Massachusetts

Consolidated State Plan

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

April 2017

Updated August 24, 2017

U.S. Department of Education
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Contents

Consolidated State Plan Crosswalk

The table below provides a crosswalk between the original plan template released by the U.S. Department of Education in November 2016 and the revised plan template released in March 2017. **The Massachusetts plan uses the original template**, modified to include requirements that were added to the revised template.

State Plan Requirements by Program	Statutory and Regulatory Requirements	Item(s) from Revised Template	Item(s) from Original Template	Page(s) within this document
Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)	**Citation to ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, and Part 200 regulations**			
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Introduction from U.S. Department of Education

Section 8302 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)[1], permits the Secretary to establish procedures and criteria under which, after consultation with the Governor, a State educational agency (SEA) may submit a consolidated State plan designed to simplify the application requirements and reduce burden for SEAs. The Secretary must establish, for each covered program under section 8302 of the ESEA, and additional programs designated by the Secretary, the descriptions, information, assurances, and other material required to be included in a consolidated State plan.

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) encourages each State to think comprehensively about implementation of programs across the ESEA and to leverage funding to ensure a focus on equity and excellence for all students as it develops its consolidated State plan. Further, the Department aims to support collaboration and efficiency across multiple programs to help ensure that all children have significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education and that each SEA works to close achievement gaps.[2]

The Department identified five overarching components and corresponding elements that integrate the included programs and that must be addressed by each SEA electing to submit a consolidated State plan. These components encourage each SEA to plan and implement included programs in a comprehensive way to support local educational agencies (LEAs), schools, and all subgroups of students.

The sections are as follows:

1. Long-Term Goals
2. Consultation and Performance Management
3. Academic Assessments
4. Accountability, Support, and Improvement for Schools
5. Supporting Excellent Educators
6. Supporting All Students

When developing its consolidated State plan, the Department encourages each SEA to reflect on its overall vision and how the different sections of the consolidated State plan work together to create one comprehensive approach to improving outcomes for all students. The Department encourages each SEA to consider: (1) what is the SEA's vision with regard to its education system; (2) how does this plan help drive toward that vision; and (3) how will the SEA evaluate its effectiveness on an ongoing basis?

Consultation
Under ESEA section 8540, each SEA must consult in a timely and meaningful manner with the Governor, or appropriate officials from the Governor's office, including during the development and prior to submission of its consolidated State plan to the Department. A Governor shall have 30 days prior to the SEA submitting the consolidated State plan to the Secretary to sign the consolidated State plan. If the Governor has not signed the plan within 30 days of delivery by the SEA, the SEA shall submit the plan to the Department without such signature.

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[1] Unless otherwise indicated, citations to the ESEA refer to the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA.

[2] In developing its consolidated State plan, each SEA must meet the requirements section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) and describe the steps it will take to ensure equitable access to and participation in the included programs for students, teachers and other program beneficiaries with special needs.

Assurances

In order to receive fiscal year (FY) 2017 ESEA funds on July 1, 2017, for the programs that may be included in a consolidated State plan, and consistent with ESEA section 8302, each SEA must also submit a comprehensive set of assurances to the Department at a date and time established by the Secretary. In the near future, the Department will publish an information collection request that details these assurances.

Cover Page

Contact Information and Signatures	
SEA Contact (Name and Position): Carrie Conaway Chief Research and Strategy Officer	Telephone: 781-338-3108
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By signing this document, I assure that: To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information and data included in this plan are true and correct. The SEA will submit a comprehensive set of assurances at a date and time established by the Secretary, including the assurances in ESEA section 8304. Consistent with ESEA section 8302(b)(3), the SEA will meet the requirements of ESEA sections 1117 and 8501 regarding the participation of private school children and teachers.	
Authorized SEA Representative (Printed Name) Jeff Wulfson Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education	Telephone: 781-338-6500
Signature of Authorized SEA Representative	Date:

Cover Page (Original)

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By signing this document, I assure that: To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information and data included in this plan are true and correct. The SEA will submit a comprehensive set of assurances at a date and time established by the Secretary, including the assurances in ESEA section 8304. Consistent with ESEA section 8302(b)(3), the SEA will meet the requirements of ESEA sections 1117 and 8501 regarding the participation of private school children and teachers.	
Authorized SEA Representative (Printed Name) Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D. Commissioner of Elementary & Secondary Education	Telephone: 781-338-3100
Signature of Authorized SEA Representative	Date:
Governor (Printed Name) Charles D. Baker	Date SEA provided plan to the Governor under ESEA section 8540: March 8, 2017
Signature of Governor	Date:

The SEA, through its authorized representative, agrees to the enclosed assurances.

Programs Included in the Consolidated State Plan

Instructions: Indicate below by checking the appropriate box(es) which programs the SEA included in its consolidated State plan. If an SEA elected not to include one or more of the programs below in its consolidated State plan, but is eligible and still wishes to receive funds under that program or programs, it must submit individual program plans that meet all statutory requirements with its consolidated State plan in a single submission.

    ☑ Check this box if the SEA has included <u>all</u> of the following programs in its consolidated State plan.

or

If all programs are not included, check each program listed below for which the SEA is submitting an individual program State plan:

☐ Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by State and Local Educational Agencies

☐ Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children

☐ Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk

☐ Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction

☐ Title III, Part A: Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students

☐ Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

☐ Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

☐ Title V, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income School Program

☐ Title VII, Subpart B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act): Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program

Alternative Template Option

☒ Check this box if the State has developed an alternative template, consistent with the March 13 letter from Secretary DeVos to chief state school officers.

☒ Check this box if the SEA has included a Cover Sheet with its Consolidated State Plan.

☒ Check this box if the SEA has included a table of contents or guide that indicates where the SEA addressed each requirement within the U.S. Department of Education's Revised State Template for the Consolidated Plan, issued March 2017.

☒ Check this box if the SEA has worked through the Council of Chief State School Officers in developing its own template.

☒ Check this box if the SEA has included the required information regarding equitable access to, and participation in, the programs included in its consolidated State plan as required by section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act. See Appendix C.

Massachusetts ESSA Plan: Executive Summary

Introduction

With the passage of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Congress maintained the Elementary and Secondary Education Act's original focus on advancing equity and excellence for all students, particularly disadvantaged and high need students. The Act's priority areas — academic standards that represent readiness for the expectations of post-secondary education and employers; accountability, support, and improvement for schools; ensuring effective educators; supporting all students; and academic assessments that form the backbone of accountability for results — align closely to the Commonwealth's existing strategies.

Massachusetts has much to be proud of in K–12 public education. Our schools are recognized as best in class among the states, and our students perform at academic levels commensurate with the highest performing education systems in the world. Yet despite our overall success, substantial gaps in student outcomes persist in our state, and too often those gaps are correlated with students' racial/ethnic identification, family economic background, disability status, and English language proficiency.

The goal of the Massachusetts K-12 public education system is to prepare all students for success after high school. This means that all students will be prepared to successfully complete credit-bearing college courses or certificate or workplace training programs, enter economically viable career pathways, and engage as active and responsible citizens in our democracy. Our work is to broaden students' opportunities and close gaps so that all students, regardless of background, are ready for the world that awaits them after high school.

Our ESSA plan is designed to **strengthen the quality and breadth of the instructional program students experience**, as that is our major lever for ensuring success after high school for all students. This focus includes special attention to two areas where state performance has been stagnant — **early grades literacy and middle grades mathematics** — to ensure our students are well prepared with strong literacy and mathematics skills. At the high school level, we will ensure that all students have **multiple high-quality pathways to educational and career opportunities after secondary school**. These pathways will include enhanced early college opportunities, expanded access to career-technical education, and career development opportunities that link to workforce skill needs.

Massachusetts will continue our commitment to **transforming the lowest performing schools and districts** through a strategy that includes state/local partnerships, empowering school and district innovation focused on student success, and aggressive intervention authority.

We continue to focus on providing **additional supports for students who have historically struggled to attain our proficiency standard** — including English language learners, students receiving special education services, and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds—to ensure that we reach all students. Among the strategies that support this effort are leveraging technology to support instruction and attending to the social-emotional development of students.

Connections among the early education, K-12, and higher education sectors will propel our progress toward these outcomes. The higher education community is key to defining the competencies needed for success after high school and is helping to develop our academic content standards and our state assessments. As

well, the higher education community is working with the K-12 sector to expand early college opportunities. The early education sector is working with K-12 to realize a more effective early literacy agenda, as well as to strengthen the social-emotional development of young children.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education employs five overarching strategies to advance the goal of success after high school for all students:

1) Strengthen standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessments
2) Promote educator development
3) Support social-emotional learning, health, and safety
4) Turn around the lowest performing districts and schools
5) Use technology and data to support student learning

Massachusetts intends to use its ESSA implementation to refine, deepen, and accelerate our work on our five strategies and to promote coherence across our strategies through our focus on instructional quality. We will strengthen the design of our system of accountability to better identify those districts and schools making the most and least progress toward improving student outcomes, and we will improve our assistance for those farthest behind. We will also help districts reconsider how they use their people, time, and fiscal resources in support of these objectives.

We have great confidence in the ability of the Commonwealth's excellent educators and education system to successfully tackle the gaps in performance that exist and will continue to highlight and share the incredible work being done in schools and districts. Our state's success in turning around schools and districts convinces us that low achievement in high-poverty communities and neighborhoods is not pre-destined. We look forward to using the opportunity that Congress has provided through ESSA to build on what is working in Massachusetts, to curtail what is not working, and to accelerate our progress, particularly in our lowest performing schools and districts.

Our successes so far and the challenges that remain

By any measure, Massachusetts public school students are among the strongest performing in the nation and the world. Our students have scored at the top of the National Assessment of Educational Progress ("the nation's report card") tests in grades 4 and 8 English language arts and mathematics for over a decade — a result unparalleled in any other state. In the most recent Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) test of 15-year-olds, none of the 72 participating countries or territories performed higher than Massachusetts in reading, only one performed higher in science, and only 11 performed higher in mathematics. Our four-year high school graduation rates have improved steadily to 87.5 percent for the graduation cohort of 2016, and fewer than 5,600 students dropped out in the 2015–16 school year, down from nearly 10,000 in 2007–08.

While we have made strong strides in providing an excellent education in Massachusetts, we have still not attained our goal of preparing all students for success after high school. A few facts highlight the broader story:

- Although most economically viable career pathways today require at least some postsecondary education, about one-quarter of Massachusetts public high school graduates do not enroll in a college or university in the fall immediately after their high school graduation.

- Among Massachusetts public high school graduates who go on to enroll in Massachusetts public colleges and universities, more than one-third take at least one remedial, non-credit-bearing course in their first semester.

- Student performance overall is strong compared to other states and nations, but some subjects and grade spans have not shown improvement. For example, proficiency in grade 3 reading has lingered at approximately 60 percent of students for more than a decade, as has proficiency in grade 6 mathematics.

- Students who are absent from school are not experiencing the curriculum and instruction that will help prepare them for success. Yet 12 percent of students were chronically absent last year, meaning that they missed 10 percent or more of their days of enrollment in a public school.

- Exposure to a broad curriculum is an important part of a student's overall educational development. Yet at the high school level, only 72 percent of students completed MassCore, the state's recommended curriculum for college readiness. About 6 percent of elementary and middle school students took no arts course in 2015–16; at the high school level, more than 50 percent took no arts in that year.

- In 2016, 79 percent of grade 9 students completed and passed all their courses; 21 percent did not. In Massachusetts, students who do not pass all their grade 9 courses are 14 times more likely not to complete high school in four years.

- Exposure to college-level coursework while in high school has been demonstrated to increase the likelihood of success in college. Yet only 36 percent of Massachusetts public high school juniors and seniors took at least one Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate (college-level) course in 2016.

- Critically, the **students who are not experiencing these opportunities are disproportionately our historically underserved student groups**: students who are English language learners, those receiving special education services, economically disadvantaged students, and/or members of racial and ethnic minority groups. Performance for high needs students on the above indicators is substantially worse. For example, proficiency rates for high needs students in both grade 3 reading and grade 6 math are approximately 20 percentage points lower than proficiency rates for all students, cohort graduation rates for disadvantaged students in Massachusetts are 10 to 20 percentage points lower than our state averages, and these students are two to three times more likely to drop out of school.

Advancing and accelerating our state strategies while promoting greater coherence across strategies through our focus on instructional quality and breadth will help us close these gaps and move closer to our goal of success after high school for all Massachusetts public school students.

Our state strategies and connections to ESSA

1) Strengthen standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessments

The foundations of any effective statewide school reform and improvement effort are world-class academic standards to establish consistently high expectations for curriculum development and academic achievement along with valid, reliable assessments that provide educators, students, families, and the wider public with the information they need to measure progress and make sound decisions about both policy and practice.

Massachusetts has just completed revisions to its English language arts, math, and science curriculum frameworks to strengthen their rigor and improve their usefulness. We are now in the process of developing and deploying a new assessment system aligned with those standards that builds on the success of MCAS, our legacy assessment that was launched in 1998.

Over the next two years, we will closely evaluate the early results of our next-generation MCAS to ensure it is providing clear and accurate signals regarding the progress and challenges of our students and schools.

2) Promote educator development

Our expectations for student learning, the instructional program that students experience, and student success depend on the effectiveness of our educators — both teachers and administrators. Thus, our first two strategies are fundamentally intertwined, and we benefit from their synergy when we tackle them together. Our aim is that all students meet ambitious academic content standards as outlined in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks by participating in an instructional program that prepares them well for the transition after high school, provides support for them as individuals, and ensures access to great teachers and administrators. To accomplish this, we have identified four immediate priorities:

- *Priority 1*: Increase the effectiveness of first-year teachers to have an impact on students on day one and accelerate teacher impact in years two and three.

  We will advance this work under ESSA by:

  - **Strengthening educator preparation programs**. We will continue to refine our educator preparation program review process to focus on outcomes rather than inputs, including implementing performance-based assessments for teacher and principal candidates. We will encourage educator preparation programs and school districts to deepen partnerships to improve pre-service and first-year induction programs, including consideration of teacher residencies.
  - **Supporting implementation of an educator evaluation and development framework that provides educators with meaningful feedback.** The state will continue to work with districts to support strong implementation of the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework by providing guidance and resources, such as a calibration instrument that promotes shared understanding of expectations for strong instruction and conversations about effective feedback.
  - **Directing greater attention to students' learning experiences and their access to effective educators.** We will provide reports to districts that identify and compare rates at which student subgroups are taught by inexperienced, out-of-field, and ineffective teachers. We will support districts in the use of this tool through technical assistance, comprehensive video tutorials, and other resources.

- *Priority 2:* Strengthen the quality of school leadership.

  We will advance this work under ESSA by:

  - **Supporting the development of principals as instructional leaders.** The state will support principals in deepening their understanding of the curriculum frameworks and the high expectations for all students that the frameworks embody and will promote principals' role as instructional leaders by strengthening their skills in observing classroom practice, analyzing measures of student learning and teacher effectiveness, and providing timely and high-impact feedback to their faculty.

  - **Expanding the pipeline of principals able to transform high-need schools.** We will work to build a cadre of experienced principals prepared to serve in turnaround schools to expand our capacity for effective intervention and sustainable improvement in our lowest performing schools and districts.

- *Priority 3*: Increase the quality of instruction by more strongly aligning instruction to the high expectations of the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks.

  We will advance this work under ESSA by:

  - **Improving program and instructional quality in early learning.** In an effort to strengthen developmental and learning outcomes for our state's youngest students, the state will continue to address program and instructional quality for public school programs in preschool through third grade. We will continue to work collaboratively with our colleagues at the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, as we know successful connections across state agencies are critical to achieving excellence within the K-12 system. This initiative aligns with the focus of our collaborative work with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health on our State Systemic Improvement Plan for students with disabilities: improved outcomes for preschool children with disabilities. Together, we will continue to build partnerships and alignment among state agencies, public schools, and community-based preschool, after-school, and out-of-school time programs.
  - **Focusing statewide efforts on early grades literacy and middle grades mathematics: areas where student performance is relatively weak or stagnant.** The early literacy focus of our state plan will ensure that students reach upper elementary grades with strong literacy skills. The middle grades mathematics focus will ensure that greater numbers of students reach high school ready to succeed in higher level mathematics. The state will prioritize these areas for supports for and assistance to districts so that we can shift the trajectory for all students upward.
  - **Increasing student access to an ambitious, engaging, well rounded curriculum.** We will support educators in understanding the curriculum frameworks and employ high expectations for instruction. We will encourage districts to increase student access to high-quality curriculum and enrichment opportunities that include English language arts, mathematics, science, history and civics, the arts, foreign languages, computer science, physical education and health, career development education, dual-enrollment in postsecondary coursework, and alternate pathways to preparation for success after high school. We will provide guidance, technical assistance, and professional learning networks to support implementation of these initiatives for both pre-service and in-service educators. This support will include targeted support for educators working with students with disabilities and English learners. Additionally, we continue to work to ensure that our curriculum standards are up-to-date and of the highest quality. We recently updated the state's frameworks in science and technology/engineering and in digital literacy and computer science; completed a review and revision of the English language arts and literacy and mathematics

curriculum frameworks, which we hope to release this spring pending final Board approval; and began a review and revision of the state's history and social sciences curriculum frameworks. As a result of the feedback we received during our public consultation process for our ESSA plan, we are proposing to begin a review and potential revision of the state's curriculum framework for the arts, which was last updated in 1999.

- *Priority 4*: Increase student access to the supports they need to be successful in achieving the standards in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks.

We will advance this work under ESSA by:

- **Implementing more effective programs to serve the students farthest behind.** The Every Student Succeeds Act provides us with many opportunities to improve results for student groups that have historically struggled to meet proficiency standards, in particular, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, English language learners, and students receiving special education services. Through grant funding, prioritized access to resources, and program initiatives at the state and local levels, we will accelerate the improvement of our lower performing students.
- **Implementing the next-generation Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test and supporting districts as they develop common assessments.** The state is upgrading the MCAS to better measure the critical thinking skills students need for success in the 21st century. The new test, informally called the next-generation MCAS, builds upon the best aspects of the MCAS assessments that have served the Commonwealth well for the past two decades. The tests will be administered entirely via computer for grades 3-8 by 2019. We will also work with districts to help them develop assessments that are common across schools, grades, and subjects so that they can more effectively compare progress and provide consistent feedback to teachers on their students' performance.

3) *Support social-emotional learning, health, and safety*

Academic and social-emotional skills and competencies are mutually reinforcing. Thus, preparing all students for success must include attending to their social emotional and health development. We will accomplish this by promoting systems and strategies that foster safe, positive, healthy, culturally competent, and inclusive learning environments that address students' varied needs in order to improve educational outcomes for all students.

We will advance this work under ESSA by:

- **Promoting social and emotional learning (SEL).** We will promote SEL with the goal of creating conditions that will support statewide implementation of SEL programs in preschool through high school. Through participation in the Collaborating States Initiative facilitated by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), we will update and expand guidelines for implementing SEL curricula and explore ways to incorporate SEL into the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks.
- **Ensuring a positive school climate and providing safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments for all students**. We will provide training, technical assistance, access to resources and guidance to schools and districts as they consider using Title IV, Part A funds in this realm and will continue to support initiatives and resources such as the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Self-Assessment Tool, Rethinking Discipline, Bullying Prevention and Intervention,

and Substance Use and Abuse Prevention. In addition, we will encourage districts to increase student access to a broad, well-rounded curriculum that includes physical education and health (as required by state law in each grade) and will explore using a school climate indicator in our measures of school performance.

- **Promoting family engagement** as a key lever that contributes to positive outcomes for students. We will continue to find opportunities to provide training, technical assistance, resources, and guidance to schools and partners on effective family engagement strategies that promote the development of strong working relationships with families and appropriate community organizations to support students' success.

4) *Turn around the lowest performing districts and schools*

The state's lowest performing schools require evidence-based interventions and strong educators to support rapid improvement in the schools' ability to prepare their students for success. Over the past seven years, Massachusetts has used strong authorities codified in state law to implement an aggressive system of identification, support, and intervention in the state's lowest performing schools and districts. The state law emphasizes sufficient autonomy and flexibility to empower school leadership to make key decisions regarding staffing, resources, and schedules within a context of accountability for results. Under ESSA, we will continue to support and partner with districts as they strive to improve underperforming schools. Where districts are unable to implement effective improvement initiatives, we will utilize our authority under state statute to intervene.

Proposed changes to our school and district accountability system, described below, will help us prioritize which schools most need state assistance to improve student outcomes. The accountability system will identify the lowest performing 5 percent of schools, schools with the lowest performing subgroups, and high schools with four-year graduation rates below 67 percent so that those schools can be prioritized for assistance.

We will support the lowest performing schools by expanding the use of four evidence-based strategies that have emerged from seven years of research on turnaround schools in Massachusetts:

- Establish a school-wide community of practice through leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration;
- Employ intentional practices for improving instruction;
- Provide student-specific supports and instruction to all students; and
- Provide appropriate social, emotional, and behavioral supports in order to create a safe, orderly, and respectful learning environment for students and teachers.

Research on Massachusetts schools demonstrates that formerly low performing schools in our state that have changed their trajectories implement these four evidence-based practices with fidelity. Third-party partners have been necessary to provide those schools with sufficient capacity and support to accelerate transformation. The use of evidence-based practices and effective partners are the cornerstones of our turnaround strategy and guide our interactions with our lowest performing schools and districts.

We will advance this work under ESSA by:

- **Providing low-performing schools direct expert assistance, funding, research-based resources, and preferred access to professional development.** These might include coaching, professional

development focused on instructional leadership and curriculum development, planning and program implementation support, and data analysis assistance.

- **Intervening in chronically underperforming districts and schools.** In instances when all other avenues to implement ambitious and accelerated reforms have been exhausted in turnaround schools and districts, and when it is in the best interest of students, the state will place districts and schools under state receivership in accordance with state law. At present, three school districts and four schools are under receivership.
- **Supporting districts in establishing alternative governance structures for low performing schools that struggle to make rapid improvements in student achievement.** Alternative governance structures, such as Innovation Partnership Zones, keep schools within a district's control but allow for additional autonomies that may be necessary for persistently low-performing schools. To date, the Springfield Empowerment Zone has implemented an alternative governance structure to promote school improvement.

5) *Use technology and data to support teaching and learning*

We seek to improve the state's data infrastructure and promote a culture of effective data and technology use in districts and schools. We will accomplish this by investing in efforts to increase access to technology, streamlining reporting requirements, and providing resources and tools to advance effective data use and personalized learning.

We will advance this work under ESSA by:

- **Shining a light on equity and access concerns through data reporting.** The Every Student Succeeds Act requires additional reporting on school-level expenditures and access to effective educators that will provide districts with valuable information and comparisons about how they allocate resources to their lowest performing students and schools.
- **Building technological capacity and infrastructure.** The Every Student Succeeds Act funds will supplement existing state efforts to bridge the digital divide that exists among schools across the Commonwealth and expand access to high-quality digital learning opportunities, particularly for students in rural, remote, and underserved areas. We will also continue to implement the Schools Interoperability Framework to streamline and automate data reporting for districts.
- **Supporting high-quality professional development for educators to personalize learning and improve academic achievement through technology.** Through a public-private partnership, we will catalyze personalized learning in the Commonwealth to better prepare students for their future. Among other activities, the partnership will help schools pilot projects that allow students to progress through the curriculum based on demonstrated competency on the expectations set forth in the curriculum frameworks.
- **Updating and improving our Edwin Analytics tools.** Edwin Analytics is the secure system by which the state provides data reports to districts and schools. We will update the Edwin Analytics reports to report on data from the state's next-generation MCAS test and will continue to add to the bank of reports available to help districts better understand their student-level data. We will also add and update reports for educator preparation programs to strengthen their support of aspiring teachers and administrators.

Success after high school

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has a number of initiatives designed to support student access to multiple high-quality pathways to educational and career

opportunities after high school. These programs improve the quality of students' high school experiences by increasing graduation rates, exposing students to career and technical skills, and promoting postsecondary access.

We will advance this work under ESSA by:

- **Supporting use of our Early Warning Indicator System.** The state produces reports that predict the likelihood of students successfully attaining their next academic milestone throughout their K–12 and postsecondary careers. The Every Student Succeeds Act will allow us to continue to help districts identify students who are likely to be off track and provide resources to implement effective interventions.
- **Providing graduation supports for student subgroups.** The Department is developing specific tools and supports to help schools and districts increase graduation rates for students with disabilities and English learners, whose graduation rates have historically lagged behind state averages.
- **Expanding postsecondary access.** The Department continues to promote the development of early college models, including dual-enrollment programs, and partners with organizations across the state to increase the number of graduates that enroll in postsecondary education or training. We will continue to collaborate with our state partners at the Department of Higher Education to ensure that expectations, experiences, and connections between our agencies are well-aligned.
- **Expanding access to career development education, high-quality career pathways, and computer science.** The Department provides funding and technical assistance to schools, districts, and workforce investment boards to increase the number of students who participate in meaningful work-based learning while in high school. Of particular note, Massachusetts recently won a $2 million grant to accelerate the development of high-quality career pathways and help ensure that high needs students are prepared for success after graduation. In addition, following the recent adoption of a new curriculum framework on digital literacy and computer science, we plan to accelerate our focus on computer science through deployment of model curriculum units, supporting teachers in their understanding and implementation of the new curriculum frameworks, and the possible inclusion of computer science in MassCore, the Commonwealth's recommended high school course of study for college and career readiness. In all of this work, ESE seeks to build upon and expand the successes of our full-time vocational technical schools and expand access to career-technical education through cultivation of partnerships among these schools, comprehensive high schools, post-secondary institutions, and employers.

School and district accountability

The state's accountability system is our primary way of measuring each school's and district's progress toward attaining the state goal of success after high school for all students. The Every Student Succeeds Act provides us with an opportunity to refine our accountability system to better align it with ESE's goals and strategies. This will allow us to broaden the dimensions of performance we consider, as well as improve our system for assisting those schools and districts farthest behind in attaining the state's goals.

Our state's existing accountability system rests primarily on student achievement, growth, and graduation data, with an emphasis on closing gaps for historically low-performing subgroups. These data are fundamental to the educational enterprise. If students are not proficient on grade-level material and are not graduating, then schools and districts are not doing their jobs. And if not all students are performing well, the accountability system should highlight those gaps.

Our accountability system will include an accountability index through which we make distinctions in school and district effectiveness. In addition, our system will include parent-friendly school and district report cards and online profiles. We are committed to providing families and the public with a robust picture of each school and district. These online profiles and report cards will include a wider range of indicators than will be incorporated in the accountability index.

In selecting indicators to be part of the accountability index, several principles will guide our decisions:

- We will focus on academic performance (e.g., academic achievement and graduation rates) more so than on school inputs. Student learning is the core work of schools.
- We will balance robustness with simplicity and transparency. We want to be sure that the signal (academic performance) is not drowned out by noise. While more inputs paint a more complete profile of schools, we do not want the accountability index to mask schools that are struggling with basic literacy, mathematics, and science instruction. We anticipate a larger number of indicators in our school report cards and profiles than will contribute to the accountability index.
- We will ensure the validity and reliability of our accountability index so that it is technically defensible.
- We will set targets that require that each school and district stretch and continually improve.
- We will align accountability incentives for districts, schools, educators, and students to ensure that all parties are rowing in the same direction.

We will ensure an appropriate balance between expanding the elements that contribute to the accountability system on the one hand and ease of interpreting the results on the other. A key purpose of an accountability system is to identify the schools and districts that need the most assistance to bring their students up to the state's academic expectations. The system must focus attention on the schools and districts farthest behind in core academic subjects, because we have a duty to address the needs of the students in those schools. Expanding the number of measures adds dimensionality to the system, but a system with too many measures runs the risk of providing a weak signal regarding the efficacy of the academic program. We need to balance robustness with simplicity and transparency.

The Commonwealth's plan distinguishes what will be reported as components of school and district profiles, both on the public website and in school and district report cards, versus elements that will comprise the accountability metric. We have done so because of our concern that input measures essentially become prescriptions and/or mandates; because combining outcomes and inputs into a single system blurs its focus; and with little experience in measuring curricular opportunity (for example, quantity versus quality of access to a given subject) we have determined that it is premature to incorporate such elements in an accountability metric. However, we are committed to reporting publicly on curricular opportunities, and we will therefore work both internally and with the field to develop the right measures and report them in the right way on our school and district profiles website and in our school and district report cards.

We heard strong support from stakeholders for the inclusion of certain input measures, specifically access to a well-rounded curriculum including the arts, physical education, advanced coursework, computer science, career development education, and other offerings. At least in the initial years of the new accountability system, such input measures are better represented as indicators in a school or district report card so that the information is readily accessible to parents, policymakers, and the public, rather than as indicators in an accountability system.

In our proposed new accountability system, student achievement and growth and graduation data remain core measures of school and district results, and opportunity gaps for high needs students remain of paramount consideration. In addition, we propose to expand the measures included in the system to create a more comprehensive picture of student opportunity and outcomes and increase the value placed on improvement. By doing so, we intend to promote a more well-rounded view of school performance and to encourage schools and districts to focus on increasing equitable access to educational opportunities. These measures also more strongly connect to our strategies.

In keeping with the focus on excellence and equity, our proposed new system will prioritize strong outcomes for all students and closing gaps for high needs students. High needs students are defined as students who are current or former English language learners, receive special education services, and/or are economically disadvantaged.

Among the accountability index indicators (core measures) to which we are committed are:

- Students' scores on our statewide assessments
- A measure of growth to standard[3] (i.e., based on year-to-year gains, whether the student is on track to reach proficiency within two or three years)
- Gap closing by accelerating the gains of the lowest performing students
- High school graduation rates
- English learner progress and attainment of proficiency in English

Other accountability index indicators that we are considering include:

- Student engagement (e.g., attendance, chronic absenteeism)
- Dropout rates
- Successful completion of broad and challenging coursework
- Ninth grade success

These measures would be aggregated into an overall school performance index. Per the federal law, the core measures outlined above would be given much greater weight in the calculation than the additional measures. For certain measures, we may begin by including them in enhanced reporting on our school and district report cards to encourage state and local conversations about programmatic and/or policy changes, such as expanding course offerings and ensuring a well-rounded curriculum including arts, physical education, and service learning.

