the gap between the high-need LEAs (DRG I) and the state average continues to widen. As can be seen in Table (F)(1)(ii)(d), in 2008-09 Connecticut funded the poorest DRGs' share of education in excess of 62 percent compared to only 4.4 percent for the wealthiest LEAs, a difference of more than 14 times.

Table (F)(1)(ii)(d)
2008-09 Revenue Shares for Education Expenditures for DRG A, DRG I and Statewide

DRG	State	Local	Federal/Other
A (High Wealth/Low Need)	4.41%	94.13%	1.46%
I (Low Wealth/High Need)	62.50%	27.21%	10.29%
Statewide	30.43%	64.53%	5.04%
DRG I to DRG A Ratio	14.17%	0.29%	7.05%
DRG I to State Ratio	2.05%	0.42%	2.04%

Appendices Referenced in Section (F)(1)

Appendix (F)(1)(a) FY 10 and FY 11 Department of Education Budget
Appendix (F)(1)(b) Connecticut General Statutes on School Funding

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools *(40 points)*

The extent to which—

(i) The State has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools (as defined in this notice) in the State, measured (as set forth in Appendix B) by the percentage of total schools in the State that are allowed to be charter schools or otherwise restrict student enrollment in charter schools;

(ii) The State has laws, statutes, regulations, or guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools; in particular, whether authorizers require that student achievement (as defined in this notice) be one significant factor, among others, in authorization or renewal; encourage charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations, especially relative to high-need students (as defined in this notice); and have closed or not renewed ineffective charter schools;

(iii) The State's charter schools receive (as set forth in Appendix B) equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal revenues;

(iv) The State provides charter schools with funding for facilities (for leasing facilities, purchasing facilities, or making tenant improvements), assistance with facilities acquisition, access to public facilities, the ability to share in bonds and mill levies, or other supports; and the extent to which the State does not impose any facility-related requirements on charter schools that are stricter than those applied to traditional public schools; and

(v) The State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (F)(2)(i):

- A description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- The number of charter schools allowed under State law and the percentage this represents of the total number of schools in the State.
- The number and types of charter schools currently operating in the State.

Evidence for (F)(2)(ii):

- A description of the State's approach to charter school accountability and authorization and a description of the State's applicable laws,

statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.

- For each of the last five years:
  - The number of charter school applications made in the State.
  - The number of charter school applications approved.
  - The number of charter school applications denied and reasons for the denials (academic, financial, low enrollment, other).
  - The number of charter schools closed (including charter schools that were not reauthorized to operate).

Evidence for (F)(2)(iii):

- A description of the State's applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- A description of the State's approach to charter school funding, the amount of funding passed through to charter schools per student, and how those amounts compare with traditional public school per-student funding allocations.

Evidence for (F)(2)(iv):

- A description of the State's applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- A description of the statewide facilities supports provided to charter schools, if any.

Evidence for (F)(2)(v):

- A description of how the State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.

(F)(2) ENSURING SUCCESSFUL CONDITIONS FOR HIGH-PERFORMING CHARTER SCHOOLS AND OTHER INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS

Introduction

In an effort to close the state's achievement gap and ensure that all students have the opportunity to access high-quality programs based on their educational needs and interests, Connecticut supports a robust Public School Choice initiative that has been in existence for over 50 years. (See Table (F)(2)(a) for details). Connecticut currently offers a series of public school choice options that includes charter schools and innovation schools as well as interdistrict magnet schools, the Open Choice Program, the Interdistrict Cooperative Grant Program, Connecticut Technical High Schools and Regional Agricultural Science and Technology Education Centers. (See

Appendix (F)(2)(a) for more detail on these programs). Connecticut's public school choice programs have increasingly engaged in partnerships with public or independent institutions of higher education, including community colleges, to prepare students for post-secondary educational opportunities. Choice programs also allow the State of Connecticut to advance the integration of its students. In Hartford, specifically, public school choice is an effective tool for meeting the Supreme Court Order in the matter of Sheff v. O'Neill to educate the children of Hartford in less-segregated settings. (See section (A)(1)(i) for additional details on the Sheff v. O'Neill lawsuit).

High academic achievement is a fundamental expectation in schools of choice as market dynamics indicate that few students will voluntarily choose a school that does not challenge students to achieve at high levels. As detailed below, public charter schools and interdistrict magnet schools routinely outpace the standardized test scores of the nearby central city and typically meet or exceed statewide averages in mathematics, reading and writing. Open choice programs, by offering students the opportunity to learn side-by-side with students of other cultures and economic strata, provide a setting where school-wide achievement is typically high and where students feel they can better succeed. In addition, public school choice programs have been found to directly and positively affect levels of parental involvement, student attendance, achievement, motivation and community engagement.

Students who attend public schools of choice are much more likely to stay engaged and less likely to drop out compared to students attending schools in local LEAs. The following factors likely contribute to student retention: school theme; smaller size; sense of community among students of similar interests; and specific interventions by schools to prevent dropping out. Interdistrict magnet and charter schools collectively have nearly one-third of the dropout rate of their comparison urban local high school. The way in which charter and magnet high schools address students at risk of dropping out of school is a part of the iterative site review process by the CSDE. Common methods or programs to prevent drop out include the *Responsive Classroom* and *Positive Behavioral Support* models.

Table (F)(2)(a) Summary of Connecticut's 2009-2010 Public School Choice Program			
Public School Choice Grant	**Number of Students**	**Number of Participating Districts**	**Total State Funds**
Charter Schools	5,170	85	$48,081,000
Magnet Schools	23,037	141	$153,000,000
Open Choice	1,875	62	$14,960,000
Regional Agricultural Science and Technology Education Centers	3,043	149	$4,560,565
Connecticut Technical High School System	10,579	162	125,141,00
TOTAL	**43,704**	**(n/a)**	**$345,742,565**

Interdistrict magnet schools are the cornerstone of the Public School Choice initiative in Connecticut and, like charter schools in other states across the nation, play a significant role in numerous districts. Connecticut now supports 61 magnet schools across the state. However, charter schools are growing in popularity and now play an expanding role in accomplishing the goals of Connecticut's education reform agenda. In fact, significant reforms to Connecticut's charter law were approved by the General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor during the 2010 legislative session as part of a comprehensive education reform bill, Public Act 10-111, described more thoroughly in Section (A)(1)(i). With regard to Section (F), the bill makes the following significant changes to current law:

- Eliminates the enrollment caps for high-performing charter schools;
- Permits the State Board of Education to approve state and local charter schools, regardless of available appropriations;
- Makes the charter school facility grant permanent; and
- Authorizes the development of "innovation schools" in priority school districts.

Further detail on these important changes that are relevant to Section (F) are embedded in the subsections that follow.

(F)(2)(i): Charter School Statutes and Potential Barriers to Growth

The Connecticut State Board of Education (SBE) is authorized to grant charters for both state and local charter schools in accordance with the provisions laid out in Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS), originally enacted by the state legislature in 1996. (See CGS 10-66aa to 10-66ll in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). Pursuant to this statute, a charter school is defined as a public, nonsectarian school established under a charter granted pursuant to the provisions of Connecticut law, organized as a nonprofit entity which acts as a public agency and operates independently of any local or regional local board of education in accordance with the terms of its charter and the provisions of the statutes.

State statute provides for the operation of both state and local charter schools. Pursuant to 10-66aa of the CGS, a "state charter school" is a new public school authorized by the SBE. CGS 10-66aa defines a "local charter school" as a public school or part of a public school that is converted into a charter school and is approved by the local or regional board of education of the LEA in which it is located and authorized by the SBE. In the 2009-10 school year, 18 state charter schools operated in Connecticut. There are currently no local charter schools in operation.

Barriers to Growth Removed

Connecticut does not have an explicit cap on the number of state or local charter schools that may operate in the state. Previously, the SBE could only approve state and local charter schools "within available appropriations." However, pursuant to Section 12 of Public Act No. 10-111, the SBE may now approve charter schools regardless of available appropriations. This is a significant change in the approval process for charter schools given that previously, potential charter school operators were prohibited from coming forward for approval unless a significant appropriation from the legislature had been made. Now these operators may come to the SBE for approval and then work with the legislature as well as other potential funding sources such as local and regional school boards to generate the funding needed to open the school.

Section 12 of Public Act No. 10-111 also removed enrollment caps for high-performing charter schools. State law restricts the enrollment levels of all new state charter schools to 250 students (300 students in schools that offer grades K-8) or 25 percent of the

enrollment of the LEA in which the state charter school is located, whichever is less. (See CGS 10-66bb(c) as amended by Section 12 of Public Act 10-111 in Appendix (A)(1)(c)). Previously, those state charter schools with "a demonstrated record of achievement" could, upon application to and approval by the SBE, enroll up to 85 students per grade, within available appropriations. However, passage of Section 12 of Public Act 10-111 now *requires* the SBE, upon application by a charter school with a demonstrated record of achievement, to waive *all* enrollment restrictions, regardless of available appropriations. (See the full text of Public Act 10-111 in Appendix (A)(1)(c)).

Charter Funding: A Potential Barrier to Growth that Remains

While Public Act 10-111 made significant progress in improving conditions for charter school growth in Connecticut, an existing potential barrier to growth for state charter school remains in the way that these schools are funded. For local charter schools, state statute requires the local or regional board of education of the LEA where a student enrolled in a local charter school resides to pay to the fiscal authority for the charter school for each such student the amount specified in its charter, including the reasonable special education costs of students requiring special education. (See CGS 10-66ee(b) in Appendix(F)(2)(b)). However, the primary funding source for each state charter school is a per pupil grant from the state for $9,300. (See CGS 10-66ee(c)(1) in Appendix(F)(2)(b)). This line item in the budget must be adjusted accordingly every year to accommodate the needs of the state charter schools; if it is not adjusted, the schools may only grow based on the number of seats that fiscal year's budget may allow.

To address this dilemma and other concerns regarding funding for public school choice programs, the SBE formed in March 2010 an Ad Hoc Committee to Study Funding School Choice Programs. This task force, made up of a variety of stakeholders, convened in May and will work to develop recommendations in time for the next legislative session to address the financial obstacles confronted by charter schools and other choice programs. By creating a new and more equitable funding structure, charter schools will thrive as a robust public school choice opportunity in Connecticut (See March 3, 2010 Resolution of the SBE in Appendix (F)(2)(c)).

Opportunities for Cooperation

Charter schools may enter into cooperative arrangements for the provision of school accommodation services, programs or activities in the same manner that local or regional school boards may do so. (See CGS 10-66ee(m) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). This provision allows charter schools to share school facilities and offer a stronger educational program, including Advanced Placement courses, a full college counseling program and a robust athletics and extracurricular program.

Appendices Referenced in Section (F)(2)(i)

Appendix (A)(1)(c) Public Act No. 10-111
Appendix (F)(2)(a) Public School Choice In Connecticut 2010-2011
Appendix (F)(2)(b) Connecticut General Statutes on Charter Schools
Appendix (F)(2)(c) March 3, 2010 Resolution of the SBE

(F)(2)(ii) Approval and Accountability of Charter Schools

Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) governs the application process for new charter schools. A summary of the process for approval of both a state and a local charter school is described below. While each type of charter school has a slightly different approval process, in both processes, applicants must submit a plan to promote a diverse student body and a means to assess student performance. (See CGS 10-66bb(d) in Appendix (F)(2)(b) for a complete list of the charter school application requirements). In approving charter school applications, the SBE shall give preference to applicants that will serve students who live in the state's priority school districts or in an LEA where 75 percent or more of the enrolled students are members of racial or ethnic minorities. (See CGS 10-66bb(c) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). Over the past three years, three charter school applications have been approved. (See Table (F)(2)(ii)(a) below for a summary of the outcomes of applications for Connecticut charter schools over the past five years).

Summary of State Charter School Approval Process

An application for the establishment of a state charter school shall be submitted to the SBE for approval and filed with the local or regional board of education in the LEA in which the charter school is to be located. The SBE shall: review the application; hold a public hearing on the application in the LEA in which such state charter school is to be located; solicit and review comments on the application from the local or regional board of education for the LEA in which such charter school is to be located and from the local or regional boards of education for LEAs that are contiguous to the LEA in which such school is to be located; and vote on a complete application not later than 75 days after the date of receipt of such application.

The SBE may condition the opening of such school on the school's meeting certain requirements that the Commissioner of Education determines to be necessary and may authorize the Commissioner to release the charter when the Commissioner determines such requirements are met. Charters shall be granted for a period of up to five years and may allow the applicant to delay its opening for a period of up to one school year in order for the applicant to fully prepare to provide appropriate instructional services. (See CGS 10-66bb(f) in Appendix(F)(2)(b)).

Summary of Local Charter School Approval Process

An application for the establishment of a local charter school shall be submitted to the local or regional board of education of the LEA in which the local charter school is to be located. The local or regional board of education shall: review the application; hold a public hearing in the LEA on the application; survey teachers and parents in the LEA to determine if there is sufficient interest in the establishment and operation of the local charter school; and vote on a complete application not later than 60 days after the date of receipt of such application.

If the application is approved, the local board shall forward the application to the SBE. The SBE shall vote on the application not later than 75 days after the date of receipt of such application. The SBE may condition the opening of such school on the school's meeting certain requirements determined by the Commissioner of Education to be necessary and may authorize the Commissioner to release the charter when the Commissioner determines such requirements are met. The SBE may grant the charter for a period of up to five years and may allow the applicant to delay its opening for a period of up to one school year for the applicant to fully prepare to provide appropriate instructional services. (See CGS 10-66bb(e) in Appendix(F)(2)(b).

Table (F)(2)(ii)(a):
State of Connecticut Charter School Applications 2006 through 2010

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Number of Applications Made in State	0	6 *	1 **	0	0
Number of Applications Approved	0	1	1	1	0
Number of Applications Denied***	0	1	3	0	0
Number of Charter Schools Closed	0	1	0	0	0

Notes:
* Six state charter school applications were made in the 2006-07 school year; one was approved and one was denied. Four applications were made at the end of the 2006-07 school year. These applications were reviewed in the 2007-08 school year; one was approved and three were denied.
** One state charter school application was made in the 2007-08 school year. It was reviewed and approved in the 2008-09 school year.
*** In 2006-07, one charter school application was submitted after the due date. In 2007-08, two charter school applications were denied for the following deficiencies: financial, governance, curriculum and student assessment. The third school was denied due to deficiencies related to curriculum and student assessment.

Monitoring and Accountability of Charter Schools

Connecticut law requires that charter schools demonstrate their success and comply with the law to operate. (See CGS 10-66bb(g) and CGS 10-66bb(h) in Appendix F-2(b)). In fact, the SBE may deny the renewal of a charter or revoke a charter if a school fails to adequately demonstrate student progress or comply with applicable laws and regulations. Therefore, as a matter of agency policy, the CSDE regularly monitors all of the state charter schools currently in operation in Connecticut to ensure that the statutory requirements laid out in 10-66bb(g) and (h) are being met. As a part of these monitoring activities, charter schools undergo informal visits on a yearly basis, as laid out in Table (F)(2)(ii)(b) below. The Commissioner has the authority, pursuant to Section 10-66bb(h) of the CGS, to place a school on probation if, at any time: (1) the school has failed to (A) adequately demonstrate student progress, (B) comply with the terms of its charter or with applicable laws and regulations, (C) achieve measurable progress in reducing racial, ethnic and economic isolation, or (D) maintain its nonsectarian status; or (2) the governing council has demonstrated an inability to provide effective leadership to oversee the operation of the charter school or has not ensured that public funds are expended prudently or in a lawful manner. A charter school placed on probation must file a corrective action plan and comply with the plan for the probationary period, which may be up to one year. (See CGS 10-66bb(h) in Appendix(F)(2)(b)). The probationary period may be extended for an additional year. The Commissioner must notify parents or guardians of students attending the charter school of the reasons for the

school's probationary status and may require the school to file interim reports on matters relevant to the probation. (See CGS 10-66bb(g) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)).

Table (F)(2)(ii)(b) Monitoring and Accountability Activities Required by the CSDE					
Site Visits and Reports	**1st Year**	**2nd Year**	**3rd Year**	**4th Year**	**5th Year**
Informal site visit	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Review of school fundamentals visit and report	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Corrective action plan follow-up and report	No	Yes	If needed	If needed	If needed
Comprehensive site visit and report	No	No	Yes	No	No
Renewal site visit	No	No	No	Round I	Round II

Charter Renewal

The SBE may renew charters for up to five years, upon application, in accordance with Section 10-66bb(g) of the CGS. The SBE may commission an independent appraisal of a charter school's performance as part of this renewal and consider the results of any such appraisal in determining whether to renew a charter. (See CGS 10-66bb(g) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). The SBE may decline to renew a charter if (1) sufficient student progress has not been demonstrated; (2) the governing council has not been sufficiently responsible for the operation of the school or has misused or spent public funds in a manner detrimental to the educational interests of its students; or (3) the school has not been in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. (See CGS 10-66bb(g) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)).

As a matter of agency policy, CSDE staff members conduct site visits to charter schools seeking renewal. The purpose of the visit is to determine compliance with the requirements of CGS section 10-66bb(g) in an effort to provide recommendations to the Commissioner and the SBE about the charter school seeking renewal. In addition to verifying the responses detailed in the charter renewal application submitted to the CSDE and ensuring that the charter school is complying with the law, CSDE staff members review the educational model and curriculum of the charter school, interview school stakeholders and evaluate how the charter school is accomplishing its mission.

Charter Revocation

Pursuant to CGS section 10-66bb(i), the SBE may revoke a charter if a school has failed to: (1) comply with the terms of probation, including the failure to file or implement a corrective action plan; (2) demonstrate satisfactory student progress, as determined by the commissioner; (3) comply with the terms of its charter or applicable laws and regulations; or (4) manage its public funds in a prudent or legal manner. Unless an emergency exists, the SBE must provide the governing council of the charter school a list of the reasons for the revocation and an opportunity to demonstrate compliance with all the requirements for the retention of its charter. (See CGS 10-66bb(i) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). If an emergency exists, the SBE may revoke the charter and provide the governing council with a subsequent opportunity to demonstrate compliance.

Charter School Closure, Non-Renewal and Revocation History

Cross Cultural Academy of Arts and Technology, which opened its doors in September 2006, serving 50 students in grades 5-6, was forced to close on May 4, 2007, due to insufficient funds. The school was unable to maintain expenses within its budget and was unable to secure private donations required for its continued operation. Its board relinquished its charter to the CSDE on May 25, 2007.

Four additional state charter schools have closed since 1999:

- The SBE revoked Village Academy's (New Haven) charter in the first week of school in 1999-2000.
- Ancestors Community High School (Waterbury) closed at the end of school year 2000-01.
- Charter Oak Preparatory Academy (New Britain/Hartford) closed on February 1, 2002.
- The SBE did not renew Brooklawn Academy's (Fairfield/Bridgeport) charter in 2003.

Annual Reporting

The governing council of a charter school must annually submit a school profile to the Commissioner of Education as required of each local and regional school board in the state. (See CGS 10-66cc(a) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). In addition, pursuant to CGS section 10-66cc(b), the governing council of a charter school must annually submit to the Commissioner of Education: (a) the educational progress of students in the school; (b) the financial condition of the school, including a certified audit statement of all revenues and expenditures; (c) accomplishment of the mission and any specialized focus of the charter school; and (d) the racial and ethnic

composition of the student body and efforts taken to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body. (See CGS 10-66cc(b) in Appendix(F)(2)(b)).