The accountability index would be used as the first step for classifying schools into performance levels. Each level would have an associated percentile range. But the system for designating performance levels would not be entirely relative. Every year, the state would also set out performance targets based on the measures in the index for each of the school performance levels that would encourage each school to continually improve. If a school met or exceeded those targets, it could attain that level even if its index would have otherwise placed it lower. In this way, the expectations for performance are clear and known ahead of time

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[3] We anticipate implementing a growth-to-standard measure; however if growth to standard is not technically feasible based on new statewide assessment results, we will continue to use our existing student growth percentiles.

for all schools, and performance level designations do not depend solely on the performance of other schools.

Per the requirements of the federal law, the lowest performing 5 percent of schools and high schools with four-year graduation rates below 67 percent will be identified for comprehensive support and improvement. Schools above the bottom 5 percent overall but that have very low-performing subgroups will be identified for targeted support and improvement. These schools, along with schools nearing those categories, will implement a turnaround plan to improve student performance and will be eligible for a wide variety of supports and services aligned to our evidence-based practices for school turnaround, as described above. Under our plan, a district's accountability level would be determined by the overall performance of its students rather than the level of its lowest performing school as it is currently.

An important caveat to this section of our plan is that we do not currently have state data on several of the indicators we have proposed. Most notably, we are just beginning a new statewide assessment program in the 2016–17 school year and do not yet have data on student performance under the new assessment system. Until we have data and can conduct simulations for combining multiple indicators to generate the summary measures of school and district performance, we present this section as a conceptual framework for the accountability system we plan to launch at the end of the 2017–18 school year. The academic and other indicators that we generate at the close of the 2016–17 school year will serve as a baseline for the new system.

As noted above, we will enhance our annual school and district report cards, making them more user-friendly and adding various measures of school and district performance beyond those included in the formal accountability system. Elements that we anticipate including in school and district report cards and profiles include:

- Breadth of curriculum (e.g., access to courses beyond English language arts, mathematics, science, history and civics, such as the arts, physical education, computer science, and community service)
- School-level financial allocations and expenditures
- School climate surveys
- Enrollment in career-technical education and other pathways (e.g., early college) as data become available
- Percent of high school graduates achieving the competency determination without needing Educational Proficiency Plans
- Preparedness for post-secondary success, including access to advanced coursework
- Percent of third graders achieving proficiency in reading
- Percent of sixth graders achieving proficiency in mathematics
- Data related to pre-kindergarten experience/readiness for kindergarten

Strategic resource use

In an era of increasing demands for public services as the state's population ages, the education sector will be competing with other public services for financial resources. Districts must continue to find ways to get more out of the people, time, and fiscal resources they already have to help improve outcomes for students, including by reducing inequities in the allocation of resources to different types of students. To this end, the state has created a new Office of Resource Allocation Strategy and Planning to develop new tools and supports for districts to rethink how they use their resources.

We will advance this work under ESSA by:

- **Developing a consolidated district application for federal education grants consistent with state and local priorities**. Currently districts apply separately for each of the funding sources provided for under ESSA. By creating a consolidated application connected to our state strategies, we will encourage districts to use their federal resources more strategically towards improving outcomes for all students.
- **Enhancing reports on school-level expenditures**. Massachusetts already collects school-level per-pupil data and reports the data in a limited way, but we will use ESSA as an opportunity to advance our work in this area. We have already begun pilot testing Resource Allocation and District Action Reports that use these data to provide comparisons and insights on how districts use their resources. These reports will be available statewide during the 2017–18 school year.
- **Requiring resource use reviews in the lowest performing schools.** The turnaround plan for schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and intervention will include an analysis of inequities in access to resources for students in those schools to inform the strategies included in the plan.

Ongoing review and refinement

In developing our state plan, we benefited greatly from the voluminous feedback we received from our stakeholders. We collected feedback over the course of nearly 12 months, during which we connected with nearly 200 stakeholder groups, along with hundreds of educators, parents, and students. We also conducted five public forums in fall 2016 with more than 250 participants, participated in close to 100 community meetings and presentations, and received approximately 3,200 responses to our stakeholder feedback surveys. We made numerous revisions to our plans as a result of this engagement.

During our official public comment period from early February to early March we received feedback from over 1,000 people. The overwhelming majority of those who commented (94-96 percent) expressed support for our identified focus areas: early grades literacy, middle grades mathematics, high-quality educational and career pathways for high school students, and additional supports for historically disadvantaged students. The strongest endorsement amongst respondents was for our focus on early grades literacy and additional supports for historically disadvantaged students, with three-quarters of those who commented stating that they "Strongly agree" with these focus areas.

Ninety-six percent of respondents to our February/March feedback survey expressed support for including as indicators in the accountability system access to the arts and to a broad curriculum generally, including such elements as computer science, career-technical programs, and advanced coursework. Eighty-seven percent supported the use of school climate and culture measures, 84 percent supported the inclusion of ninth grade course passing rates, and 83 percent supported including chronic absenteeism in the system. Of the six proposed indicators in the survey, ninth grade course passing rates and chronic absenteeism received the smallest number of responses indicating "strong" support. Finally, 86 percent of respondents supported our revised approach to measuring district performance whereby results for all students in the district would be used to determine the district's level as opposed to basing the determination on that of its lowest performing school. Forty-seven percent of respondents to the survey stated that the plan reflected feedback that they or the people they represent had provided, and more than half indicated that they had had sufficient opportunities to provide input on our state plan.

Our Office of Planning and Research will take the lead on ESSA implementation for ESE. Over the past six-plus years, the Office of Planning and Research has employed a sophisticated approach to monitoring and improving the quality of our implementation and refining our improvement strategies over time. This approach identifies key initiatives that support each agency strategy and develops specific plans, benchmarks, and outcomes for each. We dedicate three ESE staff to monitoring the implementation of these plans and assisting program offices with analytical and strategic capacity to extend their work. We will continue to use this method of review and continuous improvement to advance our work and hold ourselves accountable for our ongoing efforts to improve student outcomes, particularly for historically disadvantaged subgroups.

We will promote continuous improvement in districts by taking advantage of new resources we have already developed for district strategic planning, the consolidated federal grant application described above, and an enhanced focus on performance and outcomes in our program review and monitoring activities. Our Planning for Success model for district strategic planning involves three steps: creating a plan, aligning systems to the plan, and implementing the plan (including evaluating and monitoring progress). We will encourage districts to use this planning model as the structure underlying the plan we will require as part of their annual federal grant application, which will begin to help districts to establish local evaluation practices where they do not already exist. Over time, we will add in more supports to help districts evaluate their progress, particularly in conducting formal evaluations where needed as part of the language throughout ESSA that requires evidence-based interventions. This work will be driven by our new Office of Resource Allocation Strategy and Planning within the Office of Planning and Research, which has responsibility for promoting strategic resource use and grant coordination in districts and will take the lead in developing our strategy across program offices to review each district's proposed expenditures of federal funds under ESSA. Modifications to program review and monitoring activities are being led by our Office of Public School Monitoring.

As we refine our implementation of our plan, stakeholder voice and analysis of the strong work underway in Massachusetts districts and schools will continue to play a prominent role. We hold regular meetings with many of our stakeholder groups, including superintendents, principals, teachers, union leadership, school committee members, state board members, state legislators, parents, students, and so forth. Our work to promote arts education has been informed by recommendations from the state's [Creative Challenge Index](#) Commission and supported through targeted appropriations from the state legislature. We have established intentional processes that allow us to study the effectiveness of our initiatives, and we will continue to learn from local implementation efforts and make adjustments to our plans as necessary. We will continue these conversations and analyses, and also offer additional opportunities for stakeholders to provide input, particularly at key junctures when we are considering significant changes to an element of the plan.

Long-term Goals

Instructions: Each SEA must provide baseline data (i.e., starting point data), measurements of interim progress, and long-term goals for academic achievement, graduation rates, and English language proficiency. For each goal, the SEA must describe how it established its long-term goals, including its State-determined timeline for attaining such goals, consistent with the requirements in section 1111(c)(2) of the ESEA and 34 C.F.R. § 200.13. Each SEA must provide goals and measurements of interim progress for the all students group and separately for each subgroup of students, consistent with the State's minimum number of students.

In the tables below, identify the baseline (data and year) and long-term goal (data and year). If the tables do not accommodate this information, an SEA may create a new table or text box(es) within this template. Each SEA must include measurements of interim progress for academic achievement, graduation rates, and English language proficiency in Appendix A.

   A.   **Academic Achievement**.

   i.   **Description.** Describe how the SEA established its ambitious long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for improved academic achievement, including how the SEA established its State-determined timeline for attaining such goals.

   Massachusetts will be administering a new statewide assessment in grades 3-8 in the 2016-17 school year. The new assessment, the Next-Generation MCAS, will build upon the successes of both the original MCAS and Massachusetts' two-year trial of the PARCC assessments. The Next-Generation MCAS will be scored on a scale that differs from both the original MCAS and PARCC. Because baseline data from the new assessments will not be available until the summer of 2017, it is not possible for Massachusetts to determine final long-term goals for the state at this time. However, in the interim Massachusetts has set ambitious, long-term academic achievement goals for all students and all subgroups in English language arts, Mathematics and Science based on assessment results from the 2015-16 school year, and plans to apply the same methodology once Next-Generation MCAS results are available. The overall goal is consistent for all groups and subjects: reduce the proficiency gap by one-third over the next six years.

   ii.   Provide the baseline and long-term goals in the table below.

Group	Subject	2016 % Proficient or above	2017 Target	2018 Target	2019 Target	2020 Target	2021 Target	2022 Target
All students		**71.7**	**73.3**	**74.8**	**76.4**	**77.9**	**79.5**	**81.0**
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.		61.9	64.0	66.1	68.2	70.3	72.4	74.5
Asian		83.0	83.9	84.9	85.8	86.7	87.7	88.6
Afr. Amer/Black		56.3	58.7	61.1	63.5	65.9	68.3	70.7
Hispanic/Latino		52.8	55.4	58.0	60.6	63.2	65.8	68.4
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	ELA	72.2	73.7	75.3	76.8	78.3	79.8	81.4
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.		75.7	77.0	78.4	79.7	81.0	82.4	83.7
White		78.1	79.3	80.5	81.7	82.9	84.1	85.3
Econ. Disadvantaged		54.6	57.1	59.6	62.1	64.6	67.1	69.6
ELL and Former ELL		42.7	45.9	49.0	52.2	55.3	58.5	61.6
High needs		52.3	54.9	57.5	60.2	62.8	65.4	68.0
Students w/disabilities		37.6	41.0	44.5	47.9	51.3	54.8	58.2
All students		**64.1**	**66.1**	**68.0**	**70.0**	**72.0**	**74.0**	**75.9**
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.		52.6	55.2	57.8	60.4	63.0	65.6	68.2
Asian		83.4	84.3	85.2	86.1	87.1	88.0	88.9
Afr. Amer/Black		44.0	47.1	50.2	53.2	56.3	59.4	62.5
Hispanic/Latino		44.5	47.6	50.6	53.7	56.7	59.8	62.8
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	Math	64.3	66.3	68.2	70.2	72.2	74.1	76.1
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.		63.3	65.3	67.3	69.4	71.4	73.4	75.4
White		70.5	72.1	73.7	75.4	77.0	78.6	80.2
Econ. Disadvantaged		45.6	48.6	51.6	54.6	57.6	60.6	63.6
ELL and Former ELL		40.7	44.0	47.2	50.5	53.7	57.0	60.3
High needs		44.0	47.1	50.2	53.2	56.3	59.4	62.5
Students w/disabilities		30.0	33.9	37.7	41.6	45.4	49.3	53.1
All students		**54.7**	**57.2**	**59.7**	**62.2**	**64.7**	**67.2**	**69.6**
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.		42.4	45.6	48.7	51.9	55.1	58.2	61.4
Asian		70.0	71.7	73.3	75.0	76.6	78.3	79.9
Afr. Amer/Black		30.9	34.7	38.5	42.3	46.1	49.9	53.7
Hispanic/Latino		30.6	34.4	38.2	42.1	45.9	49.7	53.5
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	Science	55.7	58.1	60.6	63.0	65.4	67.9	70.3
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.		51.4	54.1	56.7	59.4	62.1	64.8	67.4
White		62.6	64.7	66.7	68.8	70.8	72.9	74.9
Econ. Disadvantaged		33.8	37.4	41.1	44.7	48.4	52.0	55.6
ELL and Former ELL		19.8	24.2	28.6	33.0	37.4	41.9	46.3
High needs		33.2	36.9	40.5	44.2	47.9	51.6	55.2
Students w/disabilities		26.5	30.5	34.6	38.6	42.7	46.7	50.8

iii. Provide the measurements of interim progress toward meeting the long-term goals for academic achievement.
Interim targets toward meeting the long-term goal for academic achievement of reducing the proficiency gap by one-third over six years are included in the table above.

iv. Describe how the long-term goals and measurements of interim progress toward the long-term goals for academic achievement take into account the improvement necessary to make significant progress in closing statewide proficiency gaps.

The proposed long-term goal and associated interim measures are designed to have all students and all subgroups aspire to the same goal (reducing the proficiency gap by one-third). In setting such a goal, those groups that are furthest behind will be required to make the largest gains and, as a result, close statewide proficiency gaps. For example, in English language arts, the gap between the all students group (71.7 percent proficient) and those students in the economically disadvantaged subgroup (54.6 percent proficient) was 17.1 percentage points in the 2015-16 school year. If each group were to cut their proficiency gap by exactly one-third in six years, the resulting gap between the all students group (81.0 percent proficient) and the economically disadvantaged group (69.6 percent proficient) would then be 11.4 percentage points.

B. Graduation Rate.
    i. **Description.** Describe how the SEA established its ambitious long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for improved four-year adjusted cohort graduation rates, including how the SEA established its State-determined timeline for attaining such goals.

Massachusetts began calculating a cohort graduation rate in 2006. At that time, 79.9 percent of the 2006 cohort graduated in four years. Since that initial calculation, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state's school districts have implemented a number of programmatic initiatives to increase the four-year cohort rate to 87.3 percent for the 2015 cohort. The most significant reason behind this increase has been a reduction in the number of dropouts in grades 9-12. Since 2007, the number of dropouts has decreased by almost 50 percent to 5,346 dropouts in 2015. This represents a dropout rate of 1.9 percent of all students in grades 9-12, the lowest rate on record in the state. Massachusetts expects this trend to continue as the state continues to support high schools developing multiple pathways for students to prepare for the college and beyond.

As part of its ESSA state plan, Massachusetts has set ambitious goals based on the strong graduation rate improvement of recent years. Since 2010, the average high school in Massachusetts has improved its four-year graduation rate by 5.0 percentage points and the state cut its "graduation gap" for the all students subgroup (the distance from a 100 percent four-year graduation rate) by 29 percent. The long-term goals associated with this plan seek to achieve the same level of improvement for all students and all subgroups over the next five years.

ii. Provide the baseline and long-term goals for the <u>four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate</u> in the table below.

Subgroup	Baseline (Data and Year)	Long-term Goal (Data and Year)
All students	87.3 (2015)	91.0 (2020)
Economically disadvantaged students	78.2 (2015)	84.5 (2020)
Children with disabilities	69.9 (2015)	78.6 (2020)
English learners	64.0 (2015)	74.4 (2020)
High Needs	78.5 (2015)	84.7 (2020)
African American/Black	77.5 (2015)	84.0 (2020)
Asian	92.4 (2015)	94.6 (2020)
Hispanic/Latino	72.2 (2015)	80.2 (2020)
American Indian/Alaska Native	79.5 (2015)	85.4 (2020)
Multi-race, Non-Hispanic	85.9 (2015)	90.0 (2020)
Native Haw./Pacific Islander	83.8 (2015)	88.5 (2020)
White	91.6 (2015)	94.0 (2020)

iii. If applicable, provide the baseline and long-term goals for each extended-year cohort graduation rate(s) and describe how the SEA established its ambitious long-term goals and measurements for such an extended-year rate or rates that are more rigorous as compared to the long-term goals and measurements of interim progress than the four-year adjusted cohort rate, including how the SEA established its State-determined timeline for attaining such goals.

Not applicable.

C. **English Language Proficiency.**
   i. **Description.** Describe the State's uniform procedure, applied consistently to all English learners in the State, to establish research-based student-level targets on which the goals and measurements of interim progress are based. The description must include:
      1. How the State considers a student's English language proficiency level at the time of identification and, if applicable, any other student characteristics that the State takes into account (*i.e.*, time in language instruction programs, grade level, age, Native language proficiency level, or limited or interrupted formal education, if any).

         All students enrolling in Massachusetts schools are given a Home Language Survey. If a language other than English appears on the survey, it is reviewed by appropriate staff at the district, and if necessary, a WIDA screening assessment of English language proficiency is administered to determine whether the student is an English learner. Staff reviewing the information presented on the Home Language Survey, or by the parent, determine the extent to which another language is present in the home, in the environment the child finds himself, or whether s/he comes from an English speaking environment where another language is also spoken regularly. Student transcripts or school records are also reviewed to determine grade level and content level placement. If it is determined that the student has a language other than English that may impact their level of English proficiency, students are

screened for English proficiency with the W-APT or MODEL screening tools. Students who score proficient on the screener are not identified as English learners, rather are considered fluent English speakers with other language background, and possibly bilingual.

If a newly enrolled student transferred from another district within Massachusetts or from another WIDA state, it is possible that he or she participated in the annual language proficiency assessment (ACCESS for ELLs). If so, and if the district is able to obtain ACCESS results of the test that was administered within the last calendar year, instead of retesting the student, district staff can use ACCESS for ELLs results in the student's records to determine his or her English language proficiency. Students from non-WIDA states and students new to Massachusetts are screened with W-APT or MODEL at the district.

English language proficiency scores, grade level, and time in an English language development program are taken into consideration when placing students in language instruction programs at the district and making determinations about level and type of service. Some ELs may have experienced interrupted or limited formal education prior to enrolling in the district. State law requires that all English learners (ELs) receive instruction that is specifically designed to meet their academic and language development needs. When a new student enrolls in a school district, it is the district's obligation to determine whether the student is an EL and to place that student in an appropriate instructional program. Similarly, districts should ensure that students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) are properly identified so that placement and other important academic decisions can be properly informed. For more information about procedures for identifying SLIFE students and programming considerations, please see the Massachusetts Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) Definition and Guidance document at http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/SLIFE-Guidance.pdf.

2. The applicable timelines over which English learners sharing particular characteristics would be expected to attain ELP within a State-determined maximum number of years and a rationale for that State-determined maximum.

    We plan to differentiate among English learners (ELs) according to their English proficiency level, at what grade they enrolled in the system, and the prior schooling. The majority of Massachusetts ELs have grown up in the Commonwealth and have attended school here since kindergarten. Other students enter the Massachusetts system after kindergarten with varying levels of English proficiency. In some cases, immigrant students enroll in the system at the secondary level and arrive with little or no English proficiency, often with limited continuous schooling before arriving in the United States.

    We anticipate that for students who grow up in the United States and enroll in Massachusetts schools by kindergarten, English proficiency should be attained by the end of grade two. For students who enter school in upper grades, their time to proficiency will be a function of their entering proficiency level, with full proficiency

anticipated within three years. For secondary grade immigrant students with little English proficiency and/or interrupted schooling, we anticipate that a specialized program to accelerate English acquisition and education will be required and may include a community college and/or vocational technical education component.

3. How the student-level targets expect all English learners to make annual progress toward attaining English language proficiency within the applicable timelines.

    Districts will continue to be held accountable for all enrolled EL students reaching proficiency within the established timeline, based on reaching their growth-to-proficiency targets.

ii. Describe how the SEA established ambitious State-designed long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for increases in the percentage of all English learners in the State making annual progress toward attaining English language proficiency based on 1.C.i. and provide the State-designed long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for English language proficiency.

The WIDA ACCESS for ELLs test is in the midst of a transition from paper and pencil to online testing. This transition requires us to carefully study the adjusted standard setting results and scales to ensure that the changes support valid determinations of progress toward proficiency, and to determine the best approach to measuring progress. Currently, we base growth-to-proficiency targets on the amount of growth needed by a student to reach English language proficiency (ACCESS Level 5) within six years in a Massachusetts school. When our ongoing transition is complete we will determine the appropriate number of years within which students will be expected to attain English language proficiency, up to the current six year basis, and the associated targets for making progress toward proficiency. We will provide additional information once this work has been completed. In the interim, Massachusetts is setting a long-term goal with interim targets based on the ACCESS for ELLs results from the 2015-16 school year. The goal will be to reduce the percentage of students that are not making sufficient progress towards English language proficiency by 50 percent over the next six years. The baseline and associated targets are detailed below.

Percent of Students Making Progress Toward English Proficiency							
Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
% Making Progress	61.8%	65.0%	68.2%	71.4%	74.6%	77.8%	81.0%

For the purposes of setting this long-term goal and interim targets, Massachusetts calculates **progress** toward English language proficiency based on the individual results of students who participated in two successive administrations of the ACCESS tests (i.e., the current and most recent year of administration), according to the following steps:

1. Set growth-to-proficiency targets for Massachusetts students, currently based on 2013 and 2014 historical data for students in the WIDA consortium, the student's number of years in a U.S. school, and proficiency level on the prior year's test.

2. Calculate and assign a Student Growth Percentile for ACCESS (SGPA), a number between 1-99, to each Massachusetts student who took ACCESS tests in two successive years, and compare the SGPA with the growth-to-proficiency target based on the prior year's proficiency level and number of years the student has attended a U.S. school (Note: "Massachusetts school" is used as a proxy for attending a U.S. school).

3. If the student's SGPA meets or exceeds the target listed in the table for a student at that proficiency level and with that many years in a Massachusetts school, then the student is on track toward attainment of English proficiency within the established number of years, and is considered to be "making progress."

iii. Provide the measurements of interim progress toward the long-term goal for increases in the percentage of English learners making progress in achieving English language proficiency.

The measurements of interim progress for English language learners toward English language proficiency are detailed in the table above.

Section 2: Consultation and Performance Management

2.1 Consultation.

Instructions: Each SEA must engage in timely and meaningful consultation with stakeholders in developing its consolidated State plan. The stakeholders must include the following individuals and entities and reflect the geographic diversity of the State:

- *The Governor or appropriate officials from the Governor's office;*
- *Members of the State legislature;*
- *Members of the State board of education, if applicable;*
- *LEAs, including LEAs in rural areas;*
- *Representatives of Indian tribes located in the State;*
- *Teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals, specialized instructional support personnel, and organizations representing such individuals;*
- *Charter school leaders, if applicable;*
- *Parents and families;*
- *Community-based organizations;*
- *Civil rights organizations, including those representing students with disabilities, English learners, and other historically underserved students;*
- *Institutions of higher education (IHEs);*
- *Employers;*
- *Representatives of private school students;*
- *Early childhood educators and leaders; and*
- *The public.*

Each SEA must provide information that is:
1. *Be in an understandable and uniform format;*
2. *Be, to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, be orally translated for such parent; and*
3. *Be, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12102, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent.*

A. **Public Notice**. Provide evidence that the SEA has provided public notice of the SEA's processes and procedures for developing and adopting its consolidated State plan.

   In addition to the activities related to outreach and input detailed below, Massachusetts published a draft version of its consolidated state plan for public comment on February 7, 2017. The official public comment period was open for 30 days, until March 9, 2017. See www.mass.gov/ese/essa.

B. **Outreach and Input**. For the components of the consolidated State plan including Challenging Academic Assessments; Accountability, Support, and Improvement for Schools; Supporting Excellent Educators; and Supporting All Students, describe how the SEA:
   i. Conducted outreach to and solicited input from the individuals and entities listed above, during the design and development of the SEA's plans to implement the programs that the SEA has indicated it will include in its consolidated State plan; and following the completion of its initial consolidated State plan by making the plan available for public comment for a period of not less than 30 days prior to submitting the consolidated State plan to the

Department for review and approval.

In preparing its ESSA plan, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) conducted an extensive outreach effort over the course of nearly a full year. From the beginning of the effort, it was our goal to hear from a broad range of stakeholders about Massachusetts' state plan. ESSA provided us an opportunity to reconsider the strategies we use to improve student outcomes, the data we use to measure school and district progress, and the types of supports and assistance we make available. As such, we organized our work into four phases: Listening Phase 1 (April to June 2016): Where we asked broad questions of our stakeholder community about their thoughts on the purpose and design of the state's accountability and assistance system, among other topics related to ESSA. Modeling (June to September 2016): Where we developed specific proposals based on the feedback we heard during the first listening phase. Listening Phase 2 (September 2016 to January 2017): Where we shared our draft proposals with stakeholders to further refine and improve them. Revising (January to March 2017): Where we incorporated a wide variety of feedback into a proposed state plan, put the plan out for public comment, and finalized the plan based on the feedback we received during public comment period.

Throughout the nearly 12 month process, we sought to gather feedback through a variety of mechanisms with the goal of maximizing stakeholder participation. We developed a master list and engaged nearly 200 stakeholder groups (advocacy organizations, civil rights organizations, affinity organizations, American Indian tribes, policy organizations, researchers, professional associations, special education organizations, community-based organizations, representatives from higher education, English Learner organizations, teachers unions, charter schools, governmental agencies, the business community, the Governor's education secretariat, state legislators, our Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, and many more) along with hundreds of educators, parents, and students from our 409 school districts and nearly 2,000 schools.

We conducted several online surveys, which we and our contacts distributed widely, which allowed anyone in the public to submit their thoughts: as of January 2017, right before the state plan went out for public comment, we had well over 1,500 combined responses to our ESSA surveys. The Department held five public forums around the Commonwealth in the fall of 2016, where we gathered a variety of feedback using a process known as brain-swarming, where every piece of feedback is discussed and/or captured in some way. Over 250 people participated in these forums, and we were pleased by the wide variety of attendees (approximately 20% parents, 20% teachers, 20% administrators, 20% advocacy groups, 20% concerned citizens). The state also held a series of focus groups for representatives of stakeholder associations who wanted to provide more detailed feedback in a discussion format. Furthermore, the state participated in close to 100 different community meetings and presentations with associations and organizations who wanted to discuss the implications of ESSA with us.

We gathered formal input from others in the state's education policy governance structure, such as the governor's office, the legislature, the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, and many of the Board's Advisory Councils, including the Accountability and

Assistance Advisory Council, Gifted and Talented Advisory Council, Family and Community Engagement Advisory Council, State Student Advisory Council, and Arts Education Advisory Council.

During our official public comment period, from early February through early March, we received 1,000 survey responses, along with scores of letters, postcards, emails, and other communications. A synthesis of the formal open comment period is included in Appendix B.

ii. Took into account the input obtained through consultation and public comment. The response must include both how the SEA addressed the concerns and issues raised through consultation and public comment and any changes the SEA made as a result of consultation and public comment for all components of the consolidated State plan.

The Department has relied on the feedback we received from our many stakeholders through the consultation we conducted starting in spring 2016. The overall design of the consultation period allowed us to maximize the feedback from our field. We looped back with our stakeholders on multiple occasions during the development of this plan, making them an integral part of the entire process. The voices of stakeholders are widely reflected on the pages of this plan.

C. **Governor's consultation**. Describe how the SEA consulted in a timely and meaningful manner with the Governor consistent with section 8540 of the ESEA, including whether officials from the SEA and the Governor's office met during the development of this plan and prior to the submission of this plan.

The Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth, appointed by Governor Baker, is an ex-officio member of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Our agency reported to the Board on a frequent basis about the ESSA state plan development process. By virtue of his position on the Board, the Governor's appointee was involved throughout the process, from the inception of the state planning, through the public comment period, and to the ultimate finalization of the plan. The Secretary and Commissioner met with Governor Baker on March 8, 2017, to discuss our consolidated state plan. Subsequent to that meeting, the Commissioner and Department staff continued to discuss details related to finalizing our state plan with the Secretary and his staff at the Executive Office of Education, who, in turn, continued consultation with the Governor and his staff. The final plan was presented to the Governor's office on March 31, and the Governor signed the plan on April 3, 2017. Since submitting our plan on April 3 we have continued to consult with the Secretary and his staff at the Executive Office of Education.

Date SEA provided the plan to the Governor: 3/8/2017

Check one:
- ☑ The Governor signed this consolidated State plan.
- ☐ The Governor did not sign this consolidated State plan.

2.2 System of Performance Management.

Instructions: In the text boxes below, each SEA must describe its system of performance management of SEA and LEA plans across all programs included in this consolidated State plan. The description of an SEA's system of performance management must include information on the SEA's review and approval of LEA plans, monitoring, continuous improvement, and technical assistance across the components of the consolidated State plan.

A. Review and Approval of LEA Plans. Describe the SEA's process for supporting the development, review, and approval of LEA plans in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements. The description should include a discussion of how the SEA will determine if LEA activities align with: 1) the specific needs of the LEA, and 2) the SEA's consolidated State plan.

The Department employs a team of skilled program specialists who have deep knowledge of federal programs. In recent years review and approval of LEA plans for Title I, Title IIA, and Title III has been conducted by Department staff working in individual program units (Title I, Title II, Title III). Beginning with review of SY17-18 LEA plans, the Department will establish cross-unit teams of staff responsible for conducting more cohesive reviews of LEA plans. Details regarding the modified review process will be finalized in spring 2017.

B. Monitoring. Describe the SEA's plan to monitor SEA and LEA implementation of the included programs to ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements. This description must include how the SEA will collect and use data and information which may include input from stakeholders and data collected and reported on State and LEA report cards (under section 1111(h) of the ESEA and applicable regulations), to assess the quality of SEA and LEA implementation of strategies and progress toward meeting the desired program outcomes.

The Department has robust monitoring procedures in place for federal programs. See here and here for documentation. Monitoring of Title III, Part A programs is further described in Section 6.2 of this plan. Massachusetts' monitoring procedures include reviews of LEA compliance with sections 1117 and 8501 of the ESEA regarding the equitable participation of private school children and teachers.

C. Continuous Improvement. Describe the SEA's plan to continuously improve SEA and LEA plans and implementation. This description must include how the SEA will collect and use data and information which may include input from stakeholders and data collected and reported on State and LEA report cards (under section 1111(h) of the ESEA and applicable regulations), to assess the quality of SEA and LEA implementation of strategies and progress toward meeting the desired program outcomes.