Charter School Student Population

As mentioned above, pursuant to CGS section 10-66bb(c), the SBE is instructed to give preference to applicants for charter schools that will serve students who reside in a priority school district, pursuant to CGS section 10-266p, or in an LEA where 75 percent or more of the enrolled students are members of racial or ethnic minorities and to applicants for state charter schools that will be located at a work-site or that are institutions of higher education. In Connecticut, 15 of 18 charter schools (83 percent) are located in priority school districts. In determining whether to grant a charter, the SBE shall also consider the effect of the proposed charter school on the reduction of racial, ethnic and economic isolation in the region where it is to be located, the regional distribution of charter schools in the state and the potential of over-concentration of charter schools within an LEA or in contiguous LEAs. (See CGS 10-66bb(c) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)).

Pursuant to CGS section 10-66bb(d), each charter school application shall include, among a number of other requirements, a description of the student admission criteria, a process to promote a diverse student body, ensure that the school complies with the provisions of CGS section 10-15c and that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability, athletic performance or proficiency in the English language, provided the school may limit enrollment to a particular grade level or specialized educational focus. (See Appendix (F)(2)(d) for a table with data on student enrollment of high-need students in the charter schools and traditional public schools in Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven).

Student Achievement

The monitoring process described above is designed to give the Commissioner and SBE sufficient information and authority for proper oversight of the charter school initiative and to give individual charter schools the opportunity to demonstrate the accomplishment of their unique educational mission and the stability of their organization. The two tables below are a representative sampling of 2009 student achievement comparisons in grade 8 and grade 10 among three of the highest-need Connecticut cities and

their corresponding charter schools. With the exception of grade 8 writing and grade 10 science in Bridgeport charter schools, all charter schools in grades 8 and 10 included in the sampling below exceed the student achievement performance gains of their LEA counterparts in each content area: mathematics, reading, writing and science.

Table (F)(2)(ii)(c): Charter School Host LEAs/Charter Schools					
LEA/ Charter School	**Number of Students Tested**	**Mathematics % At/Above Proficiency**	**Reading % At/Above Proficiency**	**Writing % At/Above Proficiency**	**Science % At/Above Proficiency**
Grade 8, 2009 Student Achievement Report					
Bridgeport	1332	55.1	46.5	64.1	40.0
3 Bridgeport Charter Schools	154	77.8	51.5	62.7	44.3
Hartford	1466	53.8	51.4	63.5	38.3
1 Hartford Charter School	23	87.0	91.3	91.7	62.5
New Haven	1128	65.1	58.5	61.4	44.7
2 New Haven Charter Schools	103	97.2	70.7	92.0	64.3
Grade 10, 2009 Student Achievement Report					
LEA /Charter School Note**:** *There are currently no Hartford charter schools serving high school students.*	**Number of Students Tested**	**Mathematics % At/Above Proficiency**	**Science % At/Above Proficiency**	**Reading % At/Above Proficiency**	**Writing % At/Above Proficiency**
Bridgeport	1083	35.5	32.0	44.2	57.4
1 Bridgeport Charter School	35	42.9	29.7	57.1	75.7
New Haven	1204	46.2	42.8	56.4	67.9
2 New Haven Charter Schools	81	72.0	72.9	82.1	87.8

Appendices Referenced in Section (F)(2)(ii)

Appendix (F)(2)(b) Connecticut General Statutes on Charter Schools
Appendix (F)(2)(d) Data Table on High-Need Student Enrollment in Charter Schools

(F)(2)(iii) Equitable funding for charter schools

Pursuant to section 10-66ee(c)(1) of the CGS, the per pupil grant for charter school students for the 2009-10 school year is $9,300. The state pays this grant directly to the fiscal authority of the state charter school. (See CGS 10-66ee(c) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). The local or regional board of education for the LEA where the student that attends a charter school resides is required to pay for special education costs for that student. (See CGS 10-66ee(c)(2) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). In addition, the local or regional board of education of the LEA where the charter school is located is required to provide transportation services for students of the charter school who live in the LEA, unless the charter school makes other arrangements for such transportation. For students attending a charter school in an LEA other than where that student resides, a local or regional board of education may provide transportation services and if it elects to provide such transportation, shall be eligible for reimbursement for the reasonable costs of such transportation. (See CGS 10-66ee(f) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)).

Charter schools in Connecticut are required to receive, in accordance with federal law and regulations, any federal funds available for the education of any pupils attending public schools. (See CGS 10-66ee(i) in Appendix F-2(b)). Charter schools are also eligible, to the same extent as local and regional boards of education, for any competitive state grants and grants pursuant to sections 10-17g and 10-266w of the CGS. (See CGS 10-66ee(g) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). These state grants include funding for technological improvements, capital, student nutrition, family resource centers, reading and reducing racial isolation. Charter schools may also raise additional private income. (See CGS 10-66ee(j) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)).

During the 2008-09 school year, charter schools, on average, received $10,508 per student in state funding, including grants in addition to the above referenced charter school grant. Conversely, the average funding received by a local and regional school board from the state was $5,276 per pupil. Therefore, in the 2008-09 school year, on average the charter school per pupil grant from the state represented more than 199 percent of what was provided to traditional public schools from the state. The fact that the state-funded charter schools operated on a substantially higher rate of state support is not unique to 2008-09. As shown in the table below, since their inception in 1997-98, charter schools have consistently received higher rates of state support than traditional public schools.

Table (F)(2)(iii)(a): State Funding per Pupil for Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools					
Fiscal Year	**(1) Charter Schools Funding per Pupil**	**(2) Average Traditional Public School Funding per Pupil**	**(3) Charter School Funding as a % of Traditional Public School (Col 1/Col 2)**	**(4) Charter Schools' Enrollment**	**(5) Traditional Public Schools' Enrollment**
1997-98	$5,313	$3,103	171.22%	1,117	513,489
1998-99	$5,199	$3,477	149.53%	1,870	522,337
1999-2000	$5,397	$3,775	142.97%	2,139	530,300
2000-01	$5,864	$3,794	154.56%	2,428	537,421
2001-02	$5,819	$3,922	148.37%	2,594	543,825
2002-03	$8,248	$3,962	208.18%	2,237	548,245
2003-04	$7,898	$3,936	200.66%	2,279	552,299
2004-05	$7,733	$4,342	178.10%	2,692	552,403
2005-06	$7,760	$4,711	164.72%	2,927	551,387
2006-07	$9,478	$4,951	191.44%	3,580	548,827
2007-08	$8,802*	$5,191	169.56%	4,019	544,477
2008-09	$10,508	$5,276	199.17%	4,479	539,045

*The dip in the 2007-08 Charter figure reflects the availability of $5 million for capital improvements in 2006-07 and 2008-09.

Of note, when special education and home-to-school transportation revenue are eliminated for 2008-09 (two mandates that do not apply to the charter schools), the charter school expenditure per pupil reflected 244 percent of what was funded to traditional public schools from **state** streams: $10,062 for charter schools as compared to an average of $4,123 for traditional public schools.

When adding federal, local and other revenues to state funding, on a per pupil basis, charters schools are funded at almost 106 percent of the traditional public schools per pupil expenditures: $13,191 for charter schools as compared to an average of $12,465 for traditional public schools, as broken down by revenue source in Table (F)(2)(iii)(b) below. In Table (F)(2)(iii)(b) below, the "school

district contribution" for traditional public schools identifies funding from local tax dollars. The "other revenue" for traditional public schools includes tuition revenue and miscellaneous revenue. For charter schools, the school district contribution includes in-kind services from the LEA in which the state charter school is located. Other revenues sources for charter schools include: miscellaneous income, including interest income, retained earnings and private donations.

Table (F)(2)(iii)(b):
Comparison of 2008-09 per Pupil Expenditures by Revenue Source
Excluding Special Education and Transportation

	Charter Schools	Traditional Public Schools	Charter School Funding as a % of Traditional Public Schools
State Funds	$10,062	$4,123	244.0%
Federal Funds	$959	$316	303.5%
School District Contribution	$430	$7,910	5.4%
State, Federal, & School District Contribution Combined	$11,451	$12,349	92.7%
Other Revenues	$1,740	$116	1,500.0%
***All* Revenue Sources**	$13,191	$12,465	105.8%

Table (F)(2)(iii)(c): Summary of 2008-09 Charter School Expenditures per Pupil by Revenue Source Excluding Special Education and Transportation					
Charter School	**State Revenues***	**Federal Revenues**	**School District Revenues**	**Other Revenues**	**Total Expenditures**
Jumoke Academy	$10,641	$1,224	$0	$409	$12,274
Odyssey	9,681	154	0	275	10,110
Integrated Day	11,369	774	0	224	12,367
ISAAC	13,796	1,010	0	456	15,262
Common Ground	10,656	1,831	0	476	12,963
The Bridge Academy	11,466	902	801	294	13,463
Side By Side	10,215	273	0	0	10,488
Explorations	9,949	259	0	2,204	12,412
Trailblazers	9,333	1,112	5,294	5,631	21,370
Amistad	10,114	960	0	3,670	14,744
New Beginnings	9,420	1,177	0	80	10,677
Stamford Academy	9,328	472	7,483	3,454	20,737
Park City	7,908	1,142	184	0	9,234
AF Bridgeport	9,313	1,646	0	1,617	12,576
Highville	9,048	750	0	32	9,830
Asylum Hill	9,727	551	0	1,461	11,739
AF Hartford	9,300	1,272	0	9,337	19,909
Elm City College	9,333	1,018	0	1,757	12,108
Charter Averages	**$10,062**	**$959**	**$430**	**$1,740**	**$13,191**

**** Charter schools are allowed to retain up to 15 percent of the state's $9,300 per pupil grant for expenditure in a future year.***

In terms of the local, state and federal support for charter schools, the table below summarizes the 2008-09 revenue shares. Overall, the average state share for charter schools is nearly 2.5 times greater than the public LEAs. State, federal and other revenues support nearly all of the charter schools operations compared with 35 percent for traditional public schools.

Table (F)(2)(iii)(d) Comparison of Revenue Share of State, Local and Federal Funding				
	Local Revenues	**State Revenues**	**Federal/Other Revenues**	**Total Revenues**
Charter Schools	0.72%	73.37%	25.91%	100%
Traditional Public Schools	64.52%	30.43%	5.05%	100%

Finally, the total appropriation for charter schools is $48,152,000 for 2009-10 and $53,047,200 for 2010-2011. For 2009-10, the charter school appropriation amounts to about 2 percent of the CSDE's General Fund appropriation, yet student enrollment in charter schools constitutes less than 1 percent of the state's total student enrollment. Of note, the charter school line item has grown by over $32 million in the past eight years, a 210 percent increase. In contrast, over that same time, charter school student enrollment increased by only 133 percent.

Appendices Referenced in Section F-2(iii)

Appendix (F)(2)(b) Connecticut General Statutes on Charter Schools

(F)(2)(iv) Funding for Charter School Facilities

Since 2002, Connecticut has provided charter schools with funding for facilities and other related supports. Section 10-66hh of the CGS authorizes the Commissioner of Education to establish a grant program to assist state charter schools in financing charter school building projects, general improvements to school buildings and repayment of debt incurred for building projects. (See CGS 10-66hh in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). This statutory provision was first enacted in 2001 and has since been extended approximately every two years by the state legislature to continue this grant program. Section 14 in Public Act 10-111 makes this statutory provision authorizing the charter school facility grant program permanent. (See Public Act 10-111 in Appendix at (A)(1)(c))

Since 2002, Connecticut has provided $14.5 million in funding for charter school building projects. In 2005, a separate bond fund was established specifically for the purpose of charter school building projects and improvements. This provision was extended in 2007 and is codified in statute at CGS section 10-66jj. (See CGS 10-66jj in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). Of note, in November 2009, the

CSDE requested an additional $5 million in funding from the State Bond Commission to issue additional grants for the purpose of Charter School Building Projects. This request is still pending.

In addition, in 2005 the General Assembly created a pilot school construction grant to provide a grant to one state charter school to buy and renovate a building for use as a charter school facility. (See CGS 10-285h in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). Amistad Academy, located in New Haven, Connecticut, applied for this grant on November 30, 2005. Its application was approved for a $31.5 million project, with the school's costs eligible for reimbursement by the state at a rate of 78.5 percent. Since that time, Amistad Academy has purchased a facility and the renovation process is well underway.

To provide funding for charter schools beyond school building projects, the CSDE also awards funds to charter schools for technology infrastructure. (See CGS 10-262n(d)(2) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)). Charter schools were paid over $130,000 from 1999 through 2007 for this purpose, although the majority of the money was paid in 2001 and 2003 ($50,000 in each year).

The state does not impose any facility-related requirements on charter schools that are stricter than those applied to traditional public schools. Of note, pursuant to 10-66hh of the CGS, charter schools are treated as priority school districts for the purpose of making grants for "general improvements to school buildings." For the purpose of "school building projects," Section 10-66hh of the CGS refers to the definition in Section 10-282 of the CGS, which applies to traditional public schools. (See CGS 10-282(3) in Appendix (F)(2)(b)).

Appendices Referenced in Section F-2(iv)

Appendix (A)(1)(c) Public Act 10-111
Appendix (F)(2)(b) Connecticut General Statutes on Charter Schools

(F)(2)(v) Innovative, Autonomous Public Schools other than Charter Schools

Current state statute allows LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools in the form of CommPACT schools, interdistrict magnet schools and the newly authorized "innovation schools," pursuant to section 6 of Public Act No. 10-111.

1. CommPACT Schools

CommPACT schools were authorized by the state legislature in 2007 and are governed by CGS 10-74g. (See CGS 10-74g in Appendix (F)(2)(e)). The schools are a product of an initiative led by the University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education in collaboration with the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut, Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, Connecticut Association of Urban Superintendents, Connecticut Education Association and Connecticut Federation of School Administrators, to provide alternative supports for urban schools whose students are underperforming. The name CommPACT symbolizes the commitment required by the partners within each school including community members, parents, administrators, students and teachers.

CommPACT schools are LEA-sponsored alternative schools staffed by faculty that come together voluntarily to redesign the core programs and working conditions for managing school operations. A CommPACT School is an existing public school reorganized by teachers and administrators to maximize shared decision-making and collaboration. In exchange for accountability to the LEA, the local and regional school board is required to permit the CommPACT School autonomy in governance, finance and curriculum. (See CGS 10-74g in Appendix (F)(2)(e)). They are managed by a partnership of LEA administrators, school representatives, teachers, community leaders and parents. Currently, there are eight CommPACT schools operating in five cities across the state: Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, New London and Waterbury.

Instructional Models and Associated Curriculum

The University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education serves as the hub for the CommPACT schools initiative by coordinating supports both within and across network schools. The Neag School is a resource for research-based practices for curricula and school-reform models. Often, the materials and strategies employed by schools have not been sufficiently field-tested to determine which types of school environments they work best in or how well they address specific student needs and/or learning styles. The Neag School provides field-based assistance and annually evaluates each school's progress. By conducting audits of the school, surveying the administrators, teachers, students, parents and the community to identify the school's target needs, the Neag

School provides each CommPACT School with a menu of research-proven programs to close the achievement gap. An award from the NEA Foundation funds this research. Schools then select a customized set of supports, including but not limited to, Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS), the Schoolwide Enrichment Model, the Accelerated Schools Plus (ASP) and Atlas Learning Communities reform models.

Since a CommPACT school is managed by a partnership involving its LEA administrators, school representatives, teachers, community leaders and parents, decision-making is shared, which leads to a shared vision, mission and ownership and in turn enhances the teaching and learning experience for all involved. The team within that school makes decisions about teaching methods and materials that best suit the students and needs of the CommPACT school.

New Structures, Formats and Staffing for the School Day and Year

The LEA's collective bargaining agreements cover CommPACT teachers; however, teachers in a CommPACT school may agree to alter parts of the agreement if they believe it will improve student learning. Flexibility in hours, school calendar and other scheduling issues have proven to increase efficiency and have led to increased collaboration in schools by better using the distribution of time. Critical to a CommPACT school's foundation is the required buy-in: the principal and 90 percent of the teachers and LEA administrators must accept the requirements of becoming a CommPACT school.

Student Enrollment and Accountability for Achievement

CommPACT schools operate under existing local school attendance policies, drawing students as they would before achieving CommPACT status. While the CommPACT school project is only in its second year of operation, schools have made significant gains in parent and community engagement, improved student behavior and revamping the curriculum in the areas of literacy and mathematics. Each site has implemented a growth curve model of measuring student achievement. It is anticipated that next year the project should be able to document student growth on a range of academic and social measures including statewide achievement tests and additional measures tailored to the school environment.

2. Interdistrict Magnet Schools

Magnet schools play a very important role in Connecticut's Public School Choice initiative and provide thousands of Connecticut students with an innovative approach to public education and opportunities for success in school and beyond. The first regional magnet school opened in Connecticut in 1991. Currently there are 61 magnet schools operating in the state with a statewide enrollment of 23,015 students. Over $148 million was appropriated for magnet school operating grants for 2009-10, which makes up over 6 percent of the CSDE's General Fund appropriation.

Pursuant to Section 10-264l of the CGS, an "interdistrict magnet school program" means a program that "(i) supports racial, ethnic and economic diversity, (ii) offers a special and high-quality curriculum and (iii) requires students who are enrolled to attend at least half-time." (See CGS 10-264l in Appendix (F)(2)(e)). A variety of entities are authorized to operate an interdistrict magnet school, including a local and regional board of education, a regional educational service center, a public or private college or university and a third-party not-for-profit corporation that the Commissioner approves. (See CGS 10-264l(a) in Appendix (F)(2)(e)). Interdistrict magnet schools are eligible to receive grant assistance from the state for both the operation of the magnet school program as well as for grants for transportation (see CGS 10-264i in Appendix (F)(2)(e)) and facilities. (See CGS 10-264h and CGS 10-264l in Appendix (F)(2)(e)). However, in considering whether to approve an application for a grant for an interdistrict magnet school, statute requires the Commissioner to consider, among other factors, whether the program offered by the school is likely to increase student achievement and reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation. (See CGS 10-264l(b)(2) in Appendix (F)(2)(e)).

The membership, duties and responsibilities of the governing board are designed uniquely by each magnet school to capitalize on the special learning theme and focus of the school. The governing board for a magnet school may consist of participating LEAs, business and industry partners, parents and representatives of higher education. Duties may include: hiring of administrative staff, school operations, curriculum design, building design, budget and transportation.

Instructional Models and Associated Curriculum

By definition, an interdistrict magnet school must offer a "special and high-quality curriculum," which helps the school attract students from outside the LEA in which the school operates. (See CGS 10-264l(a) in Appendix (F)(2)(e)). These engaging and innovative schools provide educational opportunities for students who benefit from a range of themes or teaching philosophies that include performing arts, mathematics, science and technology, international studies, early childhood and multicultural education.