A plan is only as good as its implementation. ESE's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) will take the lead on ESSA implementation for the agency. Over the past six-plus years, OPR has employed a sophisticated approach to monitoring and improving the quality of our implementation and refining our improvement strategies over time. This approach identifies key initiatives that support each agency strategy and develops specific plans, benchmarks, and outcomes for each. We dedicate three ESE staff to monitoring the implementation of these plans and assisting program offices with analytical and strategic capacity to extend their work. This firmly established performance management and continuous improvement team (the delivery unit) works to make sure that all projects that are of strategic priority, such as those under ESSA, are on track.

The performance management team aims to answer four questions: What is our agency trying to

do? How are we planning to do it? At any given moment, how will we know whether we are on track? If not, what are we going to do about it? The delivery unit helps our ESE teams do exactly what is outlined in ESSA: plan the work in a thoughtful way, monitor progress towards our agency-wide priorities by collecting a wide range of data from our districts (both quantitative and qualitative). Ultimately, we intend for this rigorous process to ensure that we're meeting the goals of the program and improving outcomes for all students. With the help of the delivery unit, agency staff members determine reform strategies, set targets and trajectories for program outcomes, identify relevant stakeholders, write strategic plans, and are held accountable to deliver results. Once plans are in place, the delivery unit tracks progress, identifies challenges, solves problems early and rigorously, and keeps the Commissioner and other agency leadership informed of both progress and challenges. Routines are now firmly embedded in the work of the agency and will continue to play an important role.

Our ESSA state plan will become the basis for regular progress reports to the Commissioner and other senior staff. ESE also has a well developed budget management system to oversee and control program unit spending. While the current system has allowed the agency to successfully manage and track its various ESEA activities, we continue to improve and consolidate the system to make it more efficient and effective for our schools and districts. We will continue to use these methods of review and continuous improvement to advance our work.

Our state's strong data collection practices and analysis tools (including Edwin Analytics, District Action and Research Tools (DART), our Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS), and Resource Allocation and District Action Reports (RADAR)) will help us promote continuous improvement in districts. Additionally, we will continue to take advantage of new resources we have developed for district strategic planning, along with district consolidated federal grant applications. At the LEA level, our Planning for Success model for district strategic planning involves three steps: creating a plan, aligning systems to the plan, and implementing the plan (including evaluating and monitoring progress). We will encourage districts to use this planning model as the structure underlying the plan we will require as part of the annual federal grant application, which will begin to help districts to establish local evaluation practices where they do not already exist. Over time we plan to add in more supports to help districts evaluate their progress, particularly in conducting formal evaluations where needed and in alignment with ESSA requirements for evidence-based interventions. This work will be driven by our new Office of Resource Allocation Strategy and Planning within OPR, which has responsibility for promoting strategic resource use and grant coordination in districts.

As we refine our implementation of our plan, stakeholder voice will continue to play a prominent role. We already hold regular meetings with many of our stakeholder groups, including superintendents, principals, teachers, union leadership, school committee members, state board members, state legislators, parents, students, and others. We will continue these conversations and also offer additional opportunities for stakeholders to provide input, particularly at key junctures when we are considering significant changes to an element of the plan.

D. **Differentiated Technical Assistance**. Describe the SEA's plan to provide differentiated technical assistance to LEAs and schools to support effective implementation of SEA, LEA, and other subgrantee strategies.

ESE's framework for district accountability and assistance undergirds our statewide system of

support for districts and schools. Our system provides an array of supports, services, and opportunities for schools and districts to engage in professional learning communities focused on establishing high expectations for all students, a common language to discuss school improvement efforts, and a knowledge base from which all educators can benefit. ESE provides multiple resources and tools that are widely accessible for use by a wide array of educators and the public.

Commissioner's Districts: The state's 10 largest, highest poverty school districts, collectively known as the "Commissioner's Districts", are supported through full time liaisons, program specialists and partners with expertise in collaborating with large urban districts' considerable content and leadership infrastructure. The majority of comprehensive and targeted support and intervention schools are represented in these ten districts, and therefore the districts require an intense level of support from the Department. Support services are based on needs identified through careful examination of data and focused by research, districts' self-assessments, improvement plans, and direct observations conducted by these skilled liaisons. Additional assistance is provided by Department content experts in English language arts, mathematics, science and English language development. Further external turnaround partners and consultants, who are vetted by the Department, with documented records of accomplishment at improving outcomes for high-needs and urban students provide additional targeted supports based on need. The Commissioner's Districts include: Boston, Brockton, Fall River, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, New Bedford, Springfield and Worcester.

District and School Assistance Centers. ESE has established a network of regional assistance for those small- to medium-sized districts most in need through our six District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs). In collaboration with partner organizations, DSACs use a regional approach to support self-assessment and planning, provide regional opportunities to learn about and share effective practices; and train, model, and facilitate the use of resources and tools. Districts have a strong incentive to participate in DSAC activities because they add value and needed capacity, provide customized professional development and other supports; and serve as a venue for networking opportunities. Further, the relationship between a DSAC and a district is collaborative, not evaluative, fostering trust and an atmosphere of support. Each DSAC is led by a Regional Assistance Director (RAD), a recently retired superintendent selected based on his or her prior record of accomplishment. Most RADs have led one or more districts in the region and bring a deep understanding of the local, civic, cultural, economic, and educational context and the ability to meaningfully engage local stakeholder groups in the work. The RAD works directly with the region's superintendents, providing opportunities for honest conversations about strengths and needs. Each RAD is supported by a team that includes a former principal, a data specialist, a mathematics specialist, and a literacy specialist, with the availability of additional support from ESE specialists as needed. Each DSAC serves as a forum for regional networks of school and district teams on various topics, especially the education of English language learners and students with disabilities, and for developing strong instructional leaders. In short, the support we provide to districts is modeled on the support that a good teacher would give to their students: differentiated, personalized, and designed to bring out the best in every single one of them.

Other tools and resources available to all districts include: The District Analysis and Review Tools (DARTs) report on more than 40 quantitative indicators to allow all stakeholders to gauge the overall health of school or district. Users can track pertinent data elements over time and make sound,

meaningful comparisons to the Commonwealth or to comparable districts. The DARTs provide a snapshot of school and district trends and allows users to examine trends over the most recent five years of available data; view school- and district-level data on easily accessible graphical displays; reflect and self-evaluate; locate comparable schools and districts elsewhere in the state based on student characteristics; and make comparisons to enable a district to collaborate with a similar district that has shown promising trends.

Online models and self-assessment tools for district and school improvement that are aligned with ESE's 11 Conditions for School Effectiveness and six District Standards and Indicators; The Early Warning Indicator Index system, a data-driven system to identify high school students who are at risk of not graduating on time. ESE provides targeted grants to enhance district and regional capacity to plan, implement, and sustain practices to improve student performance that are aligned with the 11 Conditions for School Effectiveness. One of ESE's goals as an agency is to guide school and district leaders to think more strategically about how best to maximize the various grants they receive, either through entitlement or competitive opportunities; ensure that grant resources are used in ways that directly contribute to attainment of agency goals; and create new practices within the agency itself to improve ESE's practices around grant development, assessment, and award determination.

The Commonwealth's professional development programs are scaled up through the DSACs, through train-the-trainer models, and through online webinars and courses. ESE's foundational professional development course menu, offered through the DSACs and other sources, is designed to build educator effectiveness in five critical content areas: 1) instructional leadership, 2) sheltering content for English language learners, 3) inclusive instructional practices for students with disabilities, 4) mathematics, and 5) literacy. A Behavioral Health and Public Schools Self-Assessment Tool that allows districts and schools to evaluate their practices and strategies for supporting positive behavior and health of students. http://bhps321.org/.

ESE also employs a staff of knowledgeable, skilled program specialists who work to support district implementation of federal programs, including Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV.

Section 3: Academic Assessments

Instructions: As applicable, provide the information regarding a State's academic assessments in the text boxes below.

A. **Advanced Mathematics Coursework.** Does the State: 1) administer end-of-course mathematics assessments to high school students in order to meet the requirements under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA; and 2) use the exception for students in eighth grade to take such assessments under section 1111(b)(2)(C) of the ESEA?
   ☐ Yes. If yes, describe the SEA's strategies to provide all students in the State the opportunity to be prepared for and to take advanced mathematics coursework in middle school consistent with section 1111(b)(2)(C) and 34 C.F.R. § 200.5(b)(4).
   ☑ No.

   Massachusetts does not administer end-of-course mathematics assessments to high school students, nor is an exception provided to assess students in grade 8 using end-of-course mathematics assessments.

B. **Languages other than English.** Describe how the SEA is complying with the requirements in section 1111(b)(2)(F) of the ESEA in languages other than English.
   i. Provide the SEA's definition for "languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating student population" and identify the specific languages that meet that definition.

      Massachusetts defines the first language of ten percent or more of students eligible to take assessments in the State as "languages other than English that are present to a significant extent." This includes only Spanish-speaking students in Massachusetts.

   ii. Identify any existing assessments in languages other than English, and specify for which grades and content areas those assessments are available.

      Spanish/English grade 10 Mathematics MCAS tests and retests are made available to EL students who are literate in Spanish and have been in a U.S. school less than three years.

   iii. Indicate the languages other than English identified in B.i. above for which yearly student academic assessments are not available and are needed.

      Other than grade 10 Mathematics MCAS tests and retests available in Spanish/English editions, MCAS tests are available only in English. State law (Chapter 71A, Section 7) has prohibited the assessment of EL students in a language other than English: "…a standardized, nationally-normed written test of academic subject matter given in English shall be administered at least once each year to all public schoolchildren…who are English learners."

   iv. Describe how the SEA will make every effort to develop assessments, at a minimum, in languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating student population by providing:

1. The State's plan and timeline for developing such assessments;

   The state will continue to administer the grade 10 Spanish/English Mathematics test and retest. The state has conducted an internal review of the feasibility of developing Spanish-language assessments, and will pursue the development of test translations of the High School Biology and Introductory Physics tests once the next-generation high school tests are developed in 2019.

2. A description of the process the State used to gather meaningful input on the need for assessments in languages other than English, collect and respond to public comment, and consult with educators; parents and families of English learners; students, as appropriate; and other stakeholders; and

   The state has consulted with its constituents and stakeholders periodically since 2002 on the topic of developing statewide other-language assessments. Since adoption of the Every Student Succeeds Act and its focus on development of assessments in languages that are "present to a significant extent," the state will again conduct a statewide dialog on this topic and solicit input from its stakeholders.

3. As applicable, an explanation of the reasons the State has not been able to complete the development of such assessments despite making every effort.

   As a result of a binding Massachusetts ballot initiative in 2002 and resulting legislation (Chapter 71A, Section 7), Massachusetts has been prohibited from developing or administering assessments in languages other than English. The Spanish/English grade 10 Mathematics MCAS tests and retests were grandfathered, as advocated by Massachusetts stakeholders, because passage of the grade 10 mathematics test or retest is a statewide requirement to earn a Competency Determination and a high school diploma.

Section 4: Accountability, Support, and Improvement for Schools

Instructions: Each SEA must describe its accountability, support, and improvement system consistent with section 1111(c) and (d) of the ESEA. Each SEA may include documentation (e.g., technical reports or supporting evidence) that demonstrates compliance with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

4.1 Accountability System.

A. **Indicators**. Describe the measure(s) included in each of the Academic Achievement, Academic Progress, Graduation Rate, Achieving English Language Proficiency, and School Quality or Student Success indicators and how those measures meet the requirements described in section 1111(c)(4)(B) of the ESEA.

- The description for each indicator should include how it is valid, reliable, and comparable across all LEAs in the State
- for the measures included within the indicators of Academic Progress and School Quality or Student Success measures, the description must also address how each measure within the indicators is supported by research that high performance or improvement on such measure is likely to increase student learning (e.g., grade point average, credit accumulation, performance in advanced coursework).
- For measures within indicators of School Quality or Student Success that are unique to high school, the description must address how research shows that high performance or improvement on the indicator is likely to increase graduation rates, postsecondary enrollment, persistence, completion, or career readiness.
- the descriptions for the Academic Progress and School Quality or Student Success indicators must include a demonstration of how each measure aids in the meaningful differentiation of schools by demonstrating varied results across schools in the State.

Indicator	Measure(s)	Description
i. Academic Achievement	• Grades 3-8 English language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics: average scale score	In full compliance with the requirements set forth in the academic achievement section of the accountability system requirements in ESSA, Massachusetts intends to use a school's average scale score as a measurement of "proficiency" within the achievement scale. The average scale score better represents the range of scores at the district and school level. The average scale score in a district or school will indicate the degree to which all students in the school are meeting expectations. By signaling how all students in the district or school are performing, emphasis can be placed on improvement for *all* students, as opposed to the narrow focus on "proficient versus not" that results from just looking at the

Indicator	Measure(s)	Description
		percentage of students that have reached a particular cut point on an achievement scale.
		Massachusetts anticipates reporting assessment results based on four achievement levels and associated scale score ranges. For purposes of accountability reporting, the academic achievement indicators will be based on a school's average scale score, and will be centered around the "meeting expectations" scale score cut point.
		Note: Scaled score ranges associated with Next-Generation MCAS achievement levels will be available in late September 2017, after standard-setting occurs. New scaled score ranges (not yet established), will be mapped to achievement levels in a manner similar to legacy MCAS results, as shown below:
		<table><tr><th>Legacy MCAS Achievement Level</th><th>Legacy MCAS Scale Score Range</th></tr><tr><td>Advanced</td><td>260-280</td></tr><tr><td>Proficient</td><td>240-258</td></tr><tr><td>Needs Improvement</td><td>220-238</td></tr><tr><td>Warning (Grades 3-8) Failing (High School)</td><td>200-218</td></tr></table>
	• Grade 10 ELA and Math: average scale score equated to Next-Generation ELA and Math MCAS scale	Massachusetts will begin its assessment transition with grades 3-8 ELA and Mathematics in the 2016-17 school year. In an effort to report comparable data to districts, schools and the public, the grade 10 assessment scores will be equated to the Next-Generation ELA and Mathematics scale

Indicator	Measure(s)	Description
		scores until such time that the grade 10 assessments have transitioned.
ii. Academic Progress/Other Academic Indicator	• ELA and Math mean student growth percentile (SGP)	Massachusetts will continue its use of the student growth percentile (SGP) as a measure of student growth. Beginning in 2017-18, we will follow the advice of our Technical Advisory Committee and use the mean SGP as opposed to the median to better reflect the full range of growth percentiles.
	• Measure of growth to standard (to be incorporated in the future)	As Massachusetts transitions its assessment program over the coming years, we will pursue the possibility of using a growth to standard measure for public reporting and as a metric in the district and school accountability system.
	• Grades 5 and 8 Science: average scale score equated to Next-Generation ELA and Math MCAS scale	Massachusetts will begin its assessment transition with grades 3-8 ELA and Mathematics in the 2016-17 school year. In an effort to report comparable data to districts, schools and the public, the science assessment scores will be equated to the Next-Generation ELA and Mathematics scale scores until such time that the grade 10 assessments have transitioned.
iii. Graduation Rate	• Four-year cohort graduation rate	Massachusetts will continue to use the four-year graduation rate in its district and school accountability system. This rate has been calculated since 2006 and will continue to be a main driver of accountability at the high school level.
iv. Achieving English Language Proficiency	• Student attainment of English language proficiency	Using achievement results from the ACCESS for ELLs assessment, Massachusetts will use the percentage of students achieving English language proficiency as one measure for English learners (ELs).
	• Progress made by students towards attaining English language proficiency as measured by growth on the ACCESS for English language learners	Massachusetts will use the percentage of students making progress towards attaining English language proficiency as one measure for English learners (ELs). ELs enter schooling at very different points in their English language development and these differences are evident across districts. As a result, it is important to measure the progress of ELs towards English language proficiency.

Indicator	Measure(s)	Description
		Massachusetts will use a measure of student growth on the state's English language proficiency assessment, ACCESS for ELLs.
v. School Quality or Student Success	• Chronic absenteeism (all grades)	Massachusetts proposes to use a measure of chronic absenteeism as a measure of School Quality or Student Success because the district and school accountability system should incentivize a minimal loss of classroom instruction time. Chronic absenteeism will be defined as the percentage of students missing at least 10 percent of their days in membership in a school (18 days or more in a typical 180-day school calendar). This measure would be applied to all grades, with minimal exceptions granted for lost instruction time. While some absences are understandable and perhaps might be excused, ultimately the student has lost instruction time regardless of the reason. There has been significant research on the impact of absenteeism. Two examples can be found here and here.
	• Grade 10 Science: average scale score equated to Next-Generation ELA and Math MCAS scale	Massachusetts will begin its assessment transition with grades 3-8 ELA and Mathematics in the 2016-17 school year. In an effort to report comparable data to districts, schools and the public, the science assessment scores will be equated to the Next-Generation ELA and Mathematics scale scores until such time that the grade 10 assessments have transitioned.
	• Extended engagement rate (high school)	In addition to the four-year graduation rate, Massachusetts will also use an extended engagement rate in its district and school accountability system. A traditional five-year graduation rate includes only students that have received a diploma within five years of entering the assigned cohort. Massachusetts proposes to use a rate that is equal to the sum of the percentage of students that have graduated within five years plus the percentage of students that are still enrolled in school after five years.

Indicator	Measure(s)	Description
		The district and school accountability system should incentivize welcoming students back into the school environment regardless of whether they are on track to graduate in four or five years. Many high schools now have alternative programming designed for off-track students and an accountability system should reward these types of programs rather than negatively impacting schools with a traditional five-year graduation rate calculation.
	• Annual dropout rate (high school)	The graduation rate of a high school is certainly a key indicator of success. However, in a district and school accountability system that makes annual determinations, it is often difficult to make large gains in a graduation rate calculation in one year because much of the rate has been determined in grades 9-11. The number of high school dropouts on an annual basis is a significant component of the graduation rate calculation. The inclusion of the annual dropout rate in a high school accountability determination allows for a more actionable indicator for high schools on an annual basis.
	• Success in grade 9 courses (high school)	Massachusetts proposes to include success in grade 9 courses as a measure of School Quality or Student Success at the high school level. The impact of grade 9 performance is a leading indicator to student success in high school and beyond. According to the most recent data available in Massachusetts (2015), students that failed any courses in 9th grade were four times more likely to drop out of school than those students that did not. Although data validation measures will need to be put into place to guard against improper grade inflation, the importance of the measure is too critical to ignore.
	• Successful completion of broad and challenging coursework (high school)	Massachusetts proposes to include successful completion of broad and challenging coursework as a measure of School Quality or Student Success at the high school level. This indicator would measure

Indicator	Measure(s)	Description
		the percentage of all students enrolled in 11th and 12th grade that complete a broad course of study (MassCore) or achieve a passing score in challenging coursework, including but not limited to Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, honors, dual enrollment, and other advanced courses in a school year. The accountability system would incentivize student participation in these types of courses. The most recent data available in Massachusetts (2016) indicate there are varying levels of participation in and completion of advanced coursework across the state and within school districts there are equity gaps in participation across subgroups. In addition, Massachusetts PSAT, SAT and course grade data indicate that additional students are prepared for advanced coursework but are not enrolling in those courses.

B. Subgroups.

    i. List the subgroups of students from each major and racial ethnic group in the State and, as applicable, describe any additional subgroups of students used in the accountability system.

       Massachusetts will continue to use the same racial/ethnic subgroups it has used for many years in its district and school accountability system: African-American, Asian, Hispanic, Multi-race/non-Hispanic, Native American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander and White. In addition, Massachusetts will also include four subgroups of selected populations in its accountability system: economically disadvantaged, former or current English language learners (see below for details about the inclusion of former English language learners), students with disabilities and high needs students (an unduplicated count of students that appear in any one of the three selected population subgroups).

    ii. If applicable, describe the statewide uniform procedure for including former children with disabilities in the children with disabilities subgroup for purposes of calculating any indicator that uses data based on State assessment results under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I) of the ESEA and as described in 34 C.F.R. § 200.16(b), including the number of years the State includes the results of former children with disabilities.

       Not applicable.

iii. If applicable, describe the statewide uniform procedure for including former English learners in the English learner subgroup for purposes of calculating any indicator that uses data based on State assessment results under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I) of the ESEA, including the number of years the State includes the results of former English learners.

ELL students must participate in all state assessments scheduled for their grades regardless of the language program and services they are receiving or the amount of time they have been in the United States. The one exception applies to first-year ELL students. Schools have the option to administer ELA tests to first-year ELL students, provided they have also participated in ACCESS for ELLs testing. First-year ELL students must participate in MCAS Mathematics and STE tests although results will be reported only for diagnostic purposes, and will not be included in school and district summary results, or in state and federal accountability reporting. Massachusetts currently includes the results of former English language learners in its accountability results for two school years after a student transitions out of ELL status and is evaluating the possibility of increasing that timeframe to four years based on flexibility afforded under ESSA.

iv. If applicable, choose one of the following options for recently arrived English learners in the State:

☐ Applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(i); or

☐ Applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(ii); or

☐ Applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(i) or under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(ii). If this option is selected, describe how the State will choose which exception applies to a recently arrived English learner.

Massachusetts intends to explore applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(ii). We will make a final determination after reviewing 2017 MCAS and ACCESS for ELLs results.

C. Minimum Number of Students.
   i. Provide the minimum number of students for purposes of accountability that the State determines are necessary to be included in each of the subgroups of students.

   Massachusetts intends to continue its practice from recent years and implement a minimum number of students of 20 for the purposes of subgroup accountability determinations. A minimum of 20 students allows for maximum accountability while still making valid and reliable accountability determinations at the subgroup level.

   ii. If the State's minimum number of students for purposes of reporting is lower than the minimum number of students for purposes of accountability, provide that number.

   Massachusetts reports enrollment, dropout and graduation rate data for any group with at least six students and reports assessment results for any group with at least ten students.

   iii. Describe how other components of the statewide accountability system, such as the State's uniform procedure for averaging data, interact with the minimum number of students to affect the statistical reliability and soundness of accountability data and to ensure the maximum

inclusion of all students and each subgroup of students;

Requiring a minimum of 20 students and multiple years to make an accountability determination has an impact on the number of school and subgroup classifications that are able to be made. However, this loss is outweighed by the need to make valid and reliable determinations based on at least 20 students and be as comprehensive as possible by looking at multiple years of data.

iv. Describe the strategies the State uses to protect the privacy of individual students for each purpose for which disaggregated data is required, including reporting under section 1111(h) of the ESEA and the statewide accountability system under section 1111(c) of the ESEA;

Massachusetts has a long history of reporting vast amounts of data to the general public while at the same time protecting the identity and privacy of its students. Massachusetts does not report any enrollment data for a group with less than six students, does not report assessment results for any group with less than ten students and does not include any group with less than 20 students in its accountability system.

v. Provide information regarding the number and percentage of all students and students in each subgroup described in 4.B.i above for whose results schools would not be held accountable under the State's system for annual meaningful differentiation of schools;

The accountability system we propose to develop would include 99.8 percent of all students from assessed grades in the aggregate. In addition, the use of the High Needs subgroup (any student in the economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities or formerly/current English language learner subgroups) would allow over 150 additional schools to be held accountable as opposed to inclusion based on the three discreet subgroups comprising the High Needs subgroup. The individual race/ethnic and selected population subgroups percentages of students included in the accountability system assuming an N size of 20 are included below.

Group	Number of Student Enrolled in Assessed Grades	% of Students in Accountability System in Individual Subgroups
All Students	498,832	99.8%
African American	42,942	74.8%
Asian	32,519	67.6%
Hispanic/Latino	92,258	86.9%
Multi-race/Non-Hispanic	15,876	21.4%
Native American	469	3.1%
Native Hawaiian	1,082	0.0%
White	313,641	99.1%
Economically Disadvantaged	156,522	94.8%
English Language Learner	59,534	80.0%
High Needs	227,900	99.1%
Students with Disabilities	88,874	89.1%

D. Annual Meaningful Differentiation. Describe the State's system for annual meaningful differentiation of all public schools in the State, including public charter schools, consistent with the requirements of section 1111(c)(4)(C) of the ESEA.

See below.

Describe the following information with respect to the State's system of annual meaningful differentiation:
   i. The distinct and discrete levels of school performance, and how they are calculated, on each indicator in the statewide accountability system;

   The state's accountability system is our primary way of measuring each school's and district's progress on attaining the state goal of success after high school for all students. ESSA provides us with an opportunity to refine our accountability system to better align it with the agency's goals and strategies. This will allow us to broaden the dimensions of performance we consider, as well as to improve our system for assisting those schools and districts farthest behind in attaining the state's goals.

   Our state's existing accountability system rests primarily on student achievement and growth and graduation data, with an emphasis on closing gaps for historically low performing subgroups. These data are fundamental to the educational enterprise. If students are not proficient on grade-level material and are not graduating, then schools and districts are not doing their jobs. And if not all students are performing well, the accountability system should highlight those gaps.

   In our proposed new accountability system, these data remain core measures of school and district results, and opportunity gaps for high needs students remain of paramount consideration. In addition, we are expanding the measures included in the system to create a more comprehensive picture of student opportunity and outcomes, and we are increasing the value placed on improvement. By doing so, we intend to promote a more well-rounded view of school performance and to encourage schools and districts to focus on increasing equitable access to educational opportunities. These measures also more strongly connect to our agency strategies.

   In keeping with the focus on excellence and equity, our proposed new system will prioritize strong outcomes for all students and closing gaps for high needs students. High needs students are defined as students who are current or former English language learners, receive special education services, and/or are economically disadvantaged. Proposed measures to be included in the system are as follows.

   Proposed measures to be included in the system for *elementary and middle schools* are as follows:

	Status for ALL students	Gap closing for HIGH NEEDS students
Core measures	1. ELA and math scale score 2. Science performance index 3. ELA and math student growth percentile 4. ACCESS progress (English language learners)	1. ELA, math, and science gap reduction 2. ELA and math student growth percentile 3. ACCESS growth (English language learners)
Additional measures	1. Chronic student absenteeism	1. Improvement in chronic absenteeism

Proposed indicators for *high schools* are as follows:

	Status for ALL students	Gap closing for HIGH NEEDS students
Core measures	1. ELA and math scale score 2. Science performance index 3. ELA and math student growth percentile 4. ACCESS progress (English language learners) 5. Graduation and dropout rates	1. ELA, math, and science gap reduction 2. ELA and math student growth percentile 3. ACCESS growth (English language learners) 4. Graduation and dropout rate gap reduction
Additional measures	1. Chronic student absenteeism 2. Grade 9 course passing 3. Successful completion of broad and challenging coursework	1. Improvement in chronic absenteeism 2. Improvement in grade 9 course passing 3. Improvement in successful completion of broad and challenging coursework

For the academic achievement indicators (ELA and mathematics average scale score), we will calculate an achievement value that illustrates the degree of proficiency demonstrated on each assessment. The achievement value will represent the percentage of the scale score range "covered" by the average scale score for the school. This will be calculated by subtracting the lowest possible scale score from the school's average scale score, and dividing the difference by the total number of points in the scale score range.

For example, scale scores for each of the legacy MCAS tests range from 200 to 280, with a score of 240 representing "proficiency" on that subject-area assessment. A school earning an average scale score of 238 would be assigned an achievement value of 47.5, because a score of 238 represents 47.5 percent of the total scale score range. These achievement values will be multiplied by the weighting assigned to the achievement indicators as described in section (ii) below. The same practice will also be applied to the Next-Generation MCAS achievement results, once available.

Each of the remaining measures would be ranked individually and assigned a percentile based on their ranking compared to all other schools statewide. For example, the Student Growth Percentile (SGP) in English language arts (ELA) for each school across the state would be ranked from lowest to highest and assigned a percentile (1-99). This process would be used for both the status and gap-closing measure available for that school, as noted in the tables above.

The percentile rank for each measure would then be multiplied by the weightings noted in section (ii) below in the calculation of the overall accountability index. Finally, these measures would be aggregated into an overall school performance index through a methodology illustrated in the table below. Per the federal law, the core measures outlined above would be given much greater weight in the index than the additional measures. This approach differs significantly from the current accountability system due to its approach to measuring relative improvement in addition to the status of a school. The current system only looks at where a school is in relation to other schools and does not compare the amount of progress that a school has made on a given indicator.

	Status for ALL students	Gap closing for HIGH NEEDS students	Average Percentile
Core measures	Percentile A	Percentile C	Percentile E (weighted average between A and C)
Additional measures	Percentile B	Percentile D	Percentile F (weighted average between B and D)
			Final Accountability Index (weighted average between E and F)

The overall accountability index would be used as the first step for classifying schools into performance levels. Each level would have an associated index range. But, the system for designating performance levels would not be entirely relative; there would also be a secondary, criterion-referenced component of the accountability system used to assign

performance levels to schools. The state would set additional performance targets for each school, based on the measures included in the index calculation. These targets would be calculated according to what we know to be ambitious, high-level annual improvement based on historical data. Any school with an accountability index greater than 10 (e.g., those that are not among the lowest performing 10 percent of schools) would be given a set of increasingly-ambitious targets for each measure that would allow them to be categorized into a performance level that is one or more levels above where its index score would have otherwise prescribed. If a school met or exceeded those targets, it could attain that level; if not, it would be assigned the performance level associated with its index score. In this way the expectations for performance are clear and known ahead of time for all schools, and performance level designations do not depend solely on the performance of other schools.

A district's performance level would be determined by the overall performance of its students, rather than the level of its lowest performing school as it is currently. Additional measures of school and district performance beyond those in the formal accountability system would be included on a public report card to provide further insight and comparative data to the public.

ii. The weighting of each indicator, including how certain indicators receive substantial weight individually and much greater weight in the aggregate.

The tables below outline Massachusetts' current thinking regarding the weighting of indicators in the proposed accountability system. The weights are similar to those used in the state's existing school percentile methodology, with adjustments made to fulfill ESSA's requirements related to English language proficiency for English learners (ELs) and the indicator(s) of school quality or student success.