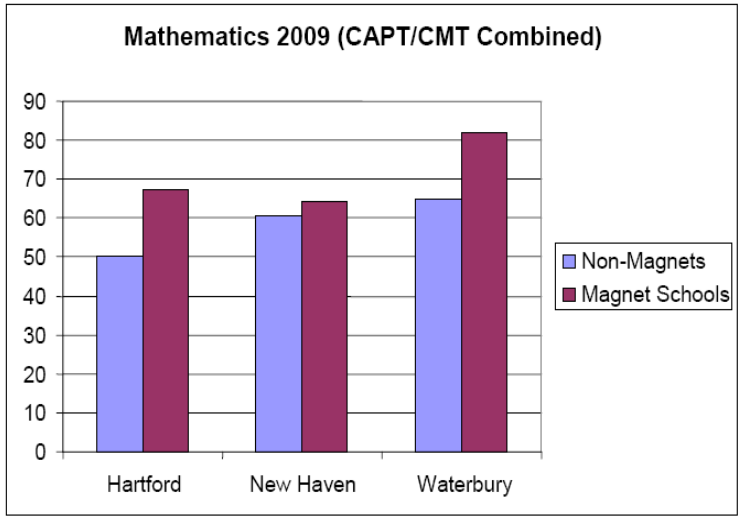
New Structures, Formats and Staffing for the School Day and School Year

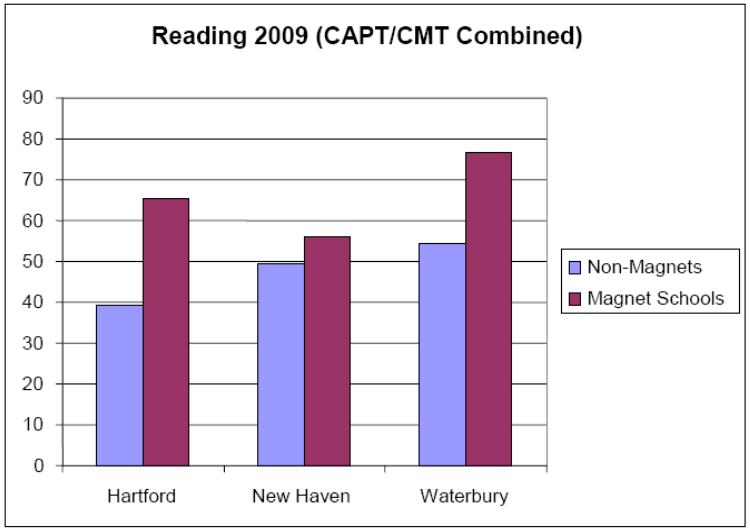
The schedule of the magnet school day and year vary depending on programmatic needs. Magnet school calendars are designed to accomplish their mission. Examples include a longer school day, before- and after-school programs, extended school years, vacation week programs and college-style scheduling. All interdistrict magnet schools must conform with the same laws and regulations applicable to public schools. (See CGS 10-264l(a) in Appendix F-2(e)). Therefore, staff in magnet schools may be selected by their interest and experience in the school's unique program. Magnet school staff generally work longer hours and have more planning time built into their schedules compared to regular public school staff.

Student Enrollment and Accountability for Achievement

Magnet school seats are generally made available to all students in the region who are interested; however, if applications exceed the number of available seats, a lottery may be conducted. In its operations plan, a magnet school is required to include a written commitment for participation from the LEAs that will participate in the school. (See CGS 10-264h(b) Appendix (F)(2)(e)). If after accommodating students from participating LEAs an interdistrict magnet school operator has unused student capacity, any interested student may enroll directly into the program. (See CGS 10-264l(j) in Appendix (F)(2)(e)). In addition, the governing authority for interdistrict magnet schools must enroll students from more than one participating LEA to remain eligible for state funding. (See CGS 10-264l in Appendix (F)(2)(e)). The governing authority also maintain student enrollment so that at least 25 percent, but not more than 75 percent, of the students enrolled are pupils of racial minorities. (See CGS 10-264l(a) Appendix (F)(2)(e)).

Due to the strong emphasis on increasing student achievement, magnet schools continually use various assessment methods to measure student performance and adjust the school curriculum and instruction according to the findings. Examples of magnet school performance levels are detailed in the charts below. These graphs compare students in magnet schools and non-magnet schools who have met or exceeded the proficiency standard on Connecticut's statewide assessments in mathematics and reading.





3. Innovation Schools

Section 6 of Public Act 10-111 authorizes the local or regional board of education of a priority school district to convert an existing public school or establish a new school as an "innovation school." (See Section 6 of Public Act 10-111 in Appendix (A)(1)(c)). The law requires that the innovation school be developed through an "innovation plan" developed by faculty and district leadership or an external partner. Eligible external partners include a public or private institution of higher education, nonprofit charter school operators, educational collaborative or a consortia authorized by the Commissioner of Education. The local or regional board of education is responsible for determining whether LEA faculty and district leadership or an external partner will be responsible for

developing the innovation plan. A committee of stakeholders, whose membership is outlined in the law and includes board members, parents, teachers and administrators, work together to develop the innovation plan. The innovation plan is required to articulate the areas of autonomy and flexibility in curriculum, budget, school schedule and calendar, school district policies and procedures, professional development and staffing policies and procedures, including waivers from or modifications to contracts or collective bargaining agreements.

Instructional Models and Associated Curriculum

The innovation plan is required by law to include a detailed description of the curriculum and related programs for the proposed school specifying how the curriculum is expected to improve school performance and student achievement.

New Structures, Formats and Staffing for the School Day and School Year

In addition to a plan for the curriculum and related programs, the innovation plan must include at least the following elements: (a) a budget plan that includes a detailed description of how funds shall be used in the proposed school to support school performance and student achievement that is or may be different than how funds are used in other public schools in the district; (b) a plan for the school schedule and calendar, that includes a detailed description of the ways the program or calendar of the proposed school may be enhanced or expanded; (c) a staffing plan including any proposed waivers or modifications of current collective bargaining contracts; (d) a plan for policies and procedures including the unique operational policies and procedures for the innovation school and how these will support school performance and student achievement; and (e) a plan for professional development for teachers, administrators and other staff.

Student Enrollment and Accountability for Achievement

The statute specifies that a student who is enrolled in a school at the time it is established as an Innovation School be allowed to remain in the school if the student and the student's parents so choose. In addition, the innovation plan must also provide for multiple measures by which to assess school performance and student achievement and propose goals for the following: (a) student attendance; (b) student safety and discipline; (c) student promotion, graduation and dropout rates; (d) mastery state test performance; (e) progress

in areas of academic underperformance; (f) progress among subgroups of students including those from low-income families, those who are limited English proficient and those receiving special education; and (g) reduction of achievement gaps among different groups of students.

Under the new law, the LEA superintendent will be required to annually evaluate the Innovation School and submit the evaluation to the local or regional board of education documenting whether the school has met the annual goals and the specified implementation defined in the innovation plan. The superintendent may amend or suspend one or more components if, after one year, the school has "substantially failed" to meet the goals of the innovation plan. If the superintendent determines a school has "substantially failed" in one or more components, the board of education may amend or suspend one or more components of the plan or terminate authorization of the school (but not before completion of the third full year of operation).

Appendices Referenced in Section F-2(v)

Appendix (A)(1)(c) Public Act 10-111
Appendix (F)(2)(e) Connecticut General Statutes on Magnet Schools and Compact Schools

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions *(5 points)*

The extent to which the State, in addition to information provided under other State Reform Conditions Criteria, has created, through law, regulation, or policy, other conditions favorable to education reform or innovation that have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes.

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (F)(3):

- A description of the State's other applicable key education laws, statutes, regulations, or relevant legal documents.

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

(F)(3) DEMONSTRATING OTHER SIGNIFICANT REFORM CONDITIONS

Beyond innovative school reform models already cited in Section F, Connecticut has invested in other programs and initiatives in an effort to increase student achievement, improve graduation rates and narrow achievement gaps, among other outcomes. Connecticut's investments in these other forms of support are summarized below:

- Dropout Prevention
- In-School Suspension Actions
- Developing Tomorrow's Professionals
- Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)
- Early Childhood Education

1. Dropout Prevention

In March 2007, the SBE adopted a report from the CSDE outlining a course of action to address the twin challenges of dropouts and in-school suspensions and expulsions. This report made seven recommendations, including the convening of an intra-agency and interagency collaborative advisory committee to develop and implement programs and to employ the Public School Information System (PSIS), with its unique student identification numbers, as a framework for identifying and monitoring student data longitudinally to better understand the impact of individual and collective dropout prevention strategies. Work has begun to address each of these seven recommendations. The CSDE has targeted 21 LEAs where data reveal a need for continued focus on assisting more students to complete school. The current LEAs include**:** Bridgeport, East Hartford, Enfield, Gilbert School, Griswold, Hartford, Killingly, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Plainfield, Plymouth, Regional School District #19, Seymour, Stafford, Thomaston, Torrington, Vernon, Waterbury, Windham and Windsor Locks.

In October 2009, the districts identified above attended the Governor's Summit on Dropout Prevention, sponsored by America's Promise, where they were exposed to detailed data on high school dropouts, their prospects in life and their impact on the state and nation economically and socially. They were exposed to principles of dropout prevention from Grad Nation and research from the Institute for Educational Science (IES) and the National Dropout Prevention Center. A CSDE research team presented preliminary findings on a set of dropout indicators drawn from Connecticut student data. District teams then met with professional facilitators to develop district-specific dropout prevention strategies.

Since the conference, the target LEAs have been provided with continuing opportunities to learn about current research and practice associated with school dropout issues and have participated in a facilitated exercise to help each examine their own local data, current initiatives, gaps in services and strategies to expand their response to students that drop out in their LEA. As a result, each of the 21 LEAs has developed an action plan with strategies to reduce the dropout rate by supporting students to remain connected to their education, school and communities.

Moving forward, these LEAs will meet to share data results, best practices and lessons learned as they work to reduce their dropout rates. Small planning grants were made available to LEAs to amplify opportunities for continued dialogue across LEA and CSDE staff. The Partnership for High School, College and Workforce Alignment will use the graduation data and local dropout prevention initiatives to repurpose existing state education grants to support promising practices in dropout prevention. In addition, effective July 1, 2011, students who are in danger of failing to graduate will have access to another support feature to enable their persistence in school completion. Pursuant to Section 28 of Public Act 10-111, a school district with a dropout rate of 8 percent or greater in the previous school year shall establish an online credit recovery program to allow those students who are identified by certified personnel as in danger of failing to graduate to complete online coursework approved by the local or regional board of education for credit toward meeting the high school graduation requirements. (See Public Act 10-111 in Appendix (A)(1)(c)).

2. In-School Suspension Actions

Pursuant to Section 10-233c, as amended by Section 20 of Public Act 10-111, all suspensions from school shall be in-school suspensions unless school administration determines that the student being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption to the educational process that the suspension should be out of school. (See section 20 of Public Act 10-111 in Appendix (A)(1)(c)). Anticipating this statutory implementation date, the CSDE published guidelines on October 1, 2008, to aid local and regional boards of education in making the determination as to whether a suspension of a student shall be either an in-school or out-of-school suspension. A critical feature of the guidance and CSDE activity has been to reduce aberrant rates of out-of-school suspension due to school policy infractions such as insubordination or disrespect. Using a careful analysis of local data, the CSDE has provided professional development sessions to school personnel where high levels of out-of-school suspension exist. The training sessions examine students' behavior with respect to intensity, duration, frequency and the sufficiency of educational supports. The trainings focus on: developing effective in-school suspension programs that are purposeful in minimizing students' time away from classroom instruction; introducing concepts that in-school suspension is part of providing a school climate that is both disciplined and

supportive; ensuring a continuum of sanctions available for students who exhibit behavior problems; and a system of strong academic and student support components.

As a result, many districts have developed in-school suspension programs that have an assigned coordinator to maintain continuity of programming and maintain relationships, instructional support offered through certified content teachers, support services staff providing counseling and social skills instruction, increased supervision through low student-to-staff ratios and communication with parents and guardians about program expectations. Through RTTT funding and the Connecticut Framework for Professional Development, the CSDE expects to leverage the above training initiatives so that school district personnel can examine their local data regarding out-of-school suspension rates and put into place stronger models of positive behavior support.

3. Developing Tomorrow's Professionals (DTP)

This program is aimed at adolescent minority males and provides specific information to participants on the essential life skills associated with mitigating the effects of racism. School principals are required to support students in taking higher-level courses and assuming school leadership roles. Participants learn to tap the full resources of the school to support personal learning and plan course-taking sequences leading to higher education requirements for college enrollment and career goal attainment. Each student is mentored by a successfully enrolled minority college student and a career businessman or professional. It has been a major component of the effort to reduce the dropout rate and improve graduation rates of students who reside in the seven largest cities.

This program has been overwhelmingly successful for the 60-80 minority males that participate each year. The DTP has proven to foster school success, prevent school drop out, increase college attendance and connect participants with careers, including public school teaching. In April 2010, more than 700 applications were submitted to be part of a new cohort of 70 students. Over the course of the RTTT our goal is to increase the program to serve a minimum of 250-300 students residing in seven towns. Through RTTT funding, the CSDE expects to increase the opportunity for participation, especially among districts with high concentrations of minority male students and conduct a program evaluation to validate its success and recommend ways for program improvement.

In 2009, at the request of parents and schools districts, the CSDE was encouraged to expand the program to support the development of initiatives to increase minority female student success. This initiative proposes to address: school academic performance, access to post-secondary professional careers, life skills development and generational and cross-generational mentoring/networking. Planning for this program will be accelerated and objectives further defined with funding from RTTT.

4. Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)

LEAs have continued to make family engagement and parent leadership training activities available in their communities. One such program, the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI), a nationally recognized program developed by the Connecticut Commission for Children, has provided leadership training for parents and families on a wide range of topics, including important competencies at being an effective parent, spouse and actively engaged citizen in one's community. Connecticut has had success in implementation of this national program and since 1992 over 1,800 parents have been recipients of the training. The state's fiscal resource to implement PLTI has been the Parent Trust Fund and through the adoption of Public Act No. 10-111, this Fund will be transferred from the Department of Social Services to the CSDE for administration. (See sections 24 to 27 of Public Act 10-111 in Appendix (A)(1)(c)). RTTT funding will leverage the state's commitment so that PLTI training will be expanded to more families in the participating LEAs. It is planned that eight regional community-based institutes per year will be held for parents to enable their development as change agents, advocates for their children and individuals who promote school practices that increase student achievement. As described in Section D-5, the CSDE will use its lever of change, the Partnership for Family and Community Engagement, to include PLTI as a critical feature of parent leadership development.

5. Early Childhood Education

Connecticut allocates significant state funds to provide direct services for children and families as well as a community planning initiative and professional development in the area of early childhood education. Section 16-o through 16-u of the CGS provides for the School Readiness Grant program, which was originally established in 1998. (See CGS sections 10-16o through 16-u in Appendix (F)(3)(a)). This program provides over $70 million for spaces in community child care programs and public school classrooms for three- and four-year-old children. Communities are eligible to receive this grant by virtue of being a Priority School District or one of the lowest 50th wealth rank towns. School Readiness Councils, consisting of co-leadership from the chief elected official and the superintendent of schools, are charged with coordinating a School Readiness program network. In addition, supplemental funds of close to $7 million are available to federally funded Head Start grantees to increase the number of children served, extend the program for children served and enhance program quality. (See CGS section 10-16n in Appendix (F)(3)(a)).

Professional development for early childhood programs is funded within available state appropriations to support implementation of intentional teaching, using standards-based instruction and assessment-based decision-making. This statewide initiative utilizes early childhood coaches to provide contextual professional learning and addresses issues unique to each setting in an effort to help teachers in School Readiness funded programs meet the unique needs of learners while being accountable for standards-based instruction.

As a means for coordinating various professional development activities of the state's workforce, Connecticut offers anyone in the Early Child Care and Education field access to a professional registry, a statewide, secure, online database that tracks the education, credentials, training and employment experience of its members. The registry captures and reports the career ladder level and qualifications of the early care and education workforce by occupation, role, program and funding source. This makes it a valuable resource for individuals, programs, state agencies, policymakers and researchers.

Other early childhood efforts offered by the state that assist in addressing the achievement gap include the availability of a child care facilities loan fund managed by the Connecticut Educational and Health Facilities Authority (CHEFA) to help ensure access to

high-quality facilities as well as the Early Childhood Education Cabinet which was designated by the Governor as the federal State Advisory Council for Early Education and Care under the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007.

The 2010-11 state budget includes $427,500 in funding that will leverage $1.2 million in private dollars for a community planning initiative for early childhood coordination to improve outcomes for young children from birth to age eight. Twenty-three towns have received private funds in the last biennium and completed community plans and are poised for implementation of local strategies. Despite a fiscal downturn in the state, funding for this program has continued and it remains an integral part of statewide collaborative efforts. The William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund and the Children's Fund of Connecticut are two private foundations that address children's issues statewide and remain committed to working with the state in a public-private partnership, which has been recognized by the National Governors Association. Within the communities, numerous United Ways, community foundations and other private foundation also contribute financial support and perhaps more importantly, remain active members of the local early childhood collaborative groups leading these efforts. Our work together has led to a commitment to build an early childhood system at both the state and local levels with communities as full partners from creating the vision to implementation.

Appendices Referenced in Section F-3

Appendix (A)(1)(c)	Public Act 10-111
Appendix (F)(3)(a)	Connecticut General Statutes on Early Childhood Education

Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority -- Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). ***(15 points, all or nothing)***

To meet this priority, the State's application must have a high-quality plan to address the need to (i) offer a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology, and engineering; (ii) cooperate with industry experts, museums, universities, research centers, or other STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines, in promoting effective and relevant instruction, and in offering applied learning opportunities for students; and (iii) prepare more students for advanced study and careers in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including by addressing the needs of underrepresented groups and of women and girls in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The competitive preference priority will be evaluated in the context of the State's entire application. Therefore, a State that is responding to this priority should address it throughout the application, as appropriate, and provide a summary of its approach to addressing the priority in the text box below. The reviewers will assess the priority as part of their review of a State's application and determine whether it has been met.

SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS (STEM) EDUCATION IN CONNECTICUT

Connecticut has long recognized the need for increased emphasis on student interest and achievement in the STEM areas. In 2002, Governor John Rowland committed $125 million in state funding to support the design and construction of the Connecticut Science Center, the state's flagship science center, in Hartford whose mission is to inspire youngsters and support teachers in making science an integral part of the curriculum. In late 2005, Governor M. Jodi Rell called for a coordinated and comprehensive plan to measurably improve PK-16 student interest and achievement in STEM to better meet Connecticut's 21st century economic development, quality of life, and workforce preparation needs. More than 100 citizens, business, policy, and education leaders contributed to crafting the 2006 CONNvene Plan that included goals and strategies for increasing student STEM interest and achievement.

Though geographically small in size, Connecticut has a large concentration of STEM businesses and industries. Particular strengths include biotechnology, pharmaceutical research and development, aerospace, stem cell research, fuel cell research and, most recently, green technologies. Our biotech sector includes corporate giants, such as Pfizer, Bristol-Myers Squibb and Boehringer

Ingelheim, as well as more than 36 startups in the last 20 years that have attracted billions in state, federal and private investment and opened doors to 63,000 Connecticut jobs. Engineering giants in the state include United Technologies Pratt & Whitney, Sikorsky Aircraft, Hamilton Sunstrand, General Electric and General Dynamics/Electric Boat.