It is important to note that Massachusetts intends to review, and if necessary, adjust the proposed weights once results from the Next-Generation MCAS tests are available. These results will serve as the primary basis for modeling and simulations for the combination of the indicators. We anticipate that once we have a complete data set and conduct analyses of the options for combining the indicators, we likely will amend our plan to reflect fine-tuning of the weights identified in this submission.

Nonetheless, Massachusetts is committing to two principles regarding any future adjustments to the weighting of indicators in the proposed accountability system: (1) the core indicators (academic achievement, student growth, graduation rates and EL progress towards English language proficiency) when taken together will be weighted substantially more than any one or combined indicators of school quality or student success; and (2) the weighting of indicators in the proposed system will be consistent with our current practice where academic achievement is the most heavily weighted indicator, including in the current normative identification of the lowest performing schools in the Commonwealth where academic achievement is weighted three times that of student growth.

These two principles, which are reflected in the current submission and will be reflected in future submissions, provide the U.S. Department of Education and peer reviewers with Massachusetts's core structure and design.

High school with measurable English learner group

Indicator	Measure(s)	Weighting
Academic Achievement	• Grade 10 ELA and Math: average scale score equated to Next-Generation ELA and Math MCAS scale	33.3%
Academic Progress	• Mean student growth percentile (SGP) • Measure of growth to standard (to be incorporated in the future)	20%
Graduation Rate	• Four-year cohort graduation rate • •	5.8%
Achieving English Language Proficiency	• Student attainment of English language proficiency • Progress made by students towards attaining English language proficiency as measured by growth on the ACCESS for English language learners test	5%
School Quality or Student Success	• Grade 10 Science: Average scale score equated to Next-Generation MCAS scale • Five-year cohort graduation rate plus percentage of students still enrolled in high school • Annual dropout rate • Chronic absenteeism • Success in grade 9 courses • Successful completion of broad and challenging coursework	35.8%

High school without measurable English learner group

Indicator	Measure(s)	Weighting
Academic Achievement	• Grade 10 ELA and Math: average scale score equated to Next-Generation ELA and Math MCAS scale	33.3%
Academic Progress	• Mean student growth percentile (SGP) • Measure of growth to standard (to be incorporated in the future)	25%
Graduation Rate	• Four-year cohort graduation rate • •	5.8%
School Quality or Student Success	• Grade 10 Science: Average scale score equated to Next-Generation MCAS scale • Five-year cohort graduation rate plus percentage of students still enrolled in high school • Annual dropout rate	35.8%

Indicator	Measure(s)	Weighting
	• Chronic absenteeism	
	• Success in grade 9 courses	
	• Successful completion of broad and challenging coursework	

Non-high school with measurable English learner group

Indicator	Measure(s)	Weighting
Academic Achievement	• Grades 3-8 English language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics: average scale score	40%
	•	
Academic Progress	• Mean student growth percentile (SGP)	25%
	• Measure of growth to standard (to be incorporated in the future)	
Achieving English Language Proficiency	• Student attainment of English language proficiency	10%
	• Progress made by students towards attaining English language proficiency as measured by growth on the ACCESS for English language learners test	
School Quality or Student Success	• Grades 5 and 8 Science: average scale score equated to Next-Generation ELA and Math MCAS scale	25%
	• Chronic absenteeism	

Non-high school without measurable English learner group

Indicator	Measure(s)	Weighting
Academic Achievement	• Grades 3-8 English language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics: average scale score.	40%
	•	
Academic Progress	• Mean student growth percentile (SGP)	30%
	• Measure of growth to standard (to be incorporated in the future)	
School Quality or Student Success	• Grades 5 and 8 Science: average scale score equated to Next-Generation ELA and Math MCAS scale	30%
	• Chronic absenteeism	

iii. The summative determinations, including how they are calculated, that are provided to schools.

The final summative determinations will be made using a hybrid approach employing a normative and criterion-referenced methodology. As mentioned above, schools will first be placed in a performance level based on their accountability index range. The exact index ranges associated with different levels have not been determined but an example is included below.

Performance Level (names to be determined)	Criteria
Tier 1	Accountability Index 90-99
Tier 2	Accountability Index 50-89
Tier 3	Accountability Index 25-49
Tier 4	Accountability Index 11-24
Tier 5	Accountability Index 6-10
Tier 6	Accountability Index 1-5
Insufficient data	New or small schools

The placement into a performance level establishes a baseline level for schools and that level can change in either direction based on number of criterion-referenced factors. At the beginning of each school year, all schools will be provided with targets based on their starting point on each of the indicators included in the system. Schools that are deemed to have met the targets set (exact methodology for attaining "met" status has not been determined to date) will be eligible to move up the performance level scale by one level and those schools attaining an "exceeding" status will be eligible up two levels on the scale.

Conversely, schools are also eligible to be moved down on the performance level scale for several reasons: (1) those schools that do not meet the participation requirements would be eligible to be moved down a level on the performance scale; (2) schools that are identified for targeted support are ineligible for the top level of the scale regardless of the school percentile; and (3) schools in the bottom two levels (lowest 10% of schools statewide) would be ineligible for an improved classification thus allowing the Department to clearly determine appropriate resource allocation and other support.

iv. How the system for meaningful differentiation and the methodology for identifying schools under 34 C.F.R. § 200.19 will ensure that schools with low performance on substantially weighted indicators are more likely to be identified for comprehensive support and improvement or targeted support and improvement, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.18(c)(3) and (d)(1)(ii).

Massachusetts has not established specific weightings for the index methodology illustrated above because we do not yet have results from our new assessment system. However, the core measures (Index E) will be given much greater weight then the additional measures (Index F) for purposes of determining an overall accountability index.

E. **Participation Rate**. Describe how the State is factoring the requirement for 95 percent student participation in assessments into its system of annual meaningful differentiation of schools.

A school's summative performance level will be lowered if that school assesses less than 95% of students in the aggregate or for any subgroup that meets a minimum N size of 20.

F. Data Procedures. Describe the State's uniform procedure for averaging data, including combining data across school years, combining data across grades, or both, in a school, if applicable.

As in past years, Massachusetts will leverage multiple years of data to place schools in a level on its classification system. Due to the change in assessment, Massachusetts will only use two years of data (2016-17 and 2017-18) for its first classification under the new accountability system in 2018. In year one, each of the two years will account for 50 percent of the weight towards a summative classification. Following year one, another year of data will be added to the calculation in each of the next two years until four years of data can used. This approach is consistent with the current system in Massachusetts and allows for the most comprehensive classification of a school. At that time, the most recent year of data will account for 40 percent of the calculation, followed by 30 percent for the next most recent year (year 2), 20 percent for year 3 and 10 percent for the year four in the calculation.

G. Including All Public Schools in a State's Accountability System. If the States uses a different methodology for annual meaningful differentiation than the one described in D above for any of the following specific types of schools, describe how they are included:

i. Schools in which no grade level is assessed under the State's academic assessment system (e.g., P-2 schools), although the State is not required to administer a standardized assessment to meet this requirement;

Massachusetts currently assigns a summative classification of "Insufficient data" to schools that do not administer the statewide assessment to any students in the school. Massachusetts will assign ~~explore a protocol for assigning~~ a summative rating based on measures other than Next-Generation MCAS results in the future and commits to assigning an annual meaningful differentiation within the state accountability system for schools that have the requisite number of students (minimum N = 20).

ii. Schools with variant grade configurations (e.g., P-12 schools);

Massachusetts plans on treating schools with any tested grades in the same manner. The construct of the Next-Generation MCAS will allow us to compare achievement across grades either through the scaled score (grades 3-8) or through equating the scale of the grade 10 assessment to that of the Next-Generation MCAS.

iii. Small schools in which the total number of students who can be included in any indicator is less than the minimum number of students established by the State, consistent with a State's uniform procedures for averaging data, if applicable;

Accountability results are based on valid, reliable data. Therefore, Massachusetts will assign a summative classification of "Insufficient data" to schools that do not meet the minimum number of students required for accountability reporting (20 students). For small schools that do not meet the minimum group size for reporting in the aggregate in a given year, we

will combine student-level data starting in 2017 and in subsequent school years for each indicator until the minimum group size is met.

iv. Schools that are designed to serve special populations (e.g., students receiving alternative programming in alternative educational settings; students living in local institutions for neglected or delinquent children, including juvenile justice facilities; students enrolled in State public schools for the deaf or blind; and recently arrived English learners enrolled in public schools for newcomer students); and

Massachusetts does not currently differentiate between schools whose mission is to serve alternative populations, but plans to explore a protocol to do so for the first time following the 2017-18 school year.

v. Newly opened schools that do not have multiple years of data, consistent with a State's uniform procedure for averaging data, if applicable, for at least one indicator (e.g., a newly opened high school that has not yet graduated its first cohort for students).

Massachusetts plans to include all schools into the accountability as soon as we are able to make a valid and reliable summative determination. In most cases, this will be after two years so we can measure both status and improvement.

4.2 Identification of Schools.

A. Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools. Describe:

i. The methodologies, including the timeline, by which the State identifies schools for comprehensive support and improvement under section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i) of the ESEA and (d), including: 1) lowest-performing schools; 2) schools with low high school graduation rates; and 3) schools with chronically low-performing subgroups.

Massachusetts plans to identify schools for Comprehensive Support for the first time in the fall of 2018 (and then, in accordance with the statute, at least once every three years thereafter), using assessment results from 2016-17 and 2017-18 and graduation rates for the 2017 cohort. There will be three types of schools in need of Comprehensive Support:

1. The lowest 5 percent of schools will be identified according to the index methodology described above. Any school with an overall accountability index from 1-5 will be identified as in need of Comprehensive Support.
2. Comprehensive high schools with a 2017 four-year graduation rate lower than 67 percent will also be identified in the fall of 2018 as in need of Comprehensive Support.
3. Any school identified as having the same chronically low-performing subgroup for three consecutive years will be identified as in need of Comprehensive Support. These schools will be first identified following the 2018-19 school year.

Massachusetts intends to identify schools that receive Title I, Part A funds as in need of Comprehensive Support, as well as schools that do not receive Title I, Part A funds.

However, only Title I-served schools in need of Comprehensive Support will be eligible for Title I school improvement funding.

ii. The uniform statewide exit criteria for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement established by the State, including the number of years over which schools are expected to meet such criteria, under section 1111(d)(3)(A)(i) of the ESEA.

Exit criteria for Comprehensive Support schools will align to Massachusetts state law and regulations governing district and school accountability and assistance (603 CMR 2.00). After three years, Comprehensive Support schools must meet student performance, growth, and gap closing targets in accordance with the revised accountability system described above. In addition, prior to removing a school from Comprehensive Support status, ESE will assess if the necessary capacity and conditions are in place at both the school and district levels to sustain improvement. Schools that do not demonstrate sufficient gains to meet the exit criteria at the end of their three-year turnaround term will either remain in Comprehensive Support status or can be considered for receivership as exercised by the Commissioner under state law. The Commissioner determines which route will have the greatest impact and opportunity for sustained change in the school and district. Comprehensive Support schools past their third year of turnaround will then be assessed annually against the exit criteria.

ESE requires that each school eligible for removal from Comprehensive Support status submit "exit assurances" to the Department for review. In this application, the district must identify the flexibilities that each school intends to sustain once removed from Comprehensive Support status and the mechanisms and/or funding sources that will be used to sustain each flexibility.

B. Targeted Support and Improvement Schools. Describe:
  i. The State's methodology for identifying any school with a "consistently underperforming" subgroup of students, including the definition and time period used by the State to determine consistent underperformance.

Massachusetts will identify schools with consistently underperforming subgroups using a similar methodology that it uses in its current district and school accountability system. A school will be identified if it has one or more of the lowest performing subgroups in the state over multiple years. This status will be determined by using the same methodology that is used to determine if a school is among the lowest performing 5 percent of schools in the state. In accordance with the statute, notification will occur at least once every three years.

  ii. The State's methodology, including the timeline, for identifying schools with low-performing subgroups of students that must receive additional targeted support in accordance with section 1111(d)(2)(C) of the ESEA.

In accordance with the statute, Massachusetts will notify districts with Targeted Support and Improvement schools that also have low-performing subgroups. Low-performing subgroups will be identified using the same index methodology used to identify schools for

Comprehensive Support. Any subgroup with an overall accountability index from 1-5 will be included in the notification. In accordance with the statute, notification will occur at least once every three years.

iii. The uniform exit criteria, established by the SEA, for schools participating under Title I, Part A with low-performing subgroups of students, including the number of years over which schools are expected to meet such criteria.

As previously mentioned, Massachusetts is unable to fully specify some of the details of its proposed accountability system until all of the data are available for simulation and modeling. We anticipate that the exit criteria for targeted support schools will be similar to the current exit criteria for focus schools within our current accountability system. Those schools must meet a normative component of being above the 20th percentile within any group that led to the identification and a criterion referenced component of meeting the annual targets for the specified groups(s) in a given year to exit the status. Our exit criteria will ensure that the school demonstrates improvement and no longer meets the criteria for which it was identified. This review will occur annually after the initial notification.

4.3 State Support and Improvement for Low-performing Schools.

Overview

Massachusetts has a well-established and robust process for identifying and intervening in the lowest performing schools and districts across the state. This Consolidated State Plan under ESSA will allow the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) to integrate its state system with federal accountability and assistance requirements, and enhance supports and services to comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools.

Since 2012, ESE has commissioned research to assess what practices and conditions are most effective at promoting turnaround. In 2014, the *Turnaround Practices in Action Report*[4] illustrated the findings of that research. The report highlighted four key turnaround practices observed in schools that have shown significant and rapid gains in student achievement:

- Establish a school-wide community of practice through leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration;
- Employ intentional practices for improving instruction;
- Provide student-specific supports and instruction to all students; and
- Provide appropriate social, emotional, and behavioral supports in order to create a safe, orderly, and respectful learning environment for students and teachers.

The four turnaround practices now form the framework for all ESE support and assistance efforts for comprehensive and targeted support school, including but not limited to:

- the state-required Turnaround Plan requirements,

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[4] *2014 Turnaround Practice in Action Report*, INSTLL, LLC,
http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/turnaround/practices-report-2014.pdf

- direct technical assistance,
- competitive funding
- annual monitoring
- professional development
- turnaround partner development

Since 2014, ESE has continued this research and dissemination of best practices in turnaround schools. In 2016, in addition to an impact study, ESE released an implementation study[5] and a field guide[6] for districts and schools, which provide specific examples of turnaround practices in action at the school and district level. Based on this research, Massachusetts will continue to align its competitive grant process to these evidence-based strategies, as well as monitoring of comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools to the turnaround practices. Massachusetts will also continue to evaluate the use of school improvement resources and disseminate evidence of best practices through our Office of Effective Practices in Turnaround and the Office of Planning and Research.

A. **School Improvement Resources**. Describe how the SEA will meet its responsibilities under section 1003 of the ESEA, including the process to award school improvement funds to LEAs and monitoring and evaluating the use of funds by LEAs.

Comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools will be eligible to apply for school improvement funds through a competitive process.

A 2016 quasi-experimental study conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) showed statistically significant gains in student achievement for Massachusetts turnaround schools receiving and implementing federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding between 2011 and 2015.[7] This research gives Massachusetts strong evidence to continue to support its lowest-performing schools as was done under its former SIG program. If adequate school improvement funding is not available to sufficiently support all schools eligible for funding, Massachusetts will establish prioritization criteria for school improvement grant funds that best meets the needs of comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools in our state.

Under ESSA, Massachusetts will structure the competitive school improvement grant process around critical elements of its former SIG competitive process;
- a rigorous set of expectations aligned to the four evidence-based turnaround practices, required of applicant schools;
- applications and interviews scored on a rubric with a high bar that ensures funding is only allocated to schools that demonstrate strong capacity to implement a strategic and

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[5] *2016 Evaluation of Level 4 Turnaround Efforts in Massachusetts, Part 1: Implementation Study*, American Institutes for Research, http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/turnaround/implementation-study.pdf
[6] *2016 Turnaround Practices Field Guide*, INSTLL, LLC and American Institutes for Research, http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/turnaround/turnaround-practices-field-guide.pdf

[7] *2016 Evaluation of Level 4 Turnaround Efforts in Massachusetts, Part 2: Impact Study*, American Institutes for Research, http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/turnaround/impact-study.pdf

actionable approach based on a robust data analysis and with community involvement to implement the turnaround plan;
- alignment to state statute and regulations for low performing schools; and
- supplemented with district assistance and support by our statewide system of support aligned to the turnaround practices.

If adequate funding is available, Massachusetts will open eligibility for school improvement funds to targeted support and intervention schools, and/or allocate school improvement grant funds according to a formula that best meets the needs of comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools in our state. All school improvement grant awards, whether competitive or formulaic, will be made in alignment with the turnaround practices and take into account district capacity to effectively, sustainably, and proactively implement the practices. For low performing schools and districts that embrace the practices and conditions essential for success, ESE will provide priority consideration in the allocation of other discretionary grants (such as Expanded Learning Time) and will work with EEC to expand access to early education.

B. **Technical Assistance Regarding Evidence-Based Interventions**. Describe the technical assistance the SEA will provide to each LEA in the State serving a significant number or percentage of schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement, including how it will provide technical assistance to LEAs to ensure the effective implementation of evidence-based interventions, and, if applicable, the list of State-approved, evidence-based interventions for use in schools implementing comprehensive or targeted support and improvement plans.

The Department prioritizes resources and intervention to districts with comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools by providing:
- direct expert assistance and accountability from Department staff and its approved turnaround partners, including but not limited to coaching, professional development, planning and program implementation support, data analysis assistance,
- funding and research based resources,
- and preferred access to professional development.

The majority of these efforts are designed to enhance school and district capacity to effectively, sustainably, and proactively use proven instructional and supportive practices to boost and sustain rapid gains in student achievement. The foundation for the state assistance and intervention is the turnaround practices research conducted in Massachusetts' schools and districts that have made rapid student achievement gains. Department-funded research has further indicated that the most effective ways to improve student performance is through the faithful implementation of the turnaround practices in a coherent system for improvement.

Comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools and their districts are supported by resources from throughout the Department. However, the direct targeted assistance for turnaround in districts with comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools is overseen through the Statewide System of Support in the District Support Center. Targeted assistance is provided in a multi-pronged method that provides a customized approach based on district size, capacity, and accountability status The basic design for assisting these districts and their schools involves addressing the distinct strengths and needs of the largest urban districts from smaller ones along the following functional assistance distinctions.

Commissioner's Districts: The state's ten largest, highest poverty school districts, collectively known as the "Commissioner's Districts", are supported through full time liaisons, program specialists and partners with expertise in collaborating with large urban districts' considerable content and leadership infrastructure. The majority of comprehensive and targeted support and intervention schools are represented in these ten districts, and therefore the districts require an intense level of support from the Department. Support services are based on needs identified through careful examination of data and focused by research, districts' self-assessments, improvement plans, and direct observations conducted by these skilled liaisons. Additional assistance is provided by Department content experts in English language arts, mathematics, science and English language development. Further external turnaround partners and consultants, who are vetted by the Department, with documented records of accomplishment at improving outcomes for high-needs and urban students provide additional targeted supports based on need. The Commissioner's Districts include: Boston, Brockton, Fall River, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, New Bedford, Springfield and Worcester. The majority of Massachusetts comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools are in the Commissioner's Districts.

District and School Assistance Centers - Support to the small and medium-sized districts with comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools is delivered through District and School Assistance Centers ("DSACs") organized into six regions across the state.[2] The DSACs serve a range of struggling districts and their schools that may lack sufficient infrastructure and human resources to deliver the complex array of supports necessary to further their educational improvement efforts. DSACs are staffed by a team of experts, including former superintendents and principals, who provide experienced leadership and guidance, along with specialists in mathematics, literacy, data use, and career vocational technical education. These Department representatives, who operate as an integrated regional assistance team, offer districts a focused array of research based assistance, customizing that assistance to meet districts' and schools' specific needs aligned to the turnaround practices.

Additional Targeted Assistance Supports: The Statewide System of Support is rounded out by three additional offices that provide a variety of supports to comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools and districts. The Systems for Student Success Office (SfSS) supports turnaround schools that struggle to take a cohesive and systemic approach to supporting the social-emotional and academic needs of all their students – and especially the unique needs of students living in poverty. The SfSS office also manages a vetting process for partners to engage in supporting turnaround schools across the state. The Office of Effective Practices in Turnaround (OEPT) manages both evaluation and monitoring of turnaround efforts in comprehensive and targeted support schools, and administers federal school improvement grant funding. The Office of Strategic Transformation (OST) leads the work on managing and supporting schools and districts under state receivership.

Evidence-Based Criteria: Massachusetts has strong research to support meeting the evidence-based criteria under ESSA. As previously detailed in this section, years of high-quality research studies have shown that Massachusetts schools that implement four key turnaround practices are more

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[2] For more information about the DSACs: http://www.mass.gov/edu/government/departments-and-boards/ese/programs/accountability/support-for-level-3-4-and-5-districts-and-schools/district-and-school-resource-centers-dsac/

likely to see rapid improvements in student achievement results. A quasi-experimental study in 2016 showed statistically significant gains in student achievement for Massachusetts turnaround schools receiving and implementing federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding. These findings give Massachusetts great confidence in its approach for supporting and monitoring comprehensive and targeted intervention schools in full alignment with the turnaround practices. An annual monitoring process for comprehensive support and intervention schools provides substantial evidence of implementation of the research-based turnaround practices, from which liaisons or DSAC staff provide direct targeted assistance to districts and schools. The Department fully intends to continue commissioning further turnaround research, deepen and enhance our statewide system of support for low performing schools based on research, and disseminate evidence of best practice to comprehensive and targeted support schools.

In addition, ESE also supports district implementation of evidence-based practices by vetting vendors interested in supporting comprehensive and/or targeted support and intervention schools through its Priority Partner Initiative. This initiative is aimed at qualifying organizations from a pre-approved list of vendors to support district and school turnaround. To be approved to work with Massachusetts comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools, vendors must provide evidence of a demonstrated track record of effectiveness in accelerating school improvement. The Priority Partner Initiative is fully integrated into the state procurement process that requires frequent renewal periods to ensure vendors continue to meet the standards we require for vendors engaging in turnaround work with schools and districts.

C. **More Rigorous Interventions.** Describe the more rigorous interventions required for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement that fail to meet the State's exit criteria within a State-determined number of years consistent with section 1111(d)(3)(A)(i) of the ESEA.

Massachusetts has developed several approaches to intervening in persistently low-performing schools and districts; full state take-over through receivership, vetted educational management organizations to fully manage a school on behalf of districts or the Department, and support to districts in establishing alternative governance structures for specific schools or clusters of schools (such as Innovation Partnership Zones). In each instance of a persistently low-performing school or district, we use the approach that best meets their context and unique needs. Each district and school engaged in receivership or alternative governance structures receives prioritized assistance, support and monitoring from the Commissioner and other staff from the Department, all aligned to the research-based turnaround practices.

In instances when all other avenues to implement ambitious and accelerated reforms have been exhausted in Level 4 schools and districts and when it is in the best interest of students, the state has intervened, using legal authorities, and has placed persistently low-performing districts and schools under state receivership into Level 5 or "chronically underperforming" status. At present, three school districts and four schools are under state receivership. The Department has exercised a few different models of receivership by appointing the superintendent as receiver of a school or district and by placing a highly-qualified educational management organization as receiver. Many of these approaches are seeing results in higher student achievement, especially in Lawrence Public Schools. Since the district was placed in receivership in 2013, student proficiency rates in English language arts, mathematics and science have rose significantly, the achievement gap between English language learners and students in the aggregate has been reduced, and dramatic

improvements have been realized in graduation and drop-out rates. After three years, the four individual schools under receivership in Boston, New Bedford and Holyoke have also seen improvements in student achievement.

The Department engages in active pursuit of educational management organizations that have a demonstrated track record in successfully managing and operating low-performing schools and can demonstrate success in achieving improved outcomes for students. School Turnaround Operators are responsible for implementing well-developed models that encompass school governance and management, instructional design, staff planning, community engagement strategies, and student supports. These pre-qualified School Turnaround Operators may be selected by districts or ESE to manage or serve as receiver for persistently low-performing schools.

The Department also supports districts in establishing alternative governance structures for one or a set of schools that continue to struggle in making rapid improvements in student achievement. Alternative governance structures and Innovation Partnership Zones keep the schools within the district's control, but allow for additional autonomies, flexibilities, and compensation systems necessary for persistently low-performing schools. To date, two districts, Boston and Springfield, have negotiated alternative governance structures. To execute an alternative governance structure, districts may choose to select an educational management organization from our vetted School Turnaround Operators. Alternatively, districts may establish an Innovation Partnership Zone consisting of at least two public schools for the purpose of improving school performance and student achievement through increased autonomy and flexibility governed by a board of directors. Pending legislation for Innovation Partnership Zones may be a key resource for districts to exercise this option. Massachusetts intends to leverage this legislation and ESSA to support districts in establishing these types of alternative governance structures in districts with multiple comprehensive and targeted support and improvement schools, as well as in districts with comprehensive support and improvement schools that fail to meet the State's exit criteria.

D. **Periodic Resource Review**. Describe how the SEA will periodically review, identify, and, to the extent practicable, address any identified inequities in resources to ensure sufficient support for school improvement in each LEA in the State serving a significant number or percentage of schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement consistent with the requirements in section 1111(d)(3)(A)(ii) of the ESEA.

Before the first identification of schools for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement in SY2018-19, Massachusetts will add a process for resource review to its array of supports for LEAs serving low-performing schools. One facet of the review will include an analysis of inequities in access to resources for students as a component of a turnaround plan for a comprehensive support and improvement school with the expectation that the review will inform the strategies included in the plan.

Section 5: Supporting Excellent Educators

5.1 Educator Development, Retention, and Advancement.

Instructions: Consistent with sections 2101 and 2102 of the ESEA, if an SEA intends to use funds under one or more of the included programs for any of the following purposes, provide a description with the necessary information.

A. **Certification and Licensure Systems.** Does the SEA intend to use Title II, Part A funds or funds from other included programs for certifying and licensing teachers and principals or other school leaders?

☑ Yes. If yes, provide a description of the systems for certification and licensure below.
☐ No.

Massachusetts has been licensing educators since 1951. Our licensure system requires that educators – including teachers, support personnel, and administrators – hold a Massachusetts license for their specific role. Teachers demonstrate subject matter knowledge and skills, usually via the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL). Educators must also continue to complete professional development on an ongoing basis to maintain licensure. Additional information on Massachusetts Licensure may be found on our Educator Licensure website .

In support of setting a high bar for licensure, and therefore ensuring that novice teachers in their first year of teaching are ready to make an impact with students on their first day in the classroom, Massachusetts will effectively implement the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure. The Department manages the contract with a vendor and develops and revises tests to align with the subject matter knowledge requirements for educators. The Department has continuously sought to evolve our licensure system. As a result, the agency will continue to refine the regulation that governs the requirements for educator licensure to promote effective teachers. Massachusetts will develop and solicit feedback on licensure policies and seek approval of revised licensure regulations from the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. These regulations directly impact novice and veteran teachers, as well as educator preparation programs.

We intend to use Title IIA administrative funds to support staff deployment within the agency to work on licensure policy, including design and implementation. Our theory of action is that if we effectively support the administration of the teacher tests and build out licensure policies that set a high bar for educators, then educators will be better positioned to affect students on day one.

B. **Educator Preparation Program Strategies**. Does the SEA intend to use Title II, Part A funds or funds from other included programs to support the State's strategies to improve educator preparation programs consistent with section 2101(d)(2)(M) of the ESEA, particularly for educators of low-income and minority students?

☑ Yes. If yes, provide a description of the strategies to improve educator preparation programs below.
☐ No.

Educator Preparation provides the foothold for beginning educators to maximize their impact on student learning from the very moment they enter the classroom as novice teachers.

Over the past several years, Massachusetts has significantly shifted the expectations for educator preparation program design, review and accountability, resulting in a review process based on data, and driven by evidence, more meaningful field-based experiences, and improved assessments for educator candidates.

The four strategies the Department has used and will continue to use include:
- Require the use of performance assessments for prospective teachers and administrators
- Implement an educator preparation program review process focused on evidence of outcomes
- Use data to promote continuous improvement and transparency, including stakeholder survey data
- Foster strong partnerships between educator preparation programs and districts

First, the Department requires performance assessments for teacher and school leader candidates. The Performance Assessment for Leaders (PAL) is required for Principal licensure and a new statewide Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP is a program completion requirement for prospective teachers. The assessments hold educator preparation program providers accountable for educator performance and also emphasize the importance of preparing educators to work with students with diverse needs, backgrounds and family income levels. The CAP assesses a teacher candidate's readiness in relation to state's Professional Standards for Teachers (PSTs). CAP parallels the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation system in order to better prepare teacher candidates and ensure that they are ready to be effective on day one. It measures teacher candidates' practice across a range of key indicators as outlined in the Guidelines for the Professional Standards for Teachers, and supports prospective teachers in improving their practice based on assessment results.

Second, the Department will continue to prioritize implementing the Educator Preparation Program Approval Process, outlined in the Guidelines for Program Approval, and that emphasizes program outcomes. The review process includes an intensive off-site collection and analysis of data as well as on-site reviews.

Third, the Department will continue to release online Educator Preparation Profiles, which include public reports linking data from educator preparation to educator evaluation, employment in Massachusetts public schools, and other outcomes of program completers. Educator Preparation Profiles hold program providers accountable for teacher performance and emphasize the importance of preparing educators to work with students with diverse needs. The profiles help prospective educators to compare programs. School and district leaders can also learn about the outcomes of the programs generating applicants for local positions, so that leaders can recruit well-prepared teachers.

Additionally, the Department is implementing a suite of surveys to provide additional data to the educator preparation programs. The Department administers and analyzes four surveys that contribute to an overall picture of educator preparation programs' and new teachers' effectiveness: Candidates Survey, Supervising Practitioners Survey, Hiring Employer Survey (one year out), and Program Completer Survey (one year out).

The fourth strategy includes providing resources and support in building close formal [partnerships](#) between educator preparation programs and school districts that mutually benefit the preparation program, the school district, and the first-year teacher.