In addition to our significant STEM industry resources and premier research universities, Yale University and the University of Connecticut (UCONN), Connecticut has a strong system of higher education, a technical high school system with STEM career clusters (Computer Technologies, Arts, Audio/Video Technology and Communication, Health Technology, and Manufacturing), 16 Agri-Science and Technology high schools that offers STEM career preparation in areas such as agri-science and marine science, and dozens of STEM-focused interdistrict magnet schools. Informal learning and work opportunities abound as well: Connecticut hosts the internationally renowned Mystic Aquarium and Institute for Learning and the Norwalk Maritime Center and is host to over 70 science museums, including the flagship, Connecticut Science Center in Hartford.

To address their deep concern about the STEM pipeline (Section (A)(1)), our elected officials and Connecticut-based STEM-related businesses, museums, research centers and higher education institutions, in collaboration with the CSDE, have invested significant resources to bolster STEM education. These efforts have included professional development for teachers, provision of engaging STEM student materials and teacher resources, and providing a variety of applied learning opportunities for students. Some of these include the following:

- $2.7 million National Science Foundation grant recently awarded to the UCONN School of Engineering to place its undergraduate and graduate students in Connecticut's 17 technical high schools to model the professional practices of engineers, while conducting research.
- $13.2 million over six years awarded to *Project Opening Doors*: Connecticut's National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) (Advanced Placement initiative).
- $40 million investment by in-state corporations, such as Pfizer, General Electric and United Technologies, in the construction of the new Connecticut Science Center that will serve 375,000 individuals and 65,000 students annually.

- $2 million investment by General Electric to support teacher professional development in inquiry science pedagogy offered by the Connecticut Science Center.
- $4 million investment by Connecticut biotechnology and pharmaceutical industry to develop biotechnology teaching materials, professional development, an equipment loan program, and a mobile laboratory (BioBus). Since 2001, the BioBus has served 445 schools, 60,000 students in grades 4-12, and more than 700 Connecticut teachers.
- $1.1 million three-year grant from Boehringer Ingelheim to develop Science Quest, an elementary science program that features curriculum units, professional development, a mobile laboratory, applied learning opportunities, an equipment loan program, and a family science activity package.
- A National Science Foundation grant to participate in Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL), managed by the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges (CCIC). This is an ongoing effort to enhance STEM faculty's teaching skills. PKAL has a large collection of online resources that provide faculty with ideas, strategies, resources and advice for engaging students in science learning. (Section (D)(5)).

Rigorous and Engaging STEM Education for All Connecticut Students -- A Coordinated and Comprehensive Effort

Despite these substantial resources and promising trends on National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) mathematics proficiency (Section (A)(3)), all of our students are not adequately prepared with the STEM skills needed for success today. Connecticut's previous STEM efforts have lacked the organizational coherence needed to link schools, colleges, and businesses into a seamless delivery system of resources and learning opportunities. To this end, we will use Race to the Top (RTTT) funding, our P-20 Shared Leadership Council, and two critical partnerships - the Partnership for Curriculum Innovation and Technology, and the Partnership for High School, College, and Workforce Alignment - to organize and secure the infrastructure needed to unite what has been a fragmented, albeit rich set of initiatives. With the Partnership for High School, College, and Workforce Alignment as our lead group, the activities described throughout this application will form the basis of a comprehensive plan for STEM education and innovation linked: to secondary school reform; magnet school innovation and expansion; technical high school and community college

collaboration; teaching excellence, and genuine engagement of all next generation learners, particularly elementary school children and underrepresented groups like girls, students of color and English language learners (ELL) students.

Connecticut's STEM goals and comprehensive plan for achieving them will allow all students to attain strong STEM skills and prepare more Connecticut students for advanced study and careers in the sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics. Components of this plan are described below and throughout our application.

21st Century STEM for Middle and High School Students

The *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* (Appendix B(3)(a)) and Public Act 10-111 (Appendix (A)(1)(c)) now mandates increased credit and specific course requirements for both math and science for high school graduation (Section (B)(3)). There is an additional requirement for at least one more credit in STEM, with the flexibility to add more credits in these areas to accommodate student interests and goals as established in individualized student success plans. Districts will be required to create plans as to how they will provide these extra classes and associated teachers (Section (D)(3)).

Model curricula and end-of-course assessments will be created (Section (B)3)), in Biological/Life Sciences, Algebra I and II, Geometry, Probability & Statistics, and hybrid courses (online and face-to-face) BIO21, CHEM21, and PHYS21, which will offer a 21st century update of traditional high school science courses (Section (D)(5)). Model curricula in Scientific Inquiry & Experimentation for students in grades 6-8 will also be developed. These model curricula and end-of-course assessments will help to ensure that every Connecticut student will take STEM courses where content is rigorous and lesson activities are relevant and engaging. Our sponsorship of 15 Board Examination pilot schools (Section (B)(3)) will secure a prominent place in our quest to make rigorous STEM content a vital part of our future curriculum linked to internationally benchmarked standards and assessments.

In order to increase the number of highly-qualified teachers in mathematics, Connecticut has established an Alternative Route to Certification (ARC) for middle and secondary mathematics teachers (Section (D)(1). In an effort to promote advanced STEM learning in schools where a highly-qualified teacher or a particular advanced STEM course may not be available, our RTTT proposal includes

scholarships for low-income students to take high-quality online STEM courses (Section (B)(3)). Our increased emphasis on advanced placement course participation included in our RTTT Memorandum of Understanding with LEAs (Appendix (A)(1)(f)) and in Project Opening Doors, also have a STEM subject emphasis.

Programs will be expanded that provide problem-based, STEM-centered, career-focused learning experiences and challenges. These efforts will be facilitated by: (1) the Center for 21st Century Skills @ Education Connection; (2) the Connecticut Career Choices (CCC) Program sponsored by the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC)**;** and (3) the Connecticut Education Network Learning Community (CENLC), an online learning management system that allows for online and hybrid course delivery, resource dissemination, online professional development, improved home-school communication and more.

The Whitney Group: A New STEM School Consortium

A critical part of Connecticut's plan will be to draw together principals from Connecticut's 27 STEM magnet schools (Appendix (G)(1)(a) to establish a new consortium to be called the **Whitney Group** (in honor of Eli Whitney, Connecticut inventor). STEM magnet school principals will be joined by the principals of Connecticut's 17 regional technical high schools and representatives from the Partnership for High School, College, and Workforce Alignment operating under the aegis of the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC). The group will meet monthly to exchange ideas, arrange for teacher exchanges, mutually plan professional development and provide best practices for STEM education to schools statewide. The Whitney Group will be assisted by the Connecticut Association of Schools and the Connecticut Academy for Education of Mathematics, Science, and Technology (CAEMST). It will be convened by November 2010 and will help with the dissemination of the CCSS for mathematics. The new CCSS for science will be released in 2011 through the National Research Council/AAAS/NSTA/Achieve Inc. collaboration, and the International Society for Technology in Education National Educational Technology Standards for Students, Teachers, and Administrators (Section (B)(3)). The ISTE et al. are internationally-agreed upon common standards that include technology and other

21st century skills. (Connecticut has already received written approval from ISTE for using these sets of standards statewide. All model curricula developed through CSDE and the Center for 21st Century Skills will include the integration of the ISTE standards.)

The Whitney Group will cooperate with industry experts, museums, universities and others to increase the availability of applied learning opportunities for students. These could include internships, work-study programs, research assistant positions and other efforts to allow students the chance to develop skills and apply learning to real world, job-embedded situations.

Additionally and as a prototype for other LEAs, the group will develop a new model for funding magnet schools via an initiative with the Danbury public schools (through business and private contributions). This model will be used by the State Board of Education's Ad Hoc Committee to Study Funding for Public School Choice Programs as part of its deliberations on better ways to support the expansion of magnet and schools statewide. Finally, the group will capitalize on the CAEMST extensive network of professional groups, such as the Connecticut Association of Physics Teachers, to assist districts in their efforts to recruit and retain effective teachers in STEM subject areas, particularly middle schools, through Crandall and Olmsted competitive grants (Section (D)(3)).

Preparing for Advanced STEM Study – Concurrent and Dual Course Enrollment

With this application, our expectation is that more of our students will be prepared for success in college-level STEM courses and rewarding STEM careers. The High School, College and Workforce Partnership described in Section (B)(3) will build and/or expand relationships between high schools and two- and four-year colleges that result in concurrent and dual course enrollment programs, particularly focusing on the STEM content areas.

Capturing Next Generation Learners

Clearly, a great STEM education requires great STEM teachers. Significant professional development will be offered to elementary teachers in effective strategies teaching mathematics and science and connecting these content areas to the other subjects they teach. Secondary STEM teachers will learn strategies to better engage and excite their students. As part of the Math-Science

Instructional Coaching Academy outlined in (D)(5), teacher leaders will be prepared to help their colleagues utilize excellent STEM teaching practices. Through the Teaching and Assessing Next Generation Learners initiative (TANGL), moreover, professional development on integrating technology and other 21st century skills will be available to all teachers, PK-12. This extensive professional development, paired with enhanced CEU requirements, will assure that all teachers who teach STEM subjects are well prepared to do so. (See Section (D)(5)

The CAEMST will also play a key role in capturing next generation learners by implementing CONNverge, a statewide, corporate funded effort aimed at helping students become more interested and engaged in mathematics and science. CONNverge's purpose is to:

1. Establish a culture where all students, especially historically under-achieving populations, understand *why* they must learn mathematics and science and accept learning as a personal responsibility; and
2. Foster stronger family support for children to succeed in challenging mathematics and science courses, and heighten teacher and community expectations that all children can and must learn more STEM to secure their future in the modern world.

Part of increasing student STEM interest is providing more STEM opportunities (Section (B)(3), including activities in-school, after-school (Section (A)(2)), at-home and in the community. Through RTTT proposed activities, all elementary schools in participating LEAs will be provided with access to online multimedia science resources designed specifically to engage young learners in the content (Section (B)(3)). Teachers will be provided with professional development in effective use of standards-based resources (Section (D)(5)). Additionally, participating LEAs have agreed through their MOU to increase STEM program offerings like the Connecticut Pre-Engineering Program (CPEP), Tech-4-All-CT, the Connecticut Girls Collaborative Project, Project Lead the Way, and regular use of the Connecticut Science Center.

Connecticut STEM Goals

CSDE and the partnerships must be focused on clear goals driven by the overarching purpose of making STEM and innovation essential parts of Connecticut's future and its future workforce. These goals will frame our coordinated, comprehensive efforts over

the next four years. We believe these goals, and the integrated activities to achieve them described here and throughout our application will move us toward rigorous and exemplary STEM education – and high student interest and achievement – statewide.

CT STEM Goal 1: Increase student interest, engagement and achievement in STEM disciplines by:

a) Providing all students with challenging and relevant STEM curriculum, instruction, and assessments;

b) Improving teachers' abilities to engage students in accessing, synthesizing and evaluating information to collaboratively solve authentic problems;

c) Providing teachers and administrators with guidance and models for integrating STEM content across subject areas and grade spans;

d) Providing students in all CT schools with equitable access to STEM resources, learning materials and highly effective teachers; and

e) Increasing awareness among students, parents, educators and the greater community on the importance of all students having strong skills in STEM subjects.

CT STEM Goal 2: Inspire and prepare more students, especially those who are traditionally underrepresented in STEM fields, for success in college-level STEM courses and rewarding STEM careers by:

a) Assuring that all students have access to a sustained, coherent and rigorous K-12 STEM education program that nurture curiosity in elementary students, inspire career interests in middle grades and foster in-depth studies in high school and

b) Increasing access to STEM opportunities, including after school and community programs, internships, apprenticeships, mentors and other authentic experiences that develop workforce competencies.

Priority 3: Invitational Priority – Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes *(not scored)*

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications that include practices, strategies, or programs to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (prekindergarten through third grade) by enhancing the quality of preschool programs. Of particular interest are proposals that support practices that (i) improve school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive); and (ii) improve the transition between preschool and kindergarten.

The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages

PRIORITY 3: INVITATIONAL PRIORITY – INNOVATIONS FOR IMPROVING EARLY LEARNING OUTCOMES

Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes

Connecticut has long sought to ensure that all of the state's youngest children grow up healthy and safe, and are ready for school success. Connecticut has historically established broad partnerships to address these issues, including state and local government, business, philanthropic and education communities, economic and workforce sectors, families and service providers. We, as a state, have been very successful in getting stakeholders to the table, but have yet to develop a system of coordinated and aligned standards, instruction, assessment and meaningful family engagement from preschool through grade 12. Connecticut serves over 24,000 three- and four-year old children in publicly funded preschool programs. This represents more than 30 percent of all 3- and 4-year old children in the state. Recognizing that growth and development begin at birth, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) can begin to address the achievement gap by structuring a system that is inclusive of high-quality preschool opportunities with a focus on attainment of "21st century" skills by all children.

In collaboration with the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet designated by Governor M. Jodi Rell as the State Advisory Council on early education and care (Section 642 B (b) (1) (A) (i), Head Start Act, 2007) the following priority areas have

been identified to improve the achievement of our youngest learners in order to ameliorate the achievement gap experienced by high-need students.

Data Systems to Support Instruction

Connecticut collects enrollment data including demographics and program information for preschool students enrolled in publically-funded preschool programs set in public schools and community childcare settings. A unique identifier is assigned to each student in these programs as well as students enrolled in Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part C – Early Intervention. As Connecticut moves forward in documenting the experiences of young children, we have identified the need for assigning a unique identifier earlier than the preschool years. There are multiple agencies/entities involved with children such as the Department of Social Services (DSS) Child Care Centers, private community based programs that are licensed by the Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Children and Families (DCF) therapeutic programs, early childhood programs operated by institutions of higher education, public and private school special education preschool programs under the CSDE and our Head Start programs, which are supported by both federal and state funds. They are currently working together to provide unique identifiers at birth. In addition, enhancing data collection to include assessment information will assist our efforts in tracking progress and proficiency across educational experiences preschool through grade 12. Creating this data warehouse will afford the opportunity for cross-referencing data for multiple purposes.

Early Learning Standards and Assessments

Connecticut has a Preschool Curriculum Framework and a Preschool Assessment Framework that address the domains of personal social, physical, cognitive and creative expression/aesthetic development. In addition, there are also content-specific grade level expectations preschool through grade 12 aligned with the Preschool Curriculum Framework. As Connecticut adopts the K-12 Common Core State Standards (CCSS) we plan to develop comprehensive and multi-domain learning standards that reflect a progression of skills birth through age 5 aligned to the CCSS. These standards will be designed for appropriate use across settings, with all children including those with disabilities and English language learners. Aligned standards will promote a common

understanding of expectations for children and strengthen the relationship between preschool and K-12. This will lead to positive and seamless transitions between preschool and kindergarten and throughout the grades. Linking early childhood standards to developmentally appropriate formative and summative assessments will provide information to improve instruction for students and focus professional development in areas of documented need.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Professional development for early childhood workers is provided through an array of in-service opportunities including limited in-depth, on-site job embedded coaching and mentoring, as well as traditional pre-service routes. We recognize a need for redesigning and expanding our current professional development delivery systems to better address the needs of teachers and administrators working with our youngest learners. This will create a high quality workforce capable of instructional decisions leading to progress and proficiency for all children. As we move forward in aligning preschool with the K-12 system it is necessary to explicitly commit to common professional development for early educators in preschool through grade 3. Shared professional development regarding early learning standards and the use of data to improve instruction will lead to common language, understanding and expectations for all children, including English language learners and other special populations considered high-need. In addition, school leaders will be provided with professional learning opportunities to increase their knowledge of the continuum of learning and instructional practices preschool to grade 3.

Family Engagement

Families are essential partners in the education of children preschool to grade 3 and beyond; they should be involved in educational programs in meaningful and culturally relevant ways. All in-service and pre-service professional development must infuse the philosophy of family as partners and provide explicit strategies for teachers and administrators to meaningfully engage and empower families. It is necessary to coordinate these efforts given Connecticut's array of organizations and programs involved with family engagement. In Connecticut we have an array of these partnerships such as the William Casper Graustein Memorial Foundation and the Annie E. Casey Foundations Early Literacy Project's partnership which is included in Section (E)(2).

Conclusion

We have outlined the four priority areas that Connecticut feels can significantly impact the educational outcomes of high-need students in school districts where the achievement gap is most persistent. As a result of increased focus on data warehousing, aligned early learning standards, professional development for great teachers and leaders and acculturating family engagement, Connecticut believes children will be afforded the opportunity for seamless transitions from preschool to grade 3. This will lead to a coordinated system that works together for progress and proficiency for all of Connecticut.

Priority 6: Invitational Priority -- School-Level Conditions for Reform, Innovation, and Learning *(not scored)*

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State's participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) seek to create the conditions for reform and innovation as well as the conditions for learning by providing schools with flexibility and autonomy in such areas as—

(i) Selecting staff;

(ii) Implementing new structures and formats for the school day or year that result in increased learning time (as defined in this notice);

(iii) Controlling the school's budget;

(iv) Awarding credit to students based on student performance instead of instructional time;

(v) Providing comprehensive services to high-need students (as defined in this notice) (*e.g.*, by mentors and other caring adults; through local partnerships with community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and other providers);

(vi) Creating school climates and cultures that remove obstacles to, and actively support, student engagement and achievement; and

(vii) Implementing strategies to effectively engage families and communities in supporting the academic success of their students.

The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages

As described in Section (F), Connecticut has created an urban school reform model grounded in innovation known as CommPACT schools. The University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education is the central clearinghouse coordinating supports within and across Connecticut's highest-need school districts: Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, New London and Waterbury. Core to the success of this reform effort is the ability to select staff, implement changes in the school day and year and create a positive school environment which engages families and promotes high student achievement.

UCONN is Connecticut's flagship public university and its Neag School of Education is well positioned as an educational research-based institution to provide the foundation for exemplary curricula designed to improve urban schools. CommPACT schools are local education agency sponsored alternative schools staffed by faculty which agree at the outset to alter parts of the collective bargaining agreement in order to improve student learning. The Neag School of Education provides each CommPACT school with a customized set of educational supports which are research-based and designed to close the achievement gap. Participating schools have utilized the following resources to improve student success: Positive Behavior Supports, Accelerated Schools Plus, Atlas Learning Communities and the Schoolwide Enrichment Model. These programs are managed by teachers, community leaders, parents and administrators who share a collective vision of sparking educational innovation through flexibility and autonomy in curriculum, governance and school finance.

Selecting key staff willing to work outside the confines of the regular school day and year is the targeted purpose of the Neag School's CommPACT school model. By conducting intensive audits of each partner school through focus group surveys, administrators, teachers, students, parents and the community are invited to express their unified vision of school improvement. Once audits are completed and analyzed, the principal and 90 percent of the teachers and local education agency administrators of the CommPACT school must agree to the prescribed road to school reform. The result of the newly established CommPACT school is ownership in an educational enterprise autonomous from the traditional local or regional board of education rooted in a high degree of collaboration.

In only two years, CommPACT schools have engaged parents and communities in eight schools by embracing a new climate and culture. Early gains have come in the form of redesigning literacy and mathematics curricula to improved student performance. Moreover, each CommPACT school site has implemented a growth model for measuring student achievement. Improved student behavior and increased parent and community engagement have set the tone for this effort. CommPACT schools have challenged the traditional school structure providing Connecticut with another rich public school choice option.