The Department plans to use Title IIA funds, non-federal funds and other sources to continue the above work.

C. **Educator Growth and Development Systems.** Does the SEA intend to use Title II, Part A funds or funds from other included programs to support the State's systems of professional growth and improvement for educators that addresses: 1) induction; 2) development, consistent with the definition of professional development in section 8002(42) of the ESEA; 3) compensation; and 4) advancement for teachers, principals, and other school leaders. This may also include how the SEA will work with LEAs in the State to develop or implement systems of professional growth and improvement, consistent with section 2102(b)(2)(B) of the ESEA; or State or local educator evaluation and support systems consistent with section 2101(c)(4)(B)(ii) of the ESEA?
☑ Yes. If yes, provide a description of the educator growth and development systems below.
☐ No.

Massachusetts intends to support the continued development and implementation of systems of professional growth and improvement for educators, including:
- Induction
- Professional growth and development system

Induction: To support the state's system of professional growth and improvement, in 2015 the Department revised the longstanding induction and mentoring guidelines. The existing regulations link beginning educator support programs, called "induction programs," to licensure by making participation in such a program one of the requirements for teachers and administrators to attain Professional License ([603 CMR 7.04 (2)(c)(b)](#)). The regulations outline basic program standards or components that are required of district induction programs ([603 CMR 7.12](#), [603 CMR 7.13](#)).

The revised [MA Induction and Mentoring Guidelines](#) have been developed to:
- assist districts in the creation and administration of their induction programs; and
- align with educator effectiveness reform initiatives.

Districts are encouraged to develop programs that meet the spirit of the standards included in the regulations while taking into account their own district needs and characteristics. The intention of this guidance is not to prescribe a specific course of action or program design, but to provide a resource to districts as they develop and refine their programs.

Since the revisions of the guidelines, the Department annually collects data from districts on their induction programs, and produces a statewide report on induction in order to describe district programs, share best practices, and understand areas of challenge. Furthermore, the report shows a snapshot of the common characteristics of statewide mentoring and induction programs, and provides information, resources and solutions that can aid districts as they continue the work of improving their mentoring and induction programs.

Specifically, the goals of the statewide annual report are to:

- Encourage district reflection on current induction and mentoring practices so districts may identify strengths and areas for further development; and
- Provide ESE with data so the agency can identify promising induction and mentoring practices to share across districts and understand areas where the agency can provide additional supports and resources to districts.

The completed 2016 Annual Induction and Mentoring Report was published in October 2016.

Educator Evaluation System: The Department supports districts in implementing their educator evaluation systems, which are aligned to the statewide Educator Evaluation Framework. The Educator Evaluation Framework is designed to provide educators with meaningful feedback on their practice and impact on students. The Framework applies to principals and other administrators, central office staff, superintendents, and teachers. In 2011, the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approved new state regulations on educator evaluation (603 CMR 35.00) in order to:
- promote growth and development among leaders and teachers;
- place student learning at the center, using multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement;
- recognize excellence in teaching and leading;
- set a high bar for professional teaching status; and
- shorten timelines for educator improvement.

The Department continues to work with districts to support educator evaluation implementation (see here for examples of educator evaluation resources the Department builds and implements); to collect and analyze data from districts on educator evaluation implementation; and to solicit and use feedback to improve the design of the Framework and supporting resources. For example, the Department will continue to promote the use of the Calibration Tool, a resource available to assist districts in supporting evaluators and educators to come to a shared understanding of expectations for instructional practices, and to build common understandings of the feedback provided to educators.

5.2 Support for Educators.

Instructions: Consistent with sections 2101 and 2102 of the ESEA, if the SEA intends to use funds under one or more of the included programs for any of the following purposes, provide a description with the necessary information.

A. **Resources to Support State-level Strategies**. Describe how the SEA will use Title II, Part A funds and funds from other included programs, consistent with allowable uses of funds provided under those programs, to support State-level strategies designed to:
   i. Increase student achievement consistent with the challenging State academic standards;
   ii. Improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders;
   iii. Increase the number of teachers, principals, and other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement in schools; and
   iv. Provide low-income and minority students greater access to effective teachers, principals, and other school leaders.

The Department will support implementation of revised English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics standards as described in the [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks](). This strategy will include resources such as "Quick Reference Guides" detailing more specific aspects of the Frameworks, links to videos of teaching of the standards, available sample assessment items, and in-person professional learning experiences through professional learning networks across the state and in-person convening of educators.

Early Literacy
The Department anticipates releasing revised English Language Arts and literacy (ELA/literacy) and mathematics learning standards in spring 2017. The implementation of the ELA/Literacy Curriculum Framework provides an opportunity for the Department to redouble our support for districts in designing effective literacy programs for students in grades Pre-K through 2 in close coordination with our partners at the state Department of Early Education and Care. To best meet the needs of districts and schools to promote early literacy success, the Department is conducting a needs assessment of the field through targeted interviews with practitioners and working with experts and stakeholders to identify research-informed approaches to early literacy instruction. Once we confirm the match made between field need and instructional support approaches, ESE will develop a program of supports, including competitive grant opportunities, teacher leadership opportunities, regional professional learning networks for teachers and administrators, statewide convenings of educators for professional learning, and web-based tools and resources. Our efforts begin with the goal of all early literacy educators in Massachusetts developing a deep understanding of the revised ELA/literacy standards to support students to attain them. This foundational knowledge of the expectations for what students should know and be able to do on the part of teachers, coupled with supports from school and district administrators will result in engaging, developmentally appropriate learning experiences that prepare all students for later academic success.

Middle Grades Math
As with the Department's attention to early literacy and its relationship to rollout of a revised ELA/Literacy Curriculum Framework, our efforts to improve instruction in middle grades mathematics will be grounded in a set of comprehensive supports to districts designed to help educators access and unpack the revised learning standards in the Mathematics Curriculum Framework to ensure students meet these standards. We have preliminarily identified as a focus deepening educators' understanding of mathematical rigor, as discussed in the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework as a balanced approach between procedural, conceptual, and applied learning/tasks and supporting educators to represent this balance in lesson and unit design. Specific to mathematics instruction in the middle grades, we intend to facilitate professional learning opportunities (e.g., regional networks, statewide professional development offerings) on how to support students to reason abstractly and quantitatively and make use of structure (two of the eight Standards for Mathematical Purpose included in the Mathematics Curriculum Framework), skills that we believe will help students develop the balance between procedure, concept, and application they will need to meaningfully engage in advanced mathematics coursework in high school and beyond. Further, we anticipate supporting educators to understand the vertical progression of the standards from the early grades through the middle grades so educators understand the progression of mathematical concepts in the standards and how to prepare students for what they will need to know and be able to do in the next grade.

The Department has been consistently focused on the equity implications and possibilities for Title IIA. Nationally, the bulk of Title IIA funding – up to 75 percent – is spent on professional development and class-size reduction, with little data as to how impactful these activities are in improving educator effectiveness.[8] We see this trend in Massachusetts, documented in an analysis of Title IIA applications facilitated by SRI International. The state FY17 Title IIA application required districts to indicate what student and/or educator outcome data they intended to use to measure the effectiveness of grant expenditures. The Department conducts Title IIA monitoring and places a focus on equity. For example, in addition to existing indicators addressing equitable distribution of in-field and effective teachers, Massachusetts added indicators to ensure that districts are implementing quality induction and mentoring and educator evaluation systems, and to identify exemplary districts or those needing technical assistance. In the technical assistance sessions, Department staff reinforces the connection between Title IIA and equity, such as how Title IIA funds can support the access of students with disabilities to effective educators under ESSA. Massachusetts's Title IIA application and review process will further promote equity and development of more effective educators beginning in FY18. For example, the Title IIA application approval will be tied to a district's submission of an approvable equity plan.

Furthermore, Massachusetts intends to leverage the ESSA provision allowing SEAs to allocate up to three percent of Title IIA funds toward a state initiative for principals and teacher leaders. ESE will fund principal and teacher ambassador fellowships, designed to strengthen the principal pipeline and build principals' effectiveness in supporting implementation of curriculum standards and supporting administrators' efficacy in the educator evaluation standards of effective administrative leadership.

Finally, Title IIA resources will support the continued development of the Student Learning Experience Report (SLE), a student-level report available to districts to analyze and understand patterns of individual students' assignment to teachers with various characteristics and proxies of effectiveness (e.g., experience, certification, ratings on educator evaluation). The SLE report will be a critical mechanism for districts to analyze student access to effective educators and will assist districts in being strategic about student assignment.

B. Skills to Address Specific Learning Needs. Describe how the SEA will improve the skills of teachers, principals, or other school leaders in identifying students with specific learning needs and providing instruction based on the needs of such students, consistent with section 2101(d)(2)(J) of the ESEA.

Many units across the Department have developed resources and guidance to improve the skills of educators in addressing specific learning needs of students, including: Social and Emotional Learning, Special Education, and English Learners. The Department will continue to work with districts to support the use of these resources:

- Educator Guidebook for Inclusive Practice: This Guidebook was created in conjunction with educators and includes tools for districts, schools, and educators that are aligned to the

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[8] McKay, S. I*mproving Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2015. Retrieved from: http://cdn.carnegiefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Title-II-expert-conveing-summary_2-6_formatted.pdf.

Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework, and that promote evidence-based best practices for inclusion following the principles of Universal Design for Learning, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, and Social and Emotional Learning.

- Foundations for Inclusive Practice Online Courses: These courses are one option for Massachusetts educators to meet the license renewal requirement related to training in strategies for effective schooling of students with disabilities and instruction of students with diverse learning styles. The courses are available at no cost to educators.

- Inclusive Practice and the Teacher Candidate: In collaboration with higher education faculty, the Department offers a three-hour sample lesson sharing evidence-based best practices for inclusion, designed to meet the needs of teacher candidates in all licensure areas.

- English Learners: The Department will continue to provide technical assistance and professional development opportunities to increase the capacity of educators to serve English Learners. We will also further the support to educators on the use of Guidance and resources on programming for English Learners. Guidance and resources include:

  o English Learner – Educator Resources
  o Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Reclassification of English Learners
  o MA Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education Definition and Guidance
  o Guidance for Defining and Implementing Two Way Immersion and Transitional Bilingual Education Programs
  o Next Generation ESL Curriculum Project: ESL Curriculum Resource Guide
  o The RETELL initiative (Rethinking Equity in the Teaching of English Language Learners) represents a commitment to address the persistent gap in academic proficiency experienced by English Learners. At the heart of this initiative are training and licensure requirements for the Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) Endorsement, which core academic teachers of English Learners and principals/assistant principals and supervisors/directors who supervise or evaluate such teachers must obtain.

- Social- emotional learning, health and safety is one of the Department's five core strategies. Massachusetts is participating in the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL's) two-year Collaborating States Initiative (CSI). The CSI is an inter-state partnership on the development of policies, guidelines, learning standards or goals to support statewide implementation of social and emotional learning (SEL).

While the needs and approaches of supporting social and emotional outcomes vary from district to district, the Department intends to partner with our stakeholders to establish a common language and shared vision of positive social and emotional competencies for all students. Partnership with CASEL and other participating states will allow the Department to achieve those goals by:

- Engaging with our stakeholders, especially our teachers, administrators, and specialized instructional support personnel (SISP);
- Integrating SEL principles with existing policies, resources, and initiatives; and

- Building useful, well-aligned resources.

In addition, the Department strongly recommends sustained professional development and collaborative learning around issues of cultural competency and SEL. Developing students' social emotional competencies can provide an opportunity to develop a sense of positive self-worth in connection to a student's race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation.

ESE has released a set of guidance to administrators and school leaders on how to facilitate SEL as a school-wide initiative. They include:

- PreK-K Standards
  These standards were developed as a collaborative initiative with the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and the University of Massachusetts/Boston with funding from the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant. The standards bring attention to critical areas of development and learning that positively impact student outcomes and can be used to guide efforts to strengthen curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional development, and family engagement.

- Guidelines on Implementing SEL
  This document contains guidelines for schools and districts on how to effectively implement social and emotional learning curricula for students in grades K-12. The information provided relates to leadership, professional development, resource coordination, instructional approaches, policies and protocols, and collaboration with families.

- Educator Guidebook for Inclusive Practice
  Created by Massachusetts educators, this Guidebook includes tools for districts, schools, and educators that are aligned to the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework and promote evidence-based best practices for inclusion following the principles of Universal Design for Learning, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, and SEL.

- **Recommendations for SEL Guiding Principles in Math/ELA Curriculum Frameworks** *currently posted for public comment*
  The Department consulted with PK–12 educators, curriculum specialists, and others to identify possible improvements to the Massachusetts ELA/literacy and mathematics standards, based on lessons learned during implementation since 2011. A review panel analyzed this stakeholder input and recommended needed changes. SEL was included in the recommended ELA standards as Guiding Principle 9 and in the recommended Math standards as Guiding Principle 7.

Finally, we are in process of considering a timeline to begin a review and potential revision of the state's curriculum framework for arts and for comprehensive health education (including physical education), which were both last updated in 1999. We anticipate that a review panel would explore opportunities for further integrating SEL into those frameworks.

5.3 Educator Equity.

A. Definitions. Provide the SEA's different definitions, using distinct criteria, for the following key terms:

Key Term	Statewide Definition (or Statewide Guidelines)
Out-of-field teacher	A core academic teacher[9] who has not demonstrated an understanding of the content, and is therefore not Highly Qualified for the subject/s he or she teaches for more than 20 percent of his or her schedule[10][11]
Low-income student	**Economically Disadvantaged Students** • Prior to the 2014-2015 school year, termed "low income students": enrolled students who are eligible for free or reduced price lunch • In 2015-2016 school year and beyond: "economically disadvantaged students" are enrolled students participating in one or more of the following state-administered programs: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); the Transitional Assistance for Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC); the Department of Children and Families' (DCF) foster care program; and eligible Mass Health programs (Medicaid).
Minority student	Students who are American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, or two or more races. The term "students of color" is used interchangeably.

B. Rates and Differences in Rates. In Appendix A, calculate and provide the statewide rates at which low-income and minority students enrolled in schools receiving funds under Title I, Part A are taught by ineffective, out-of-field, and inexperienced teachers compared to non-low-income and non-minority students enrolled in schools not receiving funds under Title I, Part A using the definitions provided in section 5.3.A. The SEA must calculate the statewide rates using student-level data.

Massachusetts' educator equity initiative applies to all schools in the state. As such, we have provided data in Appendix B for the entire state over the past five years. Appendix B also contains data specifically for schools receiving assistance under Title I, Part A.

C. Public Reporting. Provide the Web address or URL of, or a direct link to, where the SEA will publish and annually update:
  i. The rates and differences in rates calculated in 5.3.B;
  ii. The percentage of teachers categorized in each LEA at each effectiveness level established as part of the definition of "ineffective teacher," consistent with applicable State privacy policies;

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[9] MA ESE. *Title II-A: Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals*. Retrieved from: http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/title-iia/hq/hq_faq.html?section=subjects.

[10] MA regulations allow for a person holding a license to be employed for a maximum of 20 percent of his/her time in a role and/or at a grade level for which she/he does not hold a license.

[11] The Every Student Succeeds Act eliminates the category of Highly Qualified from federal statute. Massachusetts will issue guidance to districts to revise this definition of out-of-field in 2017.

iii. The percentage of teachers categorized as out-of-field teachers consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.37; and

iv. The percentage of teachers categorized as inexperienced teachers consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.37.

www.profiles.doe.mass.edu

D. Likely Causes of Most Significant Differences. If there is one or more difference in rates in 5.3.B, describe the likely causes (*e.g.*, teacher shortages, working conditions, school leadership, compensation, or other causes), which may vary across districts or schools, of the most significant statewide differences in rates in 5.3.B. The description must include whether those differences in rates reflect gaps between districts, within districts, and within schools.

Previous analysis of the Massachusetts teacher workforce, published in December 2013, provides data on how much differences in rates of access to educators reflect gaps between districts, within districts, and within schools. The analyses indicated that inequities in access to experienced teachers, based on levels of student achievement, are most strongly attributable to differences across districts in the state. The gap in lower-achieving students' access to experienced teachers is only slightly more attributable to differences across schools in a district than to differences within schools. The experiences of subsets of districts, where the Department has analyzed district data, suggest a similar pattern. Most of these districts include several elementary schools and a single high school, with a large portion of local equity gaps attributable to differences across elementary schools in the district – thus, the differences in rates reflect gaps *within* districts. Why do these inequities exist? We have identified root causes for the four areas of equity gaps: the experience gap, the preparation gap, and the effectiveness gap.

Root Cause Analysis

Experience Gap: 1) Hiring Practices – When and how schools and districts hire is critical, especially for high-need urban schools, as great teacher candidates don't wait around long.[12] In Massachusetts, 60 percent of preparation program completers are employed in a public school (and 47 percent employed as teachers) within one year of program completion – on average, to a school only 21 miles away from the Educator Preparation Program.[13] 2) Scheduling decisions-- In Massachusetts, first year teachers are more likely to be assigned students with lower scores on the previous year's statewide standardized test, when compared with students assigned to more-experienced teachers. Statewide, first-year teachers in grades four and five are assigned to students who are an average of 3.2 months behind in math and 5.5 months behind in ELA, compared to the test scores of students assigned to teachers with more than three years of experience. This difference in test scores increases in grades six to eight, to an eight-month difference in math scores and 9.2-month difference in ELA scores.[14]

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[12] Lankford, H., Loeb, S., Wyckoff, J. *Teacher Sorting and the Plight of Urban Schools: A Descriptive Analysis*. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 2002. 24(1): 37-62.

[13] *Status of the Massachusetts Educator Workforce: Focus on First-Year Teachers.* Massachusetts ESE, 2013. Retrieved from: http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/reports/2013-12EducatorReport.pdf.

[14] MA ESE, 2013.

Research has also found that schools disproportionately assign students with challenging behavior to new teachers.[15] This data supports the assumption that one of the root causes of the experience gap – indeed, a root cause of inequitable access– is that first year teachers are routinely assigned to teach students who are at greater risk. 3) Retention Strategies/Turnover Patterns – High poverty and high minority schools in Massachusetts experience higher educator turnover rates (see tables in section (F) below). When high-need schools experience high turnover rates, even more teachers are hired under ineffective hiring practices, yielding a greater gap in access to experienced teachers.

Root Cause Analysis: Preparation Gap

1) Inadequate Preparation – When Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) adequately prepare students for the realities of 21st century classrooms, educators are less likely to leave a school or district. This is why ESE is focused on supporting preparation programs to prepare program completers to make impact on the first day they are in the classroom (see above – reference section re: Educator Preparation).   2) Inadequate Pipeline – Educator Preparation Programs must look strategically at the issue of supply and demand. We heard repeatedly from school and district stakeholders about persistently hard-to-fill teaching positions, such as special education, ESL, and STEM.

In 2013-2014, almost 70 percent of licensure waivers granted to districts were to teach students with moderate/severe disabilities. For this reason, the Department has included criteria for Educator Preparation Programs to meet local district supply needs as part of the program review and approval process. In 2013-2014, ESE issued 778 waivers to 145 districts. These waivers allowed the districts to hire unlicensed candidates for teaching and administrative positions. Thus, more than one-third of all districts employed educators who were not licensed for their specific role. The educator pipeline also continues to yield teachers who are not demographically representative of Massachusetts students. Statewide, only seven percent of teachers are people of color, compared to 35 percent of students. For schools to be able to hire a diverse staff, Educator Preparation programs must attract a more representative pool of teacher candidates. Here again, for this reason, the Department has included recruiting a diverse cohort of educators as one of the criteria for program review.

Root Cause Analysis: Effectiveness Gap

Stakeholders and national research both noted the relationship between leader effectiveness gaps and teacher effectiveness gaps. There are several practices that contribute to the effectiveness gap: 1) Hiring Practices – Poor hiring practices lead to gaps in teacher effectiveness. School leaders note that by the time high-need urban districts are hiring, the most effective teacher candidates have been hired elsewhere. 2) Scheduling Decisions —Stakeholders explained that in scheduling decisions, educators' interests are often given higher preference than student considerations. Scheduling decisions can support teacher retention (e.g., creating an environment which is stimulating and supportive for an educator). When determining staff and student schedules, the first priority must be providing equitable access for students to impactful educators. 3) Inadequate Training for Diverse Student Needs – Teachers who are not adequately trained to meet the needs of ELLs, SWDs, students with social-emotional issues, and students who are academically behind, are

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[15] Coggshall, J.G., Potemski, A. *Technical assistance response: Issues related to educator equity.* (Personal communication, May 21, 2015). Washington, DC: GTL Center at American Institutes for Research.

less effective at teaching and managing behavior. This leads to an adverse school climate, and often to higher teacher turnover. This also puts added stress on specialists such as ESL and special education teachers, and on school leaders who are attempting to support unprepared teachers. 4) Climate and Culture – Effective organizations, including schools, should make building a productive culture part of a planned strategic effort.[16] This helps to retain and attract effective teachers, and to create an environment more conducive to teaching and learning.[17] Stakeholders consistently stressed the importance of schools' and districts' climate and culture. Behavior management, student needs, and leadership quality can all influence school climate.

E. **Identification of Strategies.** If there is one or more difference in rates in 5.3.B, provide the SEA's strategies, including timelines and Federal or non-Federal funding sources, that are:
   i. Designed to address the likely causes of the most significant differences identified in 5.3.D and
   ii. Prioritized to address the most significant differences in the rates provided in 5.3.B, including by prioritizing strategies to support any schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement under 34 C.F.R. § 200.19 that are contributing to those differences in rates.

See timelines and strategies below from Massachusetts' approved 2015 Equity Plan.

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[16] Fisher, D., Frey, N. and Pumpian, I., *How to Create a Culture of Achievement in Your School And Classroom.* ASCD, 2012.
[17] Allensworth, Ponisciak, & Mazzeo, 2009, as cited in Coggshall & Potemski, 2015.

	Strategy: Enhance Educator Preparation	Metrics
SY 2016-2017	Implement Teacher Performance Assessment	Statewide pilot of the TPA in every EPP in the state completed by Spring 2016.
SY 2017-2018	After three cycles of Educator Preparation Profiles, analyze outcomes, ID benchmarks & goals going forward Analyze data & set benchmarks for Performance Assessment for Leaders	Benchmarks set
SY 2018-2019	Analyze data & set benchmarks for Teacher Performance Assessment	Benchmarks set
Staff involved:	Educator Preparation Office; External research contract for Ed Prep Profiles	
Funding sources:	Title IIA; Gates Foundation funding	

	Strategy: Support Implementation of Educator Evaluation	Metrics
SY 2014-2015	Continue supporting districts in Ed Eval implementation	Alignment, consistency and differentiation of Ed Eval ratings
SY 2014-2015	Begin implementation of Ed Eval Dashboard	Implementation begun in large urban districts
SY 2014-2015	Equitable access website	Establish a landing page and website dedicated to equitable access.
SY 2016-2017	Share equity plan strategies with stakeholders Model Rubric Validation - which indicators and elements are most predictive	Conduct two in-person or virtual convenings (fall and spring) Plan established
SY 2017-2018	Overall monitoring of school and district implementation of Equitable Access	Embed and establish protocols in Title II, Part A subgrantee monitoring
Staff involved:	Center for Instructional Support	
Funding Source:	Title IIA; Special Education funding	

	Strategy: Educator Evaluation Guidebook for Inclusive Practice	Metrics
Summer 2015	Present guidebook to Education Collaboratives & MA Secondary School Administrators' Association Guidebook completed and ready for implementation	Identify 5-10 principals to partner on field test Guidebook posted
SY 2015-2016	15 teachers who created guidebook provide district PD & participate in preliminary implementation Comprehensive field test with 3-5 superintendents, 5-10 principals, 15 teachers; participants provide monthly feedback Begin development of Focus Academy course on the guidebook with Office of Tiered System of Supports Train Ed. Collaboratives on guidebook and tools	Number of PD activities Increase in full-inclusion placements; focus groups; implementation activities Completed course plan PDs offered on guidebook in summer 2016
March-April 2016	Revise tools in response to field test	Revised tools
March-June 2016	Analyze feedback to determine next set of goals and develop implementation strategy	Implementation strategy
SY 2016-2017	Develop and execute dissemination, engagement, and implementation strategy, informed by field test Focus Academy offers course on guidebook	Increase in full-inclusion placements Implementation of course
Staff involved:	Center for Instructional Support; Special Education Planning and Policy Office; Office of Tiered System of Supports	

Root Causes		
		Hiring practices
	Inadequate preparation	Assignment practices
Retention/attrition	Inadequate pipeline	Retention/attrition
Hiring practices	Fiscal feasibility	Climate and culture
Assignment practices	Readiness for diverse student needs	Readiness for diverse student needs
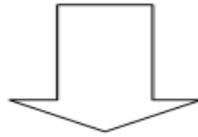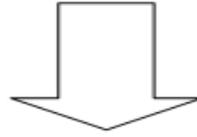
EXPERIENCE GAP **PREPARATION GAP** **EFFECTIVENESS GAP**
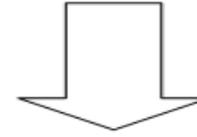
Strategies		
• Ed Prep review & accountability • Edwin Analytics • SLE Report • PLN pilot • Ed Eval Guide • Title IIA	• SLE Report • PLN pilot • Edwin Analytics	• Ed Eval System • Ed Eval Guide • MCUs • Diversity Initiative • Title IIA • Edwin Analytics • Level 5 • DSACs • SLE Report • PLN pilot • MTSS • RETELL

Under ESSA, Massachusetts's Title II application and review process will further promote equity and development of more effective educators. Beginning in FY18, Title IIA application approval will be tied to a district's submission of an approvable equity plan, where applicable.

F. Timelines and Interim Targets. If there is one or more difference in rates in 5.3.B, describe the SEA's timelines and interim targets for eliminating **all** differences in rates.

The following baseline data comes from the SLE report, using statewide data on student subgroups.

% learning experiences with teachers with <3 years of experience

Subgroup	Value
Econ. Disadvantaged	16.7
Non-Econ. Disadvantaged	13.5
Students of color	17.2
White students	12.7
ELL	16.9
Non-ELL	14.3
SWD	14.3
Non-SWD	14.4

% learning experiences with non-HQ teachers

Subgroup	Value
Econ. Disadvantaged	5.4
Non-Econ. Disadvantaged	3.8
Students of color	5.7
White students	2.6
ELL	8.3
Non-ELL	3.5
SWD	5.3
Non-SWD	3.6

The following table shows the sizes of gaps (in percentage-point differences) between comparison groups.

	<3 years of experience	Non-HQT	Rated NI/U
Economically disadvantaged	3.2	1.6	3.9
Students of color	4.5	3.1	4.2
ELLs	2.6	4.8	1.7
SWDs	-0.1	1.7	-0.4

The following tables show **interim targets** for eliminating the gaps shown above.

YEAR 1 (2017-18)			
	<3 years of experience	Non-HQT	Rated NI/U
Economically disadvantaged	2.56	1.28	3.12
Students of color	3.6	2.48	3.36
ELLs	2.08	3.84	1.36
SWDs	N/A	1.36	N/A
YEAR 2 (2018-19)			
	<3 years of experience	Non-HQT	Rated NI/U
Economically disadvantaged	1.92	0.96	2.34
Students of color	2.7	1.86	2.52
ELLs	1.56	2.88	1.02
SWDs	N/A	1.02	N/A
YEAR 3 (2019-20)			
	<3 years of experience	Non-HQT	Rated NI/U
Economically disadvantaged	1.28	0.64	1.56
Students of color	1.9	1.24	1.68
ELLs	1.04	1.92	0.68
SWDs	N/A	0.68	N/A
YEAR 4 (2020-21)			
	<3 years of experience	Non-HQT	Rated NI/U
Economically disadvantaged	0.64	0.32	0.78
Students of color	0.9	0.62	0.84
ELLs	0.52	0.96	0.34
SWDs	N/A	0.34	N/A

YEAR 5 (2021-22)			
	<3 years of experience	Non-HQT	Rated NI/U
Economically disadvantaged	0	0	0
Students of color	0	0	0
ELLs	0	0	0
SWDs	N/A	0	N/A

Section 6: Supporting All Students

6.1 Well-Rounded and Supportive Education for Students.

Instructions: When addressing the State's strategies below, each SEA must describe how it will use Title IV, Part A funds and funds from other included programs, consistent with allowable uses of fund provided under those programs, to support State-level strategies and LEA use of funds. The strategies and uses of funds must be designed to ensure that all children have a significant opportunity to meet challenging State academic standards and career and technical standards, as applicable, and attain, at a minimum, a regular high school diploma.

The descriptions that an SEA provides must include how, when developing its State strategies, the SEA considered the academic and non-academic needs of the following specific subgroups of students:

- *Low-income students;*
- *Lowest-achieving students;*
- *English learners;*
- *Children with disabilities;*
- *Children and youth in foster care;*
- *Migratory children, including preschool migratory children and migratory children who have dropped out of school;*
- *Homeless children and youths;*
- *Neglected, delinquent, and at-risk students identified under Title I, Part D of the ESEA, including students in juvenile justice facilities;*
- *Immigrant children and youth;*
- *Students in LEAs eligible for grants under the Rural and Low-Income School program under section 5221 of the ESEA; and*
- *American Indian and Alaska Native students.*

A. The State's strategies and how it will support LEAs to support the continuum of a student's education from preschool through grade 12, including transitions from early childhood education to elementary school, elementary school to middle school, middle school to high school, and high school to post-secondary education and careers, in order to support appropriate promotion practices and decrease the risk of students dropping out; and

Massachusetts has engaged in a number of initiatives in recent years to ensure that all students successfully transition from pre-kindergarten (pre-K) through grade 12 and beyond to enjoy success after high school. We recognize the importance of providing supports and interventions across the

grade spans to minimize proficiency gaps and build a foundation for future success. A number of examples of ESE's ongoing work in this realm are described below and provide a basis for our plans to support successful transitions. This work is supported with a combination of state and federal funding.

Massachusetts' Birth to Grade 3 (B3) Advisory Group, an inter-agency collaboration, developed a document called "Building the Foundation for College and Career Success for Children from Birth Through Grade 3." This document is aligned with our state's definition of College and Career Readiness and Preparation for Civic Life and speaks to the importance of addressing children's development across all domains, including social and emotional development, through the provision of high quality early learning opportunities. In addition to the B3 Advisory Group, state agencies closely collaborate on work in the early learning realm, including, but not limited to: the development of *Massachusetts Standards for Preschool and Kindergarten - Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Approaches to Play and Learning (APL)*; the development of a report focused on strengthening the early learning workforce; the implementation of our federally-funded Pre-K Expansion Grant (PEG); and joint professional networking opportunities on topics such as transitions between pre-K and kindergarten, family engagement and gender identity in the early years.

As we build and strengthen early learning supports to prevent students from falling behind, we also continue to support all students, including our most at-risk students, in the later grades. A number of ESE initiatives focus on supporting schools and districts to lower dropout rates and improve graduation rates of all students. For example, the Massachusetts' Dropout Prevention and Re-Engagement Work Group is a statewide network of schools and districts working together to learn from each other, along with experts, to develop/refine action plans to help students transition in and through high school. Additionally, a competitive grant intended to support at-risk students has provided schools with resources to implement research-based strategies to retain at-risk students and earn a diploma.

ESE has developed an early warning indicator system (EWIS). The EWIS tool is designed to improve response time to students at-risk, determine success of interventions in all tiers, and develop predictive analytics for schools and districts based on specific educational milestones, including state-level assessment scores, passing all 9th grade classes, and graduation from high school. We provide ongoing professional development and support to schools and districts in effectively employing EWIS.

Massachusetts has also established partnerships to support students with disabilities and students whose first language is not English (FLNE), to help them transition successfully from pre-K through grade 12. These efforts currently include a grant program with America's Promise in which 10 urban districts are focused on identifying and strengthening programs and interventions to improve the graduation rate of students who are FLNE. Our Special Education Policy and Planning unit also partners with the College, Career and Technical Education unit to identify the needs and supports of students with disabilities and are developing an action plan for improving graduation rates.

ESE's Educational Stability team works to ensure that students who are homeless, in foster care, migratory and/or in active military duty families have full access to a consistent education. We work with a variety of partners, including schools, districts and families, to help ensure that these

students have transportation and other supports needed to successfully transition through school.

ESE provides guidance and technical assistance for schools and districts to support children and adolescents who are absent from school on a regular basis due to chronic and life threatening illness, family illness/death, truancy, head injury, discipline removal, or coping with a family related crisis. ESE will identify and/or develop additional supports for schools and districts to effectively use technology and other means to minimizing the loss of instructional time, and help to keep these students engaged and on track with their education while they are unable to come to the school building. Schools are also encouraged to create and employ plans for safe and supportive transitions for students returning back to school.

ESE provides support for family literacy programs, which provide parents and family members with foundational skills that boost their knowledge and confidence to support the educational development of, and to become educational advocates for their children. Parents and family members are able to improve their skills to achieve readiness for postsecondary education or training, job advancement, and economic self-sufficiency. Programs are designed to make sustainable improvements in the economic prospects for a family and to better enable the family to support their children's learning needs.

ESE will support and encourage LEAs to consider the importance of successful transitions when performing their needs assessment, as well as in developing their action plans for utilizing their Title IV, Part A and other allocations under ESSA.

B. The State's strategies and how it will support LEAs to provide equitable access to a well-rounded education and rigorous coursework in subjects in which female students, minority students, English learners, children with disabilities, or low-income students are underrepresented. Such subjects could include English, reading/language arts, writing, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, geography, computer science, music, career and technical education, health, or physical education.

Massachusetts has developed a comprehensive set of rigorous curriculum frameworks and standards across the content areas, which provide schools and districts in the Commonwealth a blueprint for developing a rigorous, well-rounded curriculum for all students pre-K through grade 12.

We are in process of updating our English Language Arts and Mathematics frameworks, to ensure that all students have the foundational skills needed to effectively engage in a well-rounded education. In 2016, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) adopted new science and technology/engineering standards that are intended to drive engaging, relevant, rigorous and coherent instruction that emphasizes student mastery of core ideas and how to apply science and engineering practices. Ultimately, the standards support student readiness for citizenship, college, and careers. In early 2017, we began the process of revising the 2003 History and Social Science curriculum framework. As mentioned above, we are also in process of considering a timeline to begin a review and potential revision of the state's curriculum framework for arts and for comprehensive health education (including physical education), which were both last updated in 1999. In addition, we provide curriculum frameworks for: foreign languages, digital and computer science, and vocational/technical education, as well as WIDA English Language Development

standards.

ESE provides support and resources for teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning to ensure a well-rounded education for all students in the Commonwealth. We collaborated with Massachusetts educators to develop over 100 Model Curriculum Units (MCUs) using the Understanding by Design process that aligns to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. These units cover many of the content areas and incorporate a variety of engaging instructional strategies. We have also developed resources including the Educator Guidebook for Inclusive Practice, which promotes evidence-based best practices for inclusion following the principles of Universal Design for Learning, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, and Social and Emotional Learning. ESE offers professional development on implementing standards-aligned, engaging, student-centered instruction. This work, along with the other efforts outlined in Section 5 of this plan, ensures that students' well-rounded education is provided by high-quality educators.

Since 2007, Massachusetts has recommended that all high schools require students to complete MassCore, a minimum program of academic studies, before graduation. MassCore recommends course-taking requirements across the disciplines (including foreign languages, the arts, health, including physical education, civics, and technology) to ensure that students are prepared for success after high school. MassCore encourages that all students have access to AP and dual-enrollment opportunities, as well as the integration of work-based and service-learning opportunities throughout a course of study. During school year 2014-15, approximately 72% of all Massachusetts high school graduates completed MassCore, compared with only 57% of students who are economically disadvantaged. We recognize the continued need to support schools and districts to close the gap in accessing a well-rounded education for many subgroups of students.

In addition to the above work, Massachusetts will build upon ongoing efforts in this area that may include but are not limited to the following:

- Starting in 2014, the BESE spearheaded a Civic Learning and Engagement Working Group (Working Group,) comprised of pre-K-16 educators and non-profit partners to investigate the current status of civic learning in schools, identify promising practices, and identify opportunities for elevating civic education and engagement. In June 2015, the BESE voted to endorse the recommendations laid out in the Working Group's report. In February of 2016, the BESE joined the Board of Higher Education in adopting a revised joint definition of College and Career Readiness that incorporates preparation for civic life. May 2016 marked the first annual Civics Literacy conference. During school year 2016-17, a Civic Learning and Engagement Task Force has supported ESE in developing a strategic plan to guide its work in continuing to promote and support civic education.
- In 2015, ESE launched the Science Ambassadors Program. The Science Ambassadors are a group of talented science educators available to assist schools and districts to understand the impact of the 2016 Science Technology Engineering (STE) standards on their curriculum and instruction efforts. In partnership with the Museum of Science, ESE prepares Ambassadors to deliver presentations on the key shifts and considerations for transition and implementation of the STE standards. In addition, they share and explain the many helpful resources available.
- Comprehensive health education (including physical education) is a critical element of a

well-rounded education that helps students develop the knowledge, skills and habits needed to be successful academically and to foster lifelong health. In addition to the Comprehensive Health Curriculum Frameworks, the Department provides schools and districts with technical assistance and resources for developing and maintaining comprehensive health education programming, as well as ensuring that physical education is being offered and meets the requirements of the state law.

- In cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), ESE collects data on youth and school health policies and practices through the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and School Health Profiles (Profiles) to help inform school health policies and practices, including health education offerings. In addition, ESE works with priority districts that have higher percentages of students at risk for teen pregnancy, HIV/and other STDs, to ensure that all students have access to exemplary sexual health education.
- The arts are a critical part of a well-rounded course of study for preparation for postsecondary success in a vibrant, critical and creative thinking 21st century economy. ESE's Arts Education Advisory Council works to address the issues innate in revising the Arts Curriculum Framework as well as to research, review, and document recommendations for advancing the arts. The Council is considering ways to support districts in effective and meaningful curriculum integration in arts education. In addition, we plan to begin reporting more discretely on student access to and participation in arts coursework at the school and district level. Our work to promote arts education has been informed by recommendations from the state's Creative Challenge Index Commission and supported through targeted appropriations from the state legislature.
- ESE's College, Career and Technical Education unit provides schools with support and resources to increase the enrollment, retention, and completion of students in career and technical education programs that are nontraditional for their gender.
- Early college programming incorporates credit-bearing college coursework and academic supports into the high school experience to support increased numbers of students, particularly those who are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, to graduate from high school and go on to complete a postsecondary credential with currency in the labor market. ESE provides support for schools and districts to consider and develop early college offerings.
- The Quality Enhancements in After-School and Out-of-School Time (ASOST-Q) grant is a state-funded initiative that leverages out-of-school time (OST) to improve the academic, physical, social, and emotional wellness of students in the Commonwealth. Through this program, and the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program (see below), ESE encourages grantees to use funds to provide academic enrichment that enhances school-day offerings. In addition, these grant program provide technical assistance, professional development and networking statewide to build the capacity of the OST field to contribute to efforts to provide a well-rounded education.
- Through the Massachusetts School Breakfast Challenge, schools are encouraged to increase their school breakfast participation. The Challenge partners are offering technical assistance and grant funding to schools seeking assistance to increase their breakfast participation through strategies that include adopting a new breakfast model and improving the quality of their breakfast menu. Research shows that students who eat breakfast are more ready to learn.
- ESE has historically partnered with districts and taken advantage of federal funds to

subsidize the cost of Advanced Placement Exams for low income students. Moving forward, we will ensure that districts are aware that Title IV, Part A and Title I, Part A funds may be used to support this expense.

ESE will support and encourage LEAs as they consider how they are ensuring a well-rounded education for all students when performing their needs assessment, as well as in developing their action plans for utilizing their Title IV, Part A and other allocations under ESSA. We will continue to invite districts to take advantage of the state-level initiatives noted above to support their work. Additionally, we will encourage districts to consult the guidance issued by USED on use of Title IV, Part A funds.

As described in the Executive Summary and elsewhere in this plan, our ESSA plan is designed to strengthen the quality and breadth of the instructional program students experience, as that is our major lever for ensuring success after high school for all students. This focus includes special attention to two areas where state performance has been stagnant — early grades literacy and middle grades mathematics — to ensure our students are well prepared with strong literacy and mathematics skills. Accordingly, we intend to prioritize existing state and federal funding sources to support this effort and, should we encounter future fiscal constraints, may consider redirecting existing expenditures and/or foregoing certain initiatives.

If an SEA intends to use Title IV, Part A funds or funds from other included programs for the activities that follow, the description must address how the State strategies below support the State-level strategies in 6.1.A and B.

C. Does the SEA intend to use funds from Title IV, Part A or other included programs to support strategies to support LEAs to improve school conditions for student learning, including activities that create safe, healthy, and affirming school environments inclusive of all students to reduce:
   i. Incidents of bullying and harassment;
   ii. The overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom; and
   iii. The use of aversive behavioral interventions that compromise student health and safety?
   ☑ Yes. If yes, provide a description below.
   ☐ No.

In ESE's strategic plan one of the core strategies is to support social-emotional learning, health, and safety. Key levers in this work include safe and supportive school climate and culture, and effective family engagement. ESE is committed to building out supports and policies in partnership with practitioners in the field and other state agencies to advance this work in the Commonwealth, both in and out of school. It is our goal to promote systems and strategies that foster safe, positive, healthy, culturally competent, and inclusive learning environments and address students' varied needs in order to improve educational outcomes for all students.

Massachusetts will use Title IV, Part A state-level funds for staff time devoted to supporting supplemental efforts to advance ESE's strategic priority of supporting social and emotional learning, health, and safety. This work will build upon ongoing efforts in this area that include but are not limited to the following:
   • As previously described in Section 5.2 of this plan, ESE was selected to participate in the Collaborating States Initiative (CSI) led by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and

Emotional Learning (). This work involves receiving technical assistance from CASEL, as well as other states across the country, to help the state promote social and emotional learning (SEL) with the goal of creating conditions that will support statewide implementation of SEL in pre-K through high school.

- ESE is working in collaboration with the state-legislated Safe and Supportive Schools Commission to update and refine a safe and supportive schools framework and self-assessment tool. These resources provide guidance to schools on the creation of safe and supportive schools that foster positive school climates, and that integrate and align related initiatives, in order to improve educational outcomes for all students. Additionally, the work includes, but is not limited to, considering and recommending ways that the state and communities can better align, integrate, and streamline initiatives. This Commission will develop and submit to ESE's Board recommendations for strengthening work in this area.

- ESE's Rethinking Discipline initiative is currently engaging approximately three dozen schools and districts in a professional learning network to reduce the inappropriate or excessive use of long-term suspensions and expulsions, including disproportional rates of suspensions and expulsions for students with disabilities and/or of students of color. The network functions as a forum in which educators and administrators can learn with and from each other as they discuss their ongoing efforts, reflect on the challenges they face, and draw up plans to continue effective efforts and adjust practices as necessary. Lessons learned (by districts and ESE) will help inform other districts in the state that are grappling with these same challenges.

- ESE has created guidance on school policies regarding substance use and effective substance use prevention education (policies that are newly required by state law to be posted on districts' websites and submitted to ESE). Additionally, ESE is working on guidance and regulations related to Recovery High Schools where students can earn a high school diploma and are supported in their recovery for alcohol and drug abuse addiction and disorders.

- State law requires that all school districts have bullying prevention and intervention plans. ESE provides ongoing technical assistance to support efforts in this area.

- ESE established the "Urban Leaders Network for School Climate and Student Support." The group, comprised of district staff overseeing the implementation of Wraparound Zone (WAZ)-related initiatives in urban and Gateway cities, has developed and is currently piloting a series of metrics to assess the "conditions for learning" that allow for academic success (i.e., school climate, student support, SEL, academic engagement, and family and community engagement). The network is also being leveraged to share promising practices and solicit feedback on key issues related to these topics. In addition, ESE is rolling out a "Systems for Student Success" Initiative through which a subset of the lowest performing districts are developing plans to systematically address students' barriers to learning. Through this process, modeled after the successful WAZ Initiative, participating districts are receiving grant funding, targeted assistance, and networking opportunities to innovate the systems and strategies they use to meet students' holistic needs.

ESE will support and encourage LEAs to consider how they are ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment for all students when performing their needs assessment, as well as in developing their action plans for utilizing their Title IV, Part A and other allocations under ESSA. We will also continue to invite districts to take advantage of related state-level initiatives to support their work. In addition, ESE has encouraged schools and districts to consider using Title II, Part A

funds to holistically address students' social, emotional and academic learning needs. As noted above, we will also encourage districts to consult the guidance issued by USED on use of Title IV, Part A funds.

D. Does the SEA intend to use funds from Title IV, Part A or other included programs to support strategies to support LEAs to effectively use technology to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students?

☑ Yes. If yes, provide a description below.

☐ No.

ESE's strategic plan also includes a core strategy to use technology and data to support teaching and learning. Our initiatives seek to improve data infrastructure and promote a culture of effective data and technology use in districts and schools. The following core beliefs guide our work: technology represents a powerful tool for facilitating student engagement and higher-level learning at scale; technological savvy has become increasingly essential for students as they enter college and the workforce; empowering educators and leadership teams with data and instructional tools will enhance targeted decision-making and improve student outcomes (from ESE's Strategic Plan Summary, November 2016.)

ESE will support and encourage LEAs to consider how they are effectively using technology to support all students when performing their needs assessment, as well as in developing their action plans for utilizing their Title IV, Part A and other allocations under ESSA. Massachusetts will support the integration of in-person learning with technology to enable real-time data use, personalized instruction, and competency-based progression. Our initiatives seek to enable improved student and educator access to high-quality new learning models, supported by technology, that prepare them for student and school success. Broadly, the characteristics of these models are:

- Personal Connections: Using technology to strengthen and support deep personal connections for students, their peers, teachers, and other adults – particularly English language learners, students with disabilities, and their parents/guardians.
- Personal Learning Paths: Developing personal learning pathways that motivate students to reach their goals and take ownership of their learning in the academic, workplace readiness, and socio-emotional domains.
- Competency-Based Progression: Piloting projects that allow students to progress through the curriculum based on demonstrated competency within the Commonwealth's framework of rigorous curriculum standards and high expectations.
- Learner Profiles: Enabling educators to access the knowledge, skills, and tools that allow them to gain detailed and timely knowledge of students and to use data to guide instruction.
- Flexible Learning Environments: Tailoring the student learning environment to provide flexibility in what, when, how, and where learning and instruction happens.
- Technological Capacity and Infrastructure: Allows all of the above to be implemented effectively, affordably, and at scale.

We will also continue to encourage districts to use their allocations to leverage state-level initiatives to support their work, which may include but are not limited to the following:

- Leveraging technology to expand current efforts to develop Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)

for students as a facet of postsecondary planning to include true personalized learning.

- Providing high-quality professional development to educators in schools supported by the Digital Connections Initiative, an effort that seeks to bridge the digital divide that exists among some schools across the Commonwealth and expand access to high-quality digital learning opportunities, particularly for students in rural, remote, and underserved areas.
- Providing student access to high-quality blended and online courses based on students' individual interests, needs, and preferences, such as those offered by the Virtual High School and institutions of higher education.
- Providing high-quality professional development in using ESE-supported digital tools, including leveraging Edwin Analytics (such as the Student Learning Experiences and Early Warning Indicator System Reports) and reusable learning objects (RLOs), self-contained E-learning modules that present content, provide learning activities and assessments of learning, and engage educators in simulations and scenarios.
- Providing educator access to online and blended Massachusetts Focus Academies (MFA) & Tiered Systems Academies, intensive professional development academies designed to support school and district teams in the development and implementation of school and district-wide systems of instruction and support in the academic and non-academic domains.

E. Does the SEA intend to use funds from Title IV, Part A or other included programs to support strategies to support LEAs to engage parents, families, and communities?
☑ Yes. If yes, provide a description below.
☐ No.

Recognizing that family engagement is essential to student success, ESE collaborates with internal and external groups to inform and support work in this area and develop culturally responsive strategies for engaging parents in their children's education. In the most recent agency reorganization, the Office of Student and Family Support was established and is exploring ways to provide additional resources and assistance to help families understand and access available educational options for their children, and to help districts and partners effectively engage families in supporting student success.

ESE will support and encourage LEAs to consider how they are engaging families when performing their needs assessment, as well as in developing their action plans for utilizing their Title IV, Part A and other allocations under ESSA. We will also continue to invite districts to take advantage of related state-level initiatives to support their work. In addition, as noted above, we will encourage districts to consult the guidance issued by USED on use of Title IV, Part A funds.

F. Awarding Subgrants *(ESEA section 4103(c)(2)(B))*: Describe how the SEA will ensure that awards made to LEAs under Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1 are in amounts that are consistent with ESEA section 4105(a)(2).

In accordance with ESEA section 4105(a)(2), ESE will reserve 95 percent of its available Title IV, Part A funds for subgrants to LEAs. Funds will be allocated by formula reflecting the same proportion of the total reservation as was the proportion of that LEA's prior year Title I, Part A allocation. Pending sufficient funding appropriation, ESE will make awards of no less than $10,000 per LEA. However, if

sufficient funds are not available, allocations will be reduced proportionally to ensure that all eligible LEAs may receive funds under this program.

ESE also anticipates offering a competitive grant opportunity to LEAs using any Title IVA formula funds that remain unclaimed following the formula grant application period. When issuing competitive grants, ESE will give priority to LEAs or consortia of LEAs that have the greatest need based on the number or percentage of children counted for the purpose of issuing Title I, Part A grants to LEAs, and will make awards in a manner that ensures geographic diversity among subgrant recipients representing rural, suburban, and urban areas. Additionally, any competitive subgrants will be issued for a term of one year and in an amount not less than $10,000. In accordance with the 2017 Consolidated Appropriations Act, of the funds available for competitive subgrants at least 20 percent will be distributed for well-rounded educational opportunities, at least 20 percent will be distributed for safe and healthy students, and a portion will be distributed for effective use of technology.

6.2 Program-Specific Requirements.

A. Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by State and Local Educational Agencies
   i. Describe the process and criteria that the SEA will use to waive the 40 percent schoolwide poverty threshold under section 1114(a)(1)(B) of the ESEA that an LEA submits on behalf of a school, including how the SEA will ensure that the schoolwide program will best serve the needs of the lowest-achieving students in the school.

Massachusetts was conferred with Ed-Flex Authority on January 19, 2001 under the Education Flexibility Act of 1999 and has retained that authority through 2016-17. Waivers provided to LEAs under Ed-Flex Authority have included waiving the 40 percent schoolwide poverty threshold. To continue to encourage improvement of basic programs operated by LEAs and to maximize available flexibilities for their intended purposes, Massachusetts proposes the following process and criteria for approving schoolwide poverty threshold waivers:

   - Notify LEAs of the schoolwide waiver opportunity.
   - Post waiver application form on ESE's website.
   - Successful applicants will submit a request describing how a schoolwide approach would be more beneficial than a targeted assistance approach in meeting the needs of all students, particularly those furthest from meeting dictates of the state accountability framework.
   - Successful applicants will explain how the waiver's intent fits into school and district improvement plans.
   - Successful applicants will explain how the effect of the waiver on student learning will be annually monitored and provide major indicators of educational performance that will be used.
   - LEA leaders will sign assurances that school improvement plans will be reviewed and approved at the LEA level to ensure that required components of a schoolwide plan are addressed.
   - ESE staff will review waiver applications and suggest approval for those that meet the above criteria.

- One of ESE's Associate Commissioners will review all suggested approvals and consult with other senior staff as necessary.
- The Department will notify the district in writing of approval or non-approval of the waiver request within four weeks of receiving the request.

B. Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children.

    i. Describe how the SEA and its local operating agencies, which may include LEAs, will establish and implement a system for the proper identification and recruitment of eligible migratory children on a statewide basis, including the identification and recruitment of preschool migratory children and migratory children who have dropped out of school, and how the SEA will verify and document the number of eligible migratory children aged 3 through 21 residing in the State on an annual basis.

Identification and Recruitment System

One of the top priorities of the Massachusetts Migrant Education Program (MMEP) is to ensure that all potential migratory students are identified and recruited throughout the state by implementing strategic MMEP activities and procedures. These strategies include the following and will evolve as needed for effective implementation:

- Employing a fully dedicated staff to the identification and recruitment (ID&R) of migratory students.
- Cross-training additional staff in the ID&R processes and assist the ID&R staff in meeting the ID&R goals and activities as outlined in a MMEP ID&R plan, which is updated annually and shared with all MMEP staff at the beginning of the program year.
- Development of aligned regional ID&R plans and individual work plans to meet regional goals based on the MMEP ID&R plan. (Note: The MMEP is divided into two regions within the state.)
- Monitoring and reviewing regional goals on a bi-monthly basis.
- Utilizing various MMEP databases that are used to not only document activity, but conduct data analysis to ensure that time and effort are being directed in the most effective manner. All ID&R plans are data driven.
- Analyzing data from the state to identify trends in the agricultural/fishing industries, as well as population demographics.
- Continuing to focus recruitment on five main audiences:
  1. Schools/school districts.
  2. Eligible migratory families and Out of School Youth (OSY).
  3. Community groups.
  4. Employers (new and current).
  5. Other government agencies.
- Distribution of school and agency screeners will continue to assist with ID&R.
- Conducting mandatory bi-annual statewide trainings for all staff that address ID&R topics, as well as other programmatic procedures and protocols. Training needs/content are determined by the following factors:
  1. Accuracy in completion of mandated forms.
  2. Outcomes of previous competency test.
  3. Observations by MMEP staff.

4. Changes /clarifications with Non-Regulatory Guidance (NRGs), Office of Migrant Education (OME) Q&As, ID&R Policy.
5. Procedures, especially in light of the changes from ESSA.
6. Requests by MMEP staff, especially MMEP ID&R staff.

- Conducting extensive trainings for all new ID&R staff over a 4-5 week period.
- Requiring new ID&R staff to pass a competency exam, in addition to being monitored and mentored in the first three months of employment.
- Assessing veteran staff annually via a competency exam, in addition to receiving formal monitoring and observation visits on an annual basis.
- Issuing an electronic version of the MMEP ID&R manual that has been developed and maintained by the MMEP to all staff.
- Providing training to all MMEP staff in the severity and consequences of falsifying information on Certificates of Eligibility (COE). A policy and protocol for reporting potential fraud is in place. It is the responsibility of all MMEP staff to find and correct mistakes as soon as possible.
- Meeting bi-monthly of all MMEP ID&R staff to receive further support, and to plan and work on group initiatives, such as cross-regional partnering to ensure that staff experience the ranges of recruiting situations that occur throughout the state, emerging qualifying work activities in the state, and conduct ID&R sweeps in a geographic areas.

Verification and Documentation of Eligibility Process
The MMEP implements a rigorous quality control system including multiple staff reviews for the eligibility process. Outlined below are the different stages of ID&R and the various roles of staff involved in the process. If during this process, a staff person needs an eligibility clarification, the MMEP ID&R Director may provide support and/or consult with the MMEP Leadership Team or other ID&R coordinators from other states along with referencing the NRGs and the federal register to ensure responses are in accordance with federal regulations. When warranted, a MMEP advisory will be issued detailing the question/topic, the response, supporting information (i.e. reference to NRGs or federal register) and action to be taken. Advisories that clarify policy will be incorporated into the MMEP ID&R manual on a rolling basis. Quality control processes and roles will be reviewed, as well as assessed on an ongoing basis. Changes in policy, best practices, Office of Migrant Education Guidance or areas that need clarification will be reflected on a rolling basis as needed.

INITIAL SCREENING

Screen worker/family to see if there is a possibilty of qualifying.

THE INTERVIEW

Information is collected and documented on a COE during a face-to-face interview.

Preliminary eligibility determination made.

Checks employer database and initials COE for "Existing/New Employer."

COE is signed by MMEP staff and parent/youth.

COE and supporting documents are submitted to MMEP Regional Office within 3 days of interview.

THE CHECKER

Reviews the COE and supporting documents, ensuring accuracy and completeness.

Conducts a search on the Migrant Student Information Exchange (MSIX) to establish/verify prior migratory history in Massachusetts or another state.

Verifies school enrollment for all K-12 students.

Initials and dates COE, documents receipt, and submits to MMEP Regional Verifier for Final Check.

THE VERIFIER

Reviews the COE using the COE Tracker Form to confirm validity and signs it.

Initials the dates the COE for any changes.

Searches MSIX and MMEP Databases for potential student/family matches.

Forwards COE packet, including School Enrollment Verification form and permission slip copies to MMEP office within 5 days of initial submission by the interviewer.

DATA MANAGER

Receives completed COEs and tracks all forms.

Conducts family/student search within databases and MSIX for matches.

Checks COE for accuracy.

Initials and dates COE, then forwards packet for validation.

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                        │    ID&R Director     │
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                    ┌──────────────┴──────────────┐
           ┌────────┴────────┐           ┌─────────┴────────┐
           │    VALIDATOR    │           │     AUDITOR      │
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VALIDATOR

Reviews the COE for completion, accuracy and supporting documentation.

Determines if eligible or ineligible.

If the COE requires additional information or clarification for validation, the COE is returned with a MMEP Returned/Incomplete form for needed information or changes.

AUDITOR

Confirms employer information, physical location contact, eligible activities and operating status via database.

Conducts face-to-face or phone audit, recording information on COE Audit Form.

Initials and dates COE with attached Audit Form.

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                        │    DETERMINATION     │
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            │   Ineligible  │             │    Eligible    │
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Ineligible

A copy of the COE and supporting documentation will be returned to the MMEP staff with a "Failure to Validate" form explaining the decision.

The original COE and supporting documents will be kept on file with the ID&R Director.

Staff may appeal a "Failure to Validate" form with the ID&R Director.

If conclusion cannot be met with staff and ID&R Director, then the MMEP Leadership Team will discuss eligibilty issue with all involved, may follow up with family/student, and then make an decision based on findings.

Eligible

COE is validated and returned with supporting documentation to the Data Manager.

MMEP Data Manager assigns unique family/student numbers, inputs family/student information into databases, and files COE and documentation.

Currently, the MMEP ID&R Director conducts audits on 100% of all COE submissions. If the number of required audits exceeds what can realistically be completed, a system will be implemented for internal re-interviewing. Individuals who were not associated with the original eligibility determination will re-interview or re-verify the eligibility of randomly selected COEs.

The MMEP will conduct an independent re-interview study in 2017 and will continue this practice of quality control in the future. In order to implement the required 2017 independent re-interview process, the MMEP will join a consortium of four other MEPs (Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, and New York) to integrate human and financial resources, deliver the re-interviewing protocol, and access the findings, if any, from each state. On-site face-to-face re-interviews will be conducted on a systematic random sample of 50 COEs. The 1308 ConQIR Grant instrument, the "Re-interview Questionnaire," field tested by eight states for accuracy, will be used to re-interview families. Two qualified independent re-interviewers will conduct the interviews in Massachusetts. The interviewers will be given one-day training on conducting the re-interview using the "Re-interview Questionnaire." Interviewers will:

1. Communicate with families in their native language.
2. Use a re-interview protocol that contains all data items used in making the original eligibility determination.
3. Have a strong background in Migrant identification and recruitment.
4. Use non-threatening tactics to obtain information.
5. Be well trained in regards to the re-interview questionnaire.
6. Be assigned geographical areas where they have neither recruited nor re-interviewed.

ii. Describe how the SEA and its local operating agencies, which may include LEAs, will identify the unique educational needs of migratory children, including preschool migratory children and migratory children who have dropped out of school, and other needs that must be met in order for migratory children to participate effectively in school.

Joint Planning
The Service Delivery Plan (SDP) will be revised and approved in the spring of 2017 with input from committees of stakeholders that include MMEP staff, educators, community agencies, current migratory parents and youth; as well as State and Federal education programs.

Included in this joint planning of the SDP are the following programs, which can provide important perspectives, particularly about the unique needs of students in preschool and who have dropped out (out-of-school youth), to inform planning, implementation and evaluation of MMEP:
- Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care: Head Start
- EDCO Collaborative
- ESE Programs:
  - Title III
  - Adult and Community Learning Services
  - Early Learning
  - Drop-Out Prevention and Re-Engagement
  - 21st Century Community Learning Centers

· Early Warning Implementation.

The committees will review the results of the comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) and develop the activities outlined in the SDP to address the issues raised in the CNA. The new SDP will begin to be implemented in the fall of 2017. Services are provided during school year and summer sessions and the delivery models differ based on regional structures and needs.

The MMEP uses a rigorous process to ensure that every eligible student is identified, recruited, and provided with comprehensive services ensuring success. Objectives are formally developed for service delivery for both the school year and summer sessions in each of the regions by using current and projected data and budget. Each regional leadership team has regularly scheduled meetings to discuss student count and enrollment data, as well as support efforts to meet the regional objectives. A new Student Services database was created in 2016 to provide MMEP staff with a more efficient and effective way of tracking how students are served. Each eligible child/youth has a file that tracks service needs, available services, and what services that individual student participated in during the school year and summer sessions. This process will continue with adjustments as needed.

In order to achieve cohesiveness across the regions, a statewide curriculum for Pre-K, K-12, and OSY students began to be implemented in the 2012-2013 summer program year and has continued to present day. There are a variety of curricula selected based on the needs of the different types of student groups. Curricula will continue to be researched and will continue to evolve to ensure alignment with federal and state standards.

Preschoolers attending summer site-based programs are also given a pre and post-assessment that is recorded in a standardized rubric. This rubric was developed by selected MMEP educators based on kindergarten readiness standards in mathematics and language arts. This assessment data is gathered on a regional and state level and is used in the annual evaluation report and comprehensive needs assessment.

The math curriculum, Math Matters, utilized for both the on-site and home-based summer programs for all K-8 students, has a pre and post-assessment that is given to the students at the start and end of the program. The curriculum and assessments are available in English and Spanish, therefore allowing the program to remove the language barrier and focus on a student's math skills. This assessment data is gathered on a regional and state level and is used in the annual evaluation report and comprehensive needs assessment.

The OSY curriculum will be used throughout the program year and as there are unit tests integrated into the curriculum, they will be used for future assessment and evaluation reports. Further, this curriculum has short lessons that have pre and post-tests as part of the lesson plan. There is also a placement test used to ensure appropriate instruction and programmatic planning.

A complete listing of the types of assessments to identify services needed is included in a chart in section iii.

iii. Describe how the SEA and its local operating agencies, which may include LEAs, will ensure that the unique educational needs of migratory children, including preschool migratory children and migratory children who have dropped out of school, and other needs that must be met in order for migratory children to participate effectively in school, are addressed through the full range of services that are available for migratory children from appropriate local, State, and Federal educational programs.

Formal and informal monitoring is conducted to ensure compliance with federal law and regulations. Monitoring ensures the following purposes are met for the funding:

1. Ensure that migrant children receive full and appropriate opportunities to meet the same challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet.
2. Ensure that migrant children who move among the states are not penalized by disparities among states in curriculum, graduation requirements, and state academic content and student academic achievement standards.
3. Support high quality and comprehensive educational programs for migrant children to help reduce the educational disruptions and other problems that results from repeated moves.
4. Ensure that migrant children are provided with appropriate educational services (including support services) that address their special needs in a coordinated and efficient manner.
5. Design programs to help migrant children overcome educational disruption, caused by cultural and language barriers, social isolation, various health-related problems, and other factors that inhibit the ability of the children to do well in school and to prepare migrant children to make a successful transition to post-secondary education or employment.

The MMEP staff ensure that every eligible student is offered supplemental educational services, whether directly by the MMEP hired educators or through registration in local school and community agency offerings. The new Student Services database allows MMEP staff to document and track service delivery, therefore ensuring that all students are served throughout the state. Services vary depending on the age, grade, and needs of the student and due diligence is paid to ensure that the MMEP is not supplanting services available through local school districts.

The MMEP will continue to provide supplemental services in 2016-2017 using the current Service Delivery Plan (SDP).

As a result of the CNA and SDP, program services to be implemented and evaluated are listed on the chart that follows. Services will be provided directly or indirectly in collaboration with other local, State, and Federal education programs. For example, Preschool Migrant children will be enrolled in Migrant Head Start or YMCA programs, if available. If a child is unable to enroll in a program, only then will the migratory child be enrolled in a direct preschool service provided by the MMEP (home-based and/or site-

based). In addition to the stakeholders listed under section ii, a list of partnerships is provided at the end of this response.

Student Group	Service Type	Timeframe	Components	Curriculum	Assessment Type
Preschool	Enrollment assistance in Early Childhood Program	Ongoing	Identify Early Childhood centers in child's community and assist parent/guardian in enrollment process. Monitor waitlist status, if necessary.	Not applicable	Enrollment progress documented in a Daily activity and referral log.
Preschool	Home-based Family Literacy Programming for any preschooler not enrolled in Early Childhood Program within the community. PFS will be given to older students (4-5 yrs old)	School Year	Multiple home visits made by certified early childhood teacher to work with preschooler and a parent/guardian in native language.	Raising a Reader or GENESEO Early Start Family Literacy Kits	Parent/Guardian Satisfaction Survey
Preschool	Site-based Summer Program (two sites)	Summer Term	Pre-school classrooms focused on kindergarten readiness, English Language Arts (emerging reading and writing), and mathematics.	Curricular decisions made by individual teachers based on selection of picture books selected by MMEP.	Minutes of Instruction; Preschool Rubric (pre/post); Kindergarten Rubric (pre/post)
Preschool	Home-based Summer Program: Any preschool student residing outside of the two Site-based summer programs.	Summer Term	One-on-one instruction with teacher/tutor.	Family Literacy Curriculum based on Raising a Reader or Geneseo Early Start Family Literacy Kits.	Parent/Guardian Satisfaction/ Feedback Survey
Preschool	Enrollment in Summer Enrichment Programs (ex. Migrant Head Start and YMCA).	Summer Term	Dependent on Program; focus on English Language skills and Kindergarten Readiness	Dependent on Program	Dependent on Program

K-12	Home-based Academic Tutoring for K-12 students not receiving such services through their school, or those who need additional supports, especially PFS and high risk	School Year	Individual instruction	Homework and supplemental academic assistance	Minutes of instruction; Parent/guardian Satisfaction/Feedback Survey
9-12	Site-based Academic Tutoring (two sites)	School Year	Small group instruction	Homework and supplemental academic assistance	Minutes of Instruction
K-8	Site-based Summer Program (two sites)	Summer Term	Singular or clustered grade classrooms – implementing ELA/Math curriculum	Math Matters	Math Matters (pre/post)
9-12	Site-based Summer Program (three sites)	Summer Term	Singular or clustered grade classrooms – implementing STEM curriculum and District summer reading assignments	TeachEngineering; Summer reading as assigned by District/school	Minutes of Instruction
K-12	Home-based Summer Program (Students who do not reside near one of the site-based programs)	Summer Term	Individual instruction implementing ELA/Math curriculum	Math Matters; ACReS	Minutes of Instruction; Math Matters (pre/post); ACReS unit tests
OSY/High School Students	Career and Graduation Readiness Program	School Year	Workshops and Fieldtrips	Not Applicable	Attendance; Feedback Surveys
OSY	Site-based Program (two sites)	School year and Summer Term	Small group instruction focused on ELL/Life Skills; HSE completion via HiSET/GED Exam Preparation	OSY-CIG Life Skills Lessons; Interactive English; HiSET/GED Exam Preparatory	Minutes of Instruction; English Language Screener; Interactive English Unit Tests; HiSET/GED practice exams; Life Skills

				Materials	Assessment (pre/post)
OSY	Home-based Program	School Year and Summer Term	Individual instruction focused on ELL/Life Skills	OSY-CIG Life Skills Lesson; Interactive English	Minutes of Instruction; English Language Screener; Interactive English unit tests; Life Skills Assessment (pre/post)
OSY	Enrollment in Community Based Courses	Ongoing	ELL; HiSET/GED Prep; ABE; Life Skills, etc.	Varies	Not Applicable
Parents	State Parent Advisory Council	Two	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Meeting Feedback Forms
Parents	Regional Parent Advisory Council	Four	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Meeting Feedback Forms
Parents	Parent/Family Enrichment Workshops	School Year	Immigration; Child Car Safety; Special Education; Family Literacy; Nutrition; etc.	Not Applicable	Attendance; Workshop Feedback Forms

Current Curriculum Collaboration Highlights:
- A modified family literacy curriculum based on Raising a Reader, and the GENESEO Migrant Center's family literacy program, is implemented with preschoolers.
- Math Matters, a math curriculum developed through a multi-state consortium of Migrant Education programs, is implemented for all K-8 students. Math Matters is aligned with Common Core, is bilingual, and incorporates math with language arts. The site-based Math Matters format is based on Responsive Classroom, therefore also integrating the bullying prevention curriculum selected by the MMEP.
- Three STEM curriculum units were selected from TeachEngineering, a collaborative project between faculty members, students and teachers associated with a National Science Foundation grant at the University of Colorado, Boulder; Oregon State University; Duke University; Colorado School of Mines; Worcester Polytechnic Institute; and American Society for Engineering Education. The units are cohesive collections of lessons and activities that allow students to learn hands-on, applied scientific and mathematics concepts to discuss environmental and urban development issues and seek potential solutions to these issues. The curriculum was well received by teaching staff and students and will continue to be used in upcoming high school programming.
- Interactive English, published by Intercambio-Uniting Communities is being used for OSY instruction. Life skills are integrated into the curriculum and supplemented through short lessons developed through the OSY-Consortium Grant that the MMEP participates in. Interactive English addresses common challenges faced by adult based programs. The materials are designed to be used in both classroom and one-on-one teaching

sessions and have shorter completion cycles that allow students to experience the achievement of completing a book even when they are unable to make long-term uninterrupted commitments to attending class. The materials are also designed to be taught by educators of all different teaching experience levels and focus on speaking, listening, reading, and writing; making this curriculum a very solid fit for the migratory OSY population in the state.

- Eligible MMEP OSY interested in pursuing their high school equivalency certificate through HiSET/GED exam can dually enroll in the MMEP HiSET/GED Exam Preparation Program and the New England High School Equivalency Program (HEP). MMEP and HEP staff work to identify eligible and interested students. The staff coordinate curricular and support services for these interested MMEP students. The services of these two programs are complementary and not duplicative.

In addition, the MMEP uses a collaborative approach to promote the transition of migratory secondary students to post-secondary education and/or employment. Formal presentations at Parent Advisory Council meetings (PAC) and parent involvement workshops aid in building the capacity of parents to understand and support their children along the pathway to university. Direct service for students is geared toward helping them explore career options, assist them in setting personal learning goals and ensure they are supported in the coursework needed to reach those goals. This includes curricula that prepare them for college entrance testing and state assessment preparation, as well as soft skills and academic/career readiness skills awareness, developed through fieldtrips to local universities and industries throughout the school year and summer sessions. Collaborative efforts have been made to support migrant students transition from high school with school districts, community based organizations and local colleges. Examples of partnerships established by MMEP staff for not only this population but for all migrant students and parents are as follows:

- School district McKinney-Vento Homeless Coordinators.
- School district Perkins grant recipients.
- Community schools.
- UMASS - Dartmouth Labor Program.
- College Advising Corps.
- uAspire.
- Project Coach at Smith College.
- Springfield Technical Community College.
- Fitchburg State College.
- World Education, Inc.
- Student Immigrant Movement.
- Migrant Head Start.
- Many local business and industry leaders throughout the state.

The MMEP will continue to develop these relationships and expand the range of organizations to best identify and serve the migratory population in the state.

iv. Describe how the State and its local operating agencies, which may include LEAs, will use funds received under Title I, Part C to promote interstate and intrastate coordination of services for migratory children, including how the State will provide for educational

continuity through the timely transfer of pertinent school records, including information on health, when children move from one school to another, whether or not such move occurs during the regular school year (*i.e.*, through use of the Migrant Student Information Exchange (MSIX), among other vehicles).

The MSIX is a priority for all MMEP staff, who have essential roles in the utilization and maintenance of the MSIX. The MMEP Data Manager and MMEP Program Director act as the coordinators of this effort. The tasks of these two individuals in relation to MSIX are as follows:

1. Develop accounts and assign roles as the MSIX User Administrators.
2. Assign specific tasks related to the collection and maintenance of electronic records.
3. Develop and implement policies and procedure for all data included in MSIX for the MMEP.
4. Act as the principal trainers of MSIX for MMEP staff.

The MMEP Data Manager is responsible for entering the enrollment records, credit accrual, and the assessment data for migrant students into the MIS 2000 database which in turn holds the data for MSIX retrieval. This individual is also jointly responsible along with the MMEP Leadership Team, for communicating with all secondary schools where migratory youth attend to efficiently obtain credit accrual information for all migratory high school students throughout the state. The MMEP Data Manager and MMEP Program Director ensure that all secondary coursework is input into MSIX and conduct searches of prior MSIX records to assist in the credit transfer for secondary migratory students.

The MMEP Data Manager is currently responsible for creating records and data entry into two data systems for every child who is determined to be migrant through the MMEP's comprehensive identification and recruitment efforts. For the 2016-2017 school year, the MMEP will be consulting with MS/EdD company to map the two data systems; therefore, removing the double entry that is required now for all MSIX Minimum Data Elements (MDEs).

MMEP staff are responsible for checking the MSIX database when a potential migratory student has been identified for eligibility, and for sourcing and compiling information that will later be entered into the migrant databases. In addition, the MMEP staff are able to actively seek and retrieve academic and health records using MSIX and provide those records to school district staff when applicable.

In addition to receiving an initial orientation and training on MSIX, all MMEP staff participate in the MSIX on-line training when they initially sign up for MSIX. MMEP staff receive an annual MSIX training and review, which specifically focuses on what information is available on a consolidated student record and how best to use that information to drive effective service delivery for the individual. Specifically, MMEP ID&R staff receive MSIX training at one of their bi-monthly team meetings. This training is focused on potential uses of MSIX data, as well as reports to assist in recruitment efforts and eligibility verification.

For the 2016-17 school year, additional training will provided to the MMEP staff to input enrollment data on a weekly basis. This will require a one-day training and possibly some additional support from the MMEP Data Manager and MMEP Program Director.

When a migratory student is moving from Massachusetts to a known location, the MMEP Data Manager enters the MSIX student record and sends a notification to the receiving state. The MMEP Data Manager and MMEP ID&R Director are listed as contacts if the receiving state staff requires further information. The MMEP Data Manager, MMEP ID&R Director, and the MMEP Program Director receive all notifications from a sending state when a migratory student is arriving in Massachusetts. The MMEP ID&R Director has the primary responsibility to follow through with the initial contact for the new family/youth and requests a copy of the COE from the sending state. When the contact has been made, the MMEP ID&R Director and the MMEP ID&R staff person meet with the family/youth in a face-to-face visit and a MMEP COE is completed. The COE then follows the same protocol of any COE that is submitted in the state. For the 2016-2017 school year, the MMEP plans to consult with MS/EdD to move from a paper COE to an electronic COE, as well as create MSIX Identification Cards for all eligible migratory students. These laminated cards, which will contain their MSIX number, will be provided to the students and allow them to link up to another migrant program if they were to move and re-qualify.

In addition to the utilization of MSIX to promote interstate and intrastate coordination of services for migratory students, the MMEP Leadership Team and staff , as well as MMMP parents attend various National MEP conferences and meetings. Examples of conferences and meetings are as follows: Office of Migrant Education Annual Director's Meeting, the Interstate Migrant Education Council, OSY Consortium Grant State Steering Meetings, National ID&R Forum, and the National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education Council. MMEP staff also attend conferences within Massachusetts, as well as participate on advisory groups and coalitions throughout the state to support and promote networks among agencies serving the migrant population.

v.   Describe the unique educational needs of the State's migratory children, including preschool migratory children and migratory children who have dropped out of school, and other needs that must be met in order for migratory children to participate effectively in school, based on the State's most recent comprehensive needs assessment.

The MMEP has completed the initial steps of developing a comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) following guidance of the CNA Toolkit as developed by the Office of Migrant Education (OME). Using the CNA Toolkit, the MMEP developed a plan, using data and current research, which addressed the complexities of successfully serving migratory students.

A collaborative process brought together an MMEP leadership team for the initial development of the migratory student profile. An additional advisory group of key stakeholders was consulted for further development and review of this student profile.

The migratory student profile consisted of data gathered from multiple sources. Data included results of the most recent program evaluation reports that measured the progress

towards state performance goals of migratory kindergarten through twelfth grade students. Key stakeholders were led in discussion and analysis of the migratory student profile to determine what migrant children need in order to have successful educational outcomes. This led to further questions and the initial development of concern statements.

For the 2016-17 school year, META Associates will be contracted to assist in the final steps of completion in the CNA process. META Associates will collaborate with the MMEP to review the concern statements and supporting data, develop a survey to be used to corroborate the concern statements with key stakeholders, and will then complete the CNA process by April 2017 with a formal summary of findings, utilizing an OME approved format. These results will then provide the foundation for an action plan to develop the revised MMEP SDP to be implemented by the fall of 2017 that address the needs identified in the CNA. The OME SDP Toolkit will be used for guidance in this process and the results may shift what supplemental educational services are provided in the 2017-2018 program year. These current CNA and SDP processes and reports will serve as a future guide to develop additional CNA and SDP reports.

vi. Describe the current measurable program objectives and outcomes for Title I, Part C, and the strategies the SEA will pursue on a statewide basis to achieve such objectives and outcomes consistent with section 1304(b)(1)(D) of the ESEA.

The MMEP will use multiple data sources to obtain information to improve program delivery and to measure progress towards goals set in the SDP and the Government Performance Results Act Migrant Education Program measurements (GPRAs). Records will be reviewed and compared to current program information. Data collected will be assessed against the benchmarks the program has set through the most current SDP. Additional programmatic assessment data gathered in the 2012-2013 has served as baseline data for annual evaluations. SDP and programmatic assessments assist the MMEP to measure whether activities have had a positive impact on meeting program objectives. Assessment data and attendance also aids decision-making in regards to resources and programming for the subsequent program year in order to achieve positive impacts and helps determine future projects and programs so that they are easier to evaluate. The evaluation incorporates all mandatory aspects from the OME evaluation checklist, including disaggregation of Priority for Services (PFS) and non-PFS students.

The evaluation tools focus on measuring student growth in knowledge and skills based on curricular selections. The methods for gathering evaluation data are systematic and use reliable qualitative and quantitative data. Evaluation tools include but are not limited to the following: pre-school rubrics measuring kindergarten readiness milestones; pre and post curricular assessments for Math Matters curriculum and OSY life skills lessons; unit tests for ELL curricular units for OSY; state assessment data; oral language measurements (OSY population only), and program participant evaluations. Future adjustments in assessment tools will be made as necessary depending upon any future adjustments in curriculum needs, etc.

Scores from the state assessments for migratory students in grade 3-8 and 9-12 allow the MMEP to provide guidance and interventions, when necessary, to assist students in

attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and math (GPRA Performance Goals 1 and 2). ELL state test scores (WIDA/ACCESS) and progress reports of identified migratory students allows the MMEP to provide better support of all MMEP ELL students in progressing in their English language abilities (State Performance Goal 2).

School districts provide report cards of migratory students (K-12) to the MMEP; thus assisting the MMEP in providing support to all students to be promoted to the next grade within one school year or graduate (GPRA Performance Goal 3). This is especially pertinent for the secondary migrant students as it allows the MMEP to provide any interventions needed to ensure a student's graduation from high school (State Performance Goal 5). Secondary student report cards also provide information on an individual student's progress in mathematics and allows the MMEP to better support students in enrolling in and passing Algebra I by the time that student enters 11th grade (GPRA Performance Goal 4).

The MMEP has also prioritized building stronger relationships with school districts to support district initiatives around state assessment proficiencies and graduation rates. Collaborative discussions with school districts have focused on how the MMEP can help facilitate migratory students in attending district offered services for migrant students to meet state assessment proficiencies. The MMEP will continue to support districts and migratory students in meeting the rigorous academic performance standards of the state.

vii. Describe how the SEA will ensure there is consultation with parents of migratory children, including parent advisory councils, at both the State and local level, in the planning and operation of Title I, Part C programs that span not less than one school year in duration, consistent with section 1304(c)(3) of the ESEA.

The MMEP will continue to host the following activities to ensure consultation with the parents of migrant children:
- Two regional parent advisory council meetings (RPAC) in the primary cities of the state with a migratory population.
- Two state parent advisory council meetings (SPAC) centrally located in the state during the school year.
- Two regional workshops directly or through a network of community based organizations or school districts on various educational and health topics. These workshops provide capacity-building training and activities for the parents.
- College and career workshops for the parents, high school and OSY students.

The SPAC and RPAC provide a forum for parents to consult with the MMEP staff on the planning and operation of the program to best meet the needs of their children. For example, the MMEP developed by-laws that were revised in 2014 – 2015 by the SPAC members. In accordance with those by-laws, the Parent Involvement Plan (PIP) was and is reviewed and evaluated by the current members and amended as needed on an annual basis. The PIP serves as a guide for the MMEP in achieving a high level of parental involvement. The MMEP will continue a shared responsibility with the parents to improve their children's achievement and to meet the State's standards in academic performance. The MMEP members of the SPAC developed these goals, objectives, and expectations for parent involvement:

1. Increase the participation of all eligible parents in the MMEP sponsored activities.
2. Reduce barriers that prevent parents from participating in the MMEP sponsored activities.
3. Coordinate resources that enable parents to be involved in school, as well as educational and employment activities.
4. Educate teachers, administrators, and other staff on the values of working with migrant parents.
5. Increase the participation of all eligible migrant students in MMEP sponsored activities.

Parents who participate in the SPAC are the representatives of their respective RPAC. The RPAC meetings are held 4 -6 weeks prior to a SPAC meeting. The agenda of the RPAC is developed to allow discussion and input to take place on a regional level. The representatives then convey the consensus of the regional parent group to the SPAC.

Translation is and will continue to be provided as required by law and as necessary to the parents at the SPAC and RPAC meetings, as well as at the additional parental activities described, to reduce the language barriers that will result in the encouragement of participation of the parents at the meetings.

viii. Describe the SEA's priorities for use of Title I, Part C funds, specifically related to the needs of migratory children with "priority for services" under section 1304(d) of the ESEA, including:
- The measures and sources of data the SEA, and if applicable, its local operating agencies, which may include LEAs, will use to identify those migratory children who are a priority for services; and
- When and how the SEA will communicate those determinations to all local operating agencies, which may include LEAs, in the State.

The MMEP has established forms and procedures to accurately identify migratory students (K-12) who have had an interruption in their formal education during the prior 12 months and who are failing or at risk of failing to meet state education standards. Each K-12 student, as they are found eligible, is assessed to determine their priority for services (PFS) status. Measures and sources of data utilized to identify migratory children as PFS are:
1. Qualifying Arrival Date (QAD) in Massachusetts during the school year.
2. New QAD in Massachusetts during the school year (within state move).
3. Ten or more absences during the school year.
4. Educational interruption in another state in previous year (for June, July, August QAD).
5. Move from another state during the regular school year (for June, July, August QAD).
6. Failing to achieve Proficiency on MCAS for Grades 3 & up.
7. Failing to make progress on English Language Learners (ELL) testing (for ELL students).
8. Failing grades on report cards.
9. Grade retention.

10. High school dropout.
11. Local level school assessments and MMEP data for children below Grade 3.

The MMEP has and will continue to use the dropout measure which is part of the new regulations.

A student will either qualify as being PFS (having both an educational interruption and failure/risk of failure), pending PFS (having the interruption but awaiting documentation on failure/risk of failure), or not PFS. This is documented in the individual student's file.

Students who qualify for PFS will receive more robust services, tailored to the student's individual educational needs. The first step in determining the individual student plan will be consultation with the student's school and teachers. MEP funding will be used to remove barriers preventing the student from receiving school-based services (transportation, fees, etc) and for direct service delivery, such as home-based tutoring. Priority is given to all PFS students before funding is used for non-PFS migratory students.

C. Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk
   i. Describe the SEA's plan for assisting in the transition of children and youth between correctional facilities and locally operated programs.

      ESE facilitates the transition of children and youth between Title I, Part D-funded correctional facilities and locally operated programs by:
- Developing clear and direct instructions within the grant application process that reflect transition activities as a federal and state priority.
- Providing funding through the grant program that may be used to support instruction, professional development, the purchase of instructional materials, and other transition services.
- Meeting with corrections and local staff to provide technical assistance in exploring options, developing collaborations and initiating transitional efforts.
- Monitoring grant-funded facilities for faithfulness to program objectives, requirements, and identified support activities.

   ii. Describe the program objectives and outcomes established by the State that will be used to assess the effectiveness of the program in improving the academic, career, and technical skills of children in the program, including the knowledge and skills needed to earn a regular high school diploma and make a successful transition to postsecondary education, career and technical education, or employment.

      The overarching goal of the Title I Part D program is to prepare children and youth in juvenile or adult secure-care settings for success after high school by providing supplemental services that improve the education and transition services that students receive. To that end, ESE has established the following objectives, outcomes, and support strategies for children and youth attending Department of Youth Services programs and programs supported by Special Education in Institutional Settings (SEIS), and youth

attending adult education programs in MA county houses of corrections (CHOCs) and the Department of Corrections (DOC).

Objective 1: (1a.) Reduce the current dropout rate for DYS children and youth and (1b.) increase the number of dropouts from correctional facilities who continue their education upon release.

Outcome: Increases in the number of eligible students who (1) transition annually to LEAs and/or (2) enroll and complete adult education programs or WIOA youth programs.

ESE Support Strategies: Provide guidance and technical assistance as needed to support educators in facilitating student transition from secure-care facilities to the LEAs or adult education/WIOA youth programs.

Objective 2: Document continuous growth in students' academic and/or technical skills as measured by score increases in post-test assessments.

Outcomes: Measurable skill gains for youth in adult secure-care settings demonstrated through standardized tests (e.g., TABE) and grade level advancement (e.g., pre-ASE to ASE[18]); pass rates for state assessment (MCAS); increase in number of students who graduate or earn a credential (i.e., GED/HiSET and/or an industry recognized certification or certificate).

ESE Strategies: Require grant recipients to provide evidence of rigor, intensity, and integration (e.g., schedules, syllabi) during monitoring; revise annual data reporting requirements and monitoring for alignment with these requirements.

Objective 3: Reduce the juvenile recidivism rate annually through workforce training and preparation.

Outcome: Increased placement rates in career and technical programs and apprenticeship training, or employment within 6 months from the date of release.

ESE Support Strategies: Provide guidance and technical assistance to programs offering integrated education and training programs and/or CTE programs in tailoring these programs for youth; provide guidance and information to counselors/career advisors to support student access to career pathways upon release.

Objective 4: Ensure that staff is trained to work with children and youth with disabilities.

Outcomes: Evidence of appropriate professional development plans, programs and activities.

ESE Support Strategies: Regularly promote and provide information regarding high quality professional development that: (1) strengthens educators' understanding of the unique needs of children and youth with disabilities and (2) develops educators' skills in identifying and meeting those needs.

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[18] Adult secondary education (ASE) GLE 9-12

D. Title III, Part A: Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students.

   i. Describe the SEA's standardized entrance and exit procedures for English learners consistent with section 3113(b)(2) of the ESEA. These procedures must include valid and reliable, objective criteria that are applied consistently across the State. At a minimum, the standardized exit criteria must:

- Include a score of proficient on the State's annual English language proficiency assessment;
- Be the same criteria used for exiting students from the English learner subgroup for Title I reporting and accountability purposes; and
- Not include performance on an academic content assessment.

Massachusetts is a member of the WIDA consortium whose standards and assessments are used for English language development programs in the state and whose summative assessment is used to meet the English language proficiency standards and assessment requirements under Titles I and III of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The consortium also provides English language proficiency screeners (the W-APT and the MODEL) that are aligned to the summative assessment for English language proficiency (ACCESS for ELLs and ACCESS 2.0). The consortium includes more than 35 states. As part of the consortium, Massachusetts has access to WIDA's high quality research and data team. The team offers the state support, data analysis and technical assistance in the areas of English language assessment, progress and achievement.

ACCESS for ELLs and ACCESS 2.0 provides scores for all individual language domains (reading, writing, listening and speaking) and also takes all four language domains into account to arrive at a composite score. Massachusetts will use the composite score in conjunction with a literacy score (reading and writing) as part of its exit criteria. Based on the research and data analysis done both internally and by WIDA, Massachusetts' exit scores are set at a level indicating that the student has attained sufficient English proficiency to enable them to perform in the core content areas without language being a barrier.

After developing proposed state-wide entrance procedures and exit criteria, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's proposed procedures and criteria were shared with Title III Directors, smaller, non-Title III ELL Directors and Urban Superintendents during face-to-face network meetings. Input was gathered in the form of a survey which was conducted both online and on-paper. Following an analysis of the survey and taking district and Superintendent feedback into account, the following standardized statewide entrance procedures and exit criteria were established:

In meeting the Title III requirements of standardized entrance procedures, Massachusetts will adopt the following entrance procedures:

- Administration of Massachusetts' Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE)'s Home Language Survey. The survey will be administered and interpreted by staff who have received ESE-developed and approved, standardized training in administering and interpreting the results.

- Students for whom a language other than English is indicated on the Home Language Survey will be screened for English proficiency using the WIDA W-APT or MODEL. As WIDA does not yet have a preschool screener available for use, and as Massachusetts requires the identification of Pre-K English learners, Pre-K students will be identified using the LAS Links or Pre-IPT. Students not proficient in English, according to the cut scores from test publishers or levels recommended by WIDA, as appropriate, qualify as English learners. Districts will submit an assurance when filing grant applications that students are screened within 30 days of enrollment.

In meeting the Title III requirements of standardized exit procedures, Massachusetts will adopt the following exit criteria:

Students must have a composite ACCESS score of 5.0 and a literacy score of 4.5. The composite score takes into account all four language domains (reading, writing, listening and speaking). The literacy score is composed of reading and writing domain scores. The scores used in making exit decisions will be reexamined after an internal data analysis of the 2017 ACCESS results, and will be consistent with guidance and technical assistance provided by WIDA to determine whether these are appropriate exit scores for English learners in Massachusetts. Current ACCESS scores used for exiting students have been determined to be consistent with English proficiency levels needed to perform successfully in the content areas.

ii. SEA Support for English Learner Progress *(ESEA section 3113(b)(6))*: Describe how the SEA will assist eligible entities in meeting:
- The State-designed long-term goals established under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(ii), including measurements of interim progress towards meeting such goals, based on the State's English language proficiency assessments under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(G); and
- The challenging State academic standards.

The SEA will provide technical assistance and professional development targeting Title III served ELs, and will provide suggestions for use of Title III funds as needed to help districts meet the State-designed long-term goals under Section 1111(c)(4)(A)(ii) and challenging State academic standards. Districts will provide in their Title III grant applications reporting elements as required under Section 3121. The SEA will review these reporting elements to ensure that all elements, including progress in English language proficiency and academic content standards, are present. Districts will be asked to use the data to evaluate their programs and consider making changes if necessary to ensure that their programs effectively meet the needs of the students they serve.

Technical assistance through one-on-one phone calls or visits to districts, periodic face-to-face meetings or conferences, and/or webinars will be held to assist districts in ensuring ELs are making progress in English language proficiency as demonstrated by the reporting element in Section 3121(5) and meeting State academic standards as demonstrated in the accountability reporting for proficiency of the EL subgroup in the State content assessment subject areas.

Where multiple districts demonstrate a need for assistance in ensuring the number and percent of their ELs are making progress in English proficiency or in State academic content areas, professional development will be offered, contingent upon availability of funding.

iii. Monitoring and Technical Assistance (ESEA section 3113(b)(8)): Describe:
- How the SEA will monitor the progress of each eligible entity receiving a Title III, Part A subgrant in helping English learners achieve English proficiency; and
- The steps the SEA will take to further assist eligible entities if the strategies funded under Title III, Part A are not effective, such as providing technical assistance and modifying such strategies.

Grant applications submitted to the state by Title III eligible entities will include: a requirement of a narrative complying with Section 3116(b)(1)-(3), a reporting of elements under Section 3121 demonstrating that programs funded under Title III are effective, and a description of how Title III funds will be used to contribute to the agency's strategies for strengthening the quality of the instructional program that students experience, with special attention to early grades literacy, middle grades mathematics, pathways to post-secondary success, and historically disadvantaged students as appropriate.

For School Year 2017-18, Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) data previously required under Section 3122 of the No Child Left Behind Act will be used to demonstrate effectiveness of Title III programs. Beginning in School Year 2018-19, the reporting elements as required under Section 3121 that reflect data from the previous school year will be submitted. In subsequent years reporting elements will be submitted and reviewed by SEA grant reviewers to identify areas where effectiveness of English learner programs appear to be weak. In order to ensure weak programs are strengthened, the State will consult with Title III eligible entities regarding strategies or program models that may yield more effective program results. If needed, the district Title III program staff will coordinate with others in the district and at the SEA to take part in the overall statewide system of support described in Section 2.2.D of this Plan. In addition to the statewide system of supports, some larger districts undergo routine consulting and technical assistance from the Urban ELL Coordinators. The Urban ELL Coordinators work closely with districts to review data and offer support and technical assistance designed specifically for the ELs in that district with the goal of increasing effectiveness of English learner programs and success of ELs in attaining English proficiency and proficiency in content areas.

E. Title IV, Part B: 21ˢᵗ Century Community Learning Centers.
i. Describe how the SEA will use its Title IV, Part B, and other Federal funds to support State-level strategies that are consistent with the strategies identified in 6.1.A above.

The Massachusetts 21st Century Community Learning Centers (MA 21st CCLC) Programs provide additional learning time through longer days (Expanded Learning Time, or ELT) and/or during out-of-school time (OST). MA 21st CCLC programs strive to ensure that learning is meaningful, collaborative, supports mastery, and expands horizons. Programs focus on engaging students who are in need of additional supports to ensure that they are successfully able to access and transition through a well-rounded, safe and supportive

education. Subgrantees are required to identify and recruit students who are classified in high needs categories that include: economically disadvantaged, English language learners, students on Individualized Education Plans, and those identified in need of additional academic and/or social emotional learning (SEL) supports.

ESE's overarching priorities for this program include using more time to:
- Contribute to students' well-rounded education by implementing service-learning and project-based learning that is multi-disciplinary and supports standards-aligned learning in core subject areas.
- Provide creative and innovative enrichment programming, connected to a wide-range of content areas, that helps close proficiency gaps by increasing student engagement, fostering SEL, and promoting college and career readiness and success.
- Provide summer programming that addresses summer learning loss and supports pre-K to grade 12 transitions.
- Provide opportunities for adults (including school staff, program providers and partners) to participate in collaborative planning and professional development that supports desired student outcomes.
- Build strong school-community partnerships and engage families to support student outcomes in all developmental areas as described above.
- Develop sustainable models for providing additional quality learning time.

All MA 21st CCLC OST subgrantees are currently required to provide a minimum of 400 hours of programming during the school year and summer. Students participating are expected to attend regularly and meet statewide developed attendance requirements. ELT subgrantees are currently required to provide a minimum of 300 additional hours over the traditional school schedule. Schools must extend the school year for all students by at least 180 hours, and then offer an additional 120 hours as part of a school vacation or summer program for a select group of students that would benefit from additional supports.

Subgrantees are required to utilize the field-tested and research-based APAS suite of tools, (A Program Assessment System), to assess how participation in 21st CCLC programs supports students' academic and SEL experiences. APAS includes the Survey of Academic and Youth Outcomes (SAYO), a series of pre/post surveys designed to measure the effects of the instruction and support provided to students served by 21st CCLC funded programs. The SAYO includes the following domains: Math or English Language Arts domains (sub-grantees select their academic focus area based on student level data); and SEL domains of problem solving, engagement in learning, perseverance, leadership, self-regulation, relationship with adults and relationship with peers. The SAYO-T (Teacher) and SAYO-S (Staff) are completed by school day teachers and program staff/academic enrichment providers, respectively. The SAYO-Y, taken by students, measures their experiences in the MA 21st CCLC program, sense of competence, and future aspirations.

The Assessment of Program Practices Tool (APT) assesses program practices that research suggests are related to the domains measured by the SAYO, and is intended to assist with

continuous program improvement. The goal of the APT is to assess the extent to which subgrantees are implementing practices congruent with their desired SAYO outcomes.

The APAS has been modified and improved as needed over time and seeks to capture changes in youth that are associated with participation in a high-quality, academically enriched program, which would likely occur over a one-year period.
Monitoring efforts have been established that provide technical assistance to subgrantees while addressing programmatic, performance, and fiscal issues. These efforts include site visits, training sessions, meetings, verbal and written communications, survey and data collection and analysis, mid-year and year-end evaluation reports, and a yearly continuation grant application. Student-level demographic and attendance data is collected bi-annually for all participating students. SAYO pre/post data is collected three times per year (fall, spring and summer) on a representative sample of students.

Family and community engagement is a priority and a required element of the MA 21st CCLC program. Applicants are encouraged to set aside a minimum of five percent (5%) of their overall budget for the purposes of engaging families and the community in meaningful ways.

ii. Describe the SEA's processes, procedures, and priorities used to award subgrants consistent with the strategies identified above in 6.1.A. above and to the extent permitted under applicable law and regulations.

The MA 21st CCLC's grant eligibility criterion complies with all federal requirements and has evolved to include new state measures of economic status. Currently, priority for funding is given to applicants that propose to serve youth in schools/communities with higher percentages of students who are economically disadvantaged; are considered among the lowest performing 20% of schools in the Commonwealth (as defined in ESE's current accountability system); and/or submit an application in full partnership that includes a school district, and a community-based organization(s) or other public or private organization. Additional competitive priority criterion and grant funding categories are established each year that align with state-level priorities and initiatives.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) offers technical assistance (TA) for interested applicants each year prior to the grant application deadline. A community review team is recruited and trained to make recommendations for which applicants are awarded funding. ESE staff review applications for eligibility and compliance with grant requirements. Final grant awards are generally made each summer, with the goal of programs starting to provide services as soon as possible at the start of the new school year.

Grants are typically awarded for three-years, pending appropriation and successful implementation of programming and submission of required program reporting. Substantial training and technical assistance systems have been developed to support subgrantees and ESE's overarching priorities for additional learning time. Offerings include: professional development and technical assistance (provided by highly qualified internal staff and

outside consultants), regional networks, professional learning communities, and peer mentoring.

ESE provides an opportunity for subgrantees that are in their final year of a three-year funding cycle to apply to receive a subsequent three-year grant through a competitive Exemplary Grant process. Exemplary applicants must demonstrate continuous program improvement through data, a site visit and an application process, as well as through subgrantee staff's ability to serve as a resource and mentor for new and other existing MA 21st CCLC and OST programs in the Commonwealth.

F. Title V, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income School Program.
   i. Provide the SEA's specific measurable program objectives and outcomes related to activities under the Rural and Low-Income School Program, if applicable.

Background
The goal of Massachusetts' public education system for preschool through grade 12 is to prepare all students for success after high school. ESE has identified five primary strategies that support this goal:
- Strengthen standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Promote educator development
- Support social-emotional learning, health, and safety
- Turn around the lowest performing districts and schools
- Use technology and data to support student learning

The state's overarching goal and supporting strategies apply equally to students participating in Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS)-funded programs, which are designed to provide supplemental funding for rural districts to increase student achievement. In FY17, two districts in Massachusetts were eligible for RLIS funding.

Program objectives and outcomes
Funds received under the RLIS program must be used to help all students meet the state's academic standards and to support activities allowable under Title I, Part A, Title II, Part A, Title III, or Title IV, Part A, and may include parent involvement activities. Accordingly, RLIS-funded program objectives and measurable outcomes include the following:
- strengthen the core program in schools and provide academic and/or support services to low-achieving students at the preschool, elementary, middle, and high school levels;
- increase graduation rates and decrease dropout rates;
- improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders;
- increase the number of teachers, principals, and other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement in schools;
- provide low-income and minority students equitable access to effective teachers, principals, and other school leaders;

- increase the English language proficiency of ELs by providing effective language instruction educational programs that meet the needs of ELs and increase English language proficiency and student academic achievement;
- support well-rounded educational opportunities;
- support safe and healthy students; and/or
- support effective use of technology.

All activities funded under the RLIS program must be identified through district needs assessments and improvement plans, and aligned with recipient districts' objectives and expected outcomes for programs funded through Title I, Part A, Title II, Part A, Title III, and/or Title IV, Part A, including the expectations for academic achievement defined by the state's district and school accountability system. Overall academic achievement objectives and outcomes for Titles I-IV are described in Sections 4 through 6, and in the Long-Term Goals section of this Consolidated State Plan.

As part of the annual application for funding, districts are required to describe the specific program objectives and anticipated outcomes that they have identified to increase student achievement. Massachusetts provides direct technical assistance to recipient districts, including help with application planning and completion, opportunities to network with similarly situated districts, and the appropriate level of assistance and intervention as dictated by the state's accountability and assistance system. Most importantly, low-performing schools are provided direct expert assistance, supplemental funding, research-based resources, and preferred access to professional development. Such access might include coaching, professional development focused on instructional leadership and curriculum development, planning and program implementation support, and data analysis assistance. All recipients, regardless of level of performance or rate of growth, are monitored for both fund use and reported measures of program effectiveness.

G. McKinney-Vento Act.
   i. Consistent with section 722(g)(1)(B) of the McKinney-Vento Act, describe the procedures the SEA will use to identify homeless children and youths in the State and assess their needs.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) through the Education of Homeless Children and Youth program (MA EHCY) currently employs several strategies to identify and assess the needs of homeless children and youth. These strategies include training, outreach, technical assistance and guidance, monitoring, McKinney-Vento sub-grants, and state law. These strategies are used in tandem to ensure that, regardless of where or when children become homeless, whether they are in sub-grant districts or not, they are able to access a public education.

A key strategy in identification is training offered to a broad audience which include homeless liaisons, district staff, district administrators, other state agencies, and community service providers. Training opportunities cover how homelessness is defined, what it looks like across Massachusetts, the educational rights of homeless children and youth, the roles of the homeless liaison and state coordinator, and best practices in addressing the needs of

homeless children and youth. ESE uses a variety of formats and tailors trainings to current topics and specific requests.

- Typically, McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Orientation sessions are half-day events offered every October regionally and are designed primarily for new liaisons, district staff working with homeless students and staff from providers and sister agencies that support our homeless families and youth. Orientation sessions cover the technical aspects of the law, who is homeless, educational rights, and the roles of the homeless liaison and the state coordinator. The impact of homelessness on behavior and learning, what homelessness looks like in different parts of the state, and how the state shelter system works are also covered. The importance of collaboration, knowing where to find resources and best practices are stressed. Power Point slides from the Orientations are posted on the MA EHCY webpage.
- Roundtables can provide further training for homeless liaisons and district staff and are generally offered in the spring, usually regionally and occasionally statewide.
- Homelessness looks very different across Massachusetts from large urban centers to the smaller New England towns of the Berkshires and the coastline. To address this, local conversations are provided at the request of a small group of liaisons and are facilitated discussions of local concerns, whether that means talking about the doubling up of homeless children and youth with friends and relatives in dense communities, or the impact of the large shelter system on small towns, etc.
- Webinars are also offered as pressing topics arise in an effort to reach a large number of district liaisons and staff with specific information; most recently webinars focused on reauthorization under the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA).
- District level training tailored to specific groups such as enrollment staff, administrators, or school nurses is offered periodically by the state coordinator in collaboration with the district's homeless liaison. By focusing on the detailed knowledge of the local streets and buildings and the "red flags"/early warning indicators of homelessness in school engagement, health and well-being in health and well being, targeted district training has resulted in increased identification and appreciation of the rights of homeless children and youth.
- In recognition of the time constraints on district staff, ESE is currently exploring how best to provide more accessible training including online and topic-focused opportunities each year.
- ESE shares announcements from the National Center for Homeless Education's (NCHE) training opportunities and the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth's (NAEHCY) annual conference with districts and charter schools.
- The Massachusetts Migrant Education program has coordinated with the MA EHCY program to develop and implement a Migrant Homeless Verification form to be used by migrant recruiters when they are working with families in their homes. Training is provided by the state coordinator to ensure the recruiters understand the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act, the definition of homelessness, and the educational right of the children they are working with.
- In Massachusetts, children with disabilities make up 27% of the homeless students population compared to 17% of the state wide student body. As a member of the State Special Education Advisory Council the state coordinator has presented on the needs and rights of homeless students including young children. Additionally many homeless

liaisons are also special education directors and/or early childhood directors. Trainings and presentations to these groups cite the disproportionate representation and the importance of identifying homeless students with disabilities, expediting enrollment, evaluations, and implementation of individual education plans (IEPs).

In addition to providing extensive training ESE uses outreach to families, service providers, and partners as a strategy to identify homeless children and youth and to assess their needs.

- The MA EHCY program distributes posters and brochures outlining the educational right of homeless children and youth to LEAs, service providers, partners, and at all trainings and events.
- The MA EHCY website is updated regularly, includes a list of homeless liaisons, annual data collection results, and links to other resources. This website is also used by parents and providers alike to connect with liaisons and seek guidance and support.
- The state coordinator provides presentations and updates to a variety of community groups such as local legal service providers, the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, local councils on aging, and grassroots groups supporting homeless families.
- Outreach and collaboration with service providers increases referrals to homeless liaisons of families and students that are identified outside of the school or classroom.
- The state coordinator represents ESE at the Massachusetts Interagency Council for Housing and Homelessness, Massachusetts Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Young Adult Commission, State Special Education Advisory Council, and the State Head Start Coordinating Council.

The MA EHCY program handles 400-500 cases per year and hundreds of informational calls. Providing guidance through the office of the state coordinator offers families and providers another avenue to identify homelessness and the needs of homeless students. Often having a third party to discuss sensitive issues such as housing and homelessness creates a safe space for self-disclosure without a family feeling they may jeopardize their relationship with a school district. The technical assistance and guidance offered to school districts allows suggestions around best practices to be tailored to particular cases.

The McKinney-Vento sub-grants serve as another means of strengthening identification and assessing the needs of homeless children and youth. While currently only twenty-seven districts out of four hundred and eight districts receive sub-grants, their homeless students represent 75% of the state's homeless student population. Several of the sub-grantees, both large and small, identify 10-12% of their district student body as homeless at some point during the school year.

Sub-grantees are currently required to hold service coordination committee meetings four times a year to build awareness in the community, increase identification and expand access to services and resources. As a result, communication between school districts and providers has grown, which enables both to make referrals with confidence to the other.

- Building awareness of homelessness, the needs of homeless students and their educational rights, along with the identification of homeless children and youth continue to be priority activities in Requests for Proposals.
- Further, the state coordinator has encouraged districts, particularly sub-grantees, to engage school committees on an ongoing basis. The intent of this strategy is to ensure that school committee members understand the needs of homeless students so that they are better able to address concerns when they arise. It has had the added benefit of school committee members being able to assist their constituents experiencing housing instability.
- Sub-Grantee meetings are generally held twice a year and provide opportunities to share best practices and challenges. Discussions have focused on engaging community providers, identifying and supporting unaccompanied homeless youth, district training, and training opportunities for liaisons.

Interagency collaboration has been critical to the implementation and identification both through the sub-grantees and at the SEA level. When McKinney-Vento was reauthorized in 2002 under the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), the state legislature established the McKinney-Vento Steering Committee with the express purpose of advising ESE on the implementation of the law. This Committee has continued to meet on a semi-annual basis since 2003 and serves as a sounding board of stakeholders for the MA EHCY.

ii. Describe the SEA's programs for school personnel (including liaisons designated under section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) of the McKinney-Vento Act, principals and other school leaders, attendance officers, teachers, enrollment personnel, and specialized instructional support personnel) to heighten the awareness of such school personnel of the specific needs of homeless children and youths, including such children and youths who are runaway and homeless youths.

As with identification, ESE places an emphasis on informing a broad audience through a variety of mediums to increase the awareness of the needs of homeless children and youth and their educational rights. It has been the experience of the state coordinator that the more that is understood about the needs of homeless students and the importance of educational stability, the greater the acceptance of their educational rights that ensure that. As mentioned above, trainings range from half-day orientation sessions to regional and state roundtables to more local discussions of particular needs in an area. Targeted training for front line staff such as enrollment staff, guidance and adjustment counselors and school nurses focus on red flags/ early warning indicators of homelessness. Webinars, online posting of information and online training opportunities are all designed to reach as broad an audience as possible. These strategies complement the more traditional outreach efforts of distributing posters and brochures wherever homeless families receive services or access resources. All outreach and training opportunities are open to the public including service providers and state agencies.

Another opportunity to heighten awareness is seen in the hundreds of cases and informational calls the MA EHCY program receives. Staff intentionally walk liaisons and providers through cases to support their understanding of who is homeless, the needs of

homeless families, how to assist homeless children accessing school, what their rights are, and suggest best practices in supporting them.

Similarly, monitoring is approached as an opportunity to heighten awareness and improve the identification and support of homeless students. While the MA EHCY program is aligned with ESE's LEA monitoring schedule for federal programs and efforts have been made to streamline the process making it less onerous on LEAs and possible to increase the number of LEAs monitored each year, the state coordinator continues to frame it as a tutorial whenever possible.

In addition to those efforts, the state coordinator participates on several commissions and advisory councils. Currently, these include but are not limited to the following:

- The state coordinator represents ESE on the Massachusetts Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness and its Family Services sub-committee to ensure that homeless children and education are at the table.
- The state coordinator is also active on the state's Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Young Adult Commission and participates in that Commission's Identification and Connections working Group which has overseen three statewide Youth Counts and the reporting of results.
- For young homeless children the state coordinator sits on the Head Start State Coordinating Council based at the Department of Early Education and Care and its recently formed subcommittee on homeless children.
- The state coordinator is also a member of the state special education advisory council and has presented on mobility and access concerns and more broadly on homeless education and the reauthorization.

Currently, McKinney-Vento sub-grantees are required to convene a service coordination committee four times a year with community based service providers. The purpose of these committees is to help with identification, heighten awareness in the community of the educational rights and needs of homeless children and to open communications between schools and providers regarding referrals.

iii. Describe the SEA's procedures to ensure that disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youths are promptly resolved.

The MA EHCY McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Dispute Resolution Process and the related forms have been posted on the MA EHCY program's webpage since 2003. They have been reviewed and revised to reflect reauthorization under ESSA and to make the process more parent friendly. Disputes cover eligibility, school selection, and enrollment and have grown in complexity over the years. In all cases the student has the right to attend the school selected by the parent pending a resolution.

Orientation sessions present dispute resolution as a three stage process. Initially, efforts should be made by the homeless liaison to resolve the dispute at the local level. If concerns still exist, either the liaison or the parent/unaccompanied homeless youth should reach out

to the state coordinator, who is not a decision maker in the dispute process, but provides technical assistance and guidance. In many situations, concerns and questions can be answered by the state coordinator. At this point other issues such as special education can be directed to the appropriate offices to ensure all of the student's rights. Finally, if either party remains unhappy with the guidance they received, the dispute process may be initiated. At any stage a parent may engage an attorney or advocate to assist or represent him/her. Due to the inherent conflict of interest in their position, homeless liaisons may not deny enrollment without providing the parent with the right to appeal to ESE.

The Dispute process itself currently consists of two brief forms; the School District Notification to Parent/Guardian of Enrollment Decision and the Parent/Guardian Appeal of School District Enrollment Decision. All parties are encouraged to provide as much information as they feel is relevant. Once all documentation is submitted, disputes are reviewed by the Commissioner's Designee and Legal Unit. If there are any questions, the state coordinator is asked to follow up with the appropriate parties. A resolution is issued whenever possible within 5-10 school days. ESE typically resolves over fifty disputes a year.

iv. Describe the SEA's procedures to ensure that that youths described in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Act and youths separated from the public schools are identified and accorded equal access to appropriate secondary education and support services, including by identifying and removing barriers that prevent youths described in this paragraph from receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school, in accordance with State, local, and school policies.

Massachusetts has taken a multi-pronged approach to the needs of both unaccompanied homeless youth enrolled in school and those youth who have been separated from school including youth that have had little or no education. This means that while the definition and identification of unaccompanied homeless youth, their needs and best practices in supporting them are covered in the MA EHCY program trainings, technical assistance, sub-grant funding, and monitoring as described above, the program also reaches out to other offices within ESE to integrate awareness and the needs of unaccompanied homeless youth into their work. Examples of this collaboration include the following:

- The state coordinator has presented and recommended homeless liaisons to speak on panels at ESE's conference on dropout prevention and re-engagement. Trainings offered by other units within the Department that address the re-engagement and support of out of school youth are highlighted for homeless liaisons.
- MA EHCY will continue to collaborate with ESE's dropout prevention staff and encourage the use of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for homeless students given their high mobility. Training has been and will continue to be provided with a specific focus on re-engaging youth, using student developed Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), assisting youth with FASFA applications, verification of homelessness, and college and career counseling. The National Center for Homeless Education's template for FASFA verification is posted and distributed to homeless liaisons. Verification of homelessness for all students, particularly unaccompanied homeless youth, is covered in the Orientation sessions for homeless liaisons and is discussed in technical assistance calls.

The 2014 graduation rate for unaccompanied homeless youth in a four-year cohort was 67% and given a fifth year went up to 74.8%. This is slightly higher than the rate for homeless students that remain with their parents which was 63%. There are a few possible reasons for this: 1) there may be a closer link between having a place to stay at night and going to school during the day for unaccompanied youth (an adult may be more willing to take you in for the night if you are going to school the next day), 2) the resources unaccompanied youth tend to turn to are friends and relatives that are close by, and 3) students that stay with their parents are more likely to end up outside of their school district while their families are moved around in the shelter system or are in search of services that are more spread out. This would suggest that the most important strategy for improving graduation rates for homeless students may be to ensure that they remain in or return to their school of origin, staying connected to faculty that know them, and minimizing the concern of credit loss.

Massachusetts school districts exercise home rule for all course credit and graduation requirements. While full credit for standard completed courses has not been a problem, extending partial credit has been difficult particularly in those situations when students have moved between high schools with traditional scheduling and block scheduling. Reauthorization provides another opportunity to explore new ways of addressing this issue.

Other strategies to support homeless youth, particularly those that are unaccompanied, both enrolled in school and those separated from school include the following:

- Many districts have implemented or partnered with mentoring programs to re-engage students at risk of dropping out or who have already left school. This is based on extensive research showing that feeling connected to a caring adult is a strong protective factor that supports high school graduation.
- Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) are designed by students to explore their interests, career options, and to support post-secondary education planning. ILPs travel with a student and provide a way for students to communicate and engage with a school to meet their needs. This is a positive platform particularly for students who are highly mobile and/or homeless. Similarly, the state coordinator has reached out to ESE's dropout prevention staff to incorporate other strategies such as Early Warning Indicators.
- Massachusetts has supported districts that have developed alternative education programs for students that are better suited for non-traditional classroom settings. These programs can be very helpful for homeless students and particularly unaccompanied homeless youth who need to work during school hours, recover credits, or juggle other responsibilities due to their living arrangements.
- The state coordinator represents ESE on the Massachusetts Commission for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Young Adults and actively participates on its Identification and Connections working group which has overseen three annual statewide Youth Counts. This commission has built awareness of unaccompanied youth, their needs, and is piloting programs and services to address those needs.
- The state coordinator is a founding and active member of the Post-Secondary Homeless Student Network and has helped to design and co-presented the Post-Secondary Homeless Education Regional Forums during 2015-2016 to bring higher education

administrators, admissions, and financial aid officers and staff together with homeless liaisons, high school guidance counselors, local providers and child welfare to expand awareness of the growing population of homeless youth transitioning to higher education, their unique needs for housing, food, and support, and the abyss they fall into when those needs are not met.

v. Describe the SEA's procedures to ensure that homeless children and youths:
- Have access to public preschool programs, administered by the SEA or LEA, as provided to other children in the State;
- Who meet the relevant eligibility criteria, do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities; and
- Who meet the relevant eligibility criteria, are able to participate in Federal, State, and local nutrition programs.

Among the procedures used by ESE at the SEA level to ensure homeless children and youth's access to education is monitoring of districts. The MA EHCY program has monitored both sub-grant and non-sub-grant districts since the 2007-2008 school year for compliance under No Child Left Behind. The state typically monitors sixty to seventy districts for federal program compliance on a six-year rotating basis with mid-cycle reviews at the three-year mark. The MA EHCY program follows the same schedule and selects twenty or more of those districts each year. This procedure has been streamlined to a desk review and focused site visits as needed and is being further updated to reflect reauthorization under the ESSA. As mentioned above, monitoring is also viewed as an opportunity to provide direct training where needed and to ensure that homeless students' educational rights are being honored.

A. Access to preschool: Massachusetts does not have universal mandatory preschool nor does the SEA administer any preschool programs. As a result, early education programming and transportation to that programming varies from district to district. In the past this has meant that while the state recognized preschool as a school of origin for homeless children and the importance of their educational stability, access to transportation when needed was uneven and/or unlikely. Reauthorization under the ESSA addresses this barrier by extending transportation to the school of origin for homeless preschool children and districts are now sharing this responsibility.

- McKinney-Vento Orientations and regional roundtables include a focus on the targeted populations of preschoolers and unaccompanied homeless youth, and the role of the homeless liaison to ensure their access to education to the extent that the district offers a preschool education and wherever possible liaisons are urged to find a way to get a homeless preschooler enrolled and placed in a seat. However, many districts do not offer preschool or offer only programming limited to special education. When no programming is offered in district or there are no available appropriate seats, the liaison is directed to refer families to community based early education, including Head Start, where available.

- For a few grant cycles the EHCY Request for Proposals allowed applicants to request additional funding for preschoolers and/or unaccompanied homeless youth. However, there was no evidence that this increased identification or access for either group and was discontinued.
- The state coordinator participates in ESE's internal Early Learning Working Group.
- The state coordinator sits on the MA Head Start State Collaboration Office Advisory Council at the Department of Early Education and Care and collaborates with Horizons for Homeless Children, a nonprofit early education provider and advocate for young homeless children (primarily birth to age 5). Both organizations are members of the state's McKinney-Vento Steering Committee.

B. Access to academic and extracurricular activities:

Due to their high level of mobility homeless students have in many cases lost all their connections to community, providers, family, and friends. Full participation in school including extracurricular activities provides students with opportunities to find their niche in a group, feel connected again, and be able to contribute to a goal. For this reason the MA EHCY has long stressed the importance of homeless students accessing all school courses, activities and events including academic and extracurricular activities such as summer school and all school courses, magnet schools, career and technical education, advanced placement, on-line learning, charter school, special education, gifted and talented programs, vocational education, English language services, Title I programming, and school sponsored activities that take place outside of the typical school day. Districts have ensured that homeless students are able to participate in local field trips, long distance field trips, proms, sports teams, and after school clubs.

The MA EHCY program has always required access and the removal of barriers to summer programming for courses a district required of a student to stay on track for graduation or to be promoted to the next grade. Under ESSA access is expanded to all summer programming not just required courses. Trainings and updates to districts have already included this change.

The two most often cited barriers to full participation are fees and transportation. If fees are a barrier districts must waive them or find scholarships. Often the local Parent Teacher Organization/Association or a community group steps in financially. If transportation poses a barrier to participation, districts are advised to provide it and to be creative for those unusual times when events are held away from the school campus and during out-of-school time. The barrier that has been hardest to overcome is the chronic and severe lack of drivers appropriately licensed to transport children. The state coordinator has reached out to the MA Department of Transportation and the Massachusetts Association of Pupil Transporters highlighting the growing number of homeless students, the expansion of their transportation rights under ESSA, and the large number of children in foster care now covered under Title 1. The state legislature, which has provided some reimbursement for homeless transportation, is in the process of establishing a commission to find other solutions to this crisis.

C. Access to nutrition programs:

Training and technical assistance with school districts stresses that homelessness and food insecurity go hand-in-hand. School meals are highlighted as one of the non-academic ways schools are able to support homeless students and their families. This has included breakfast and lunch with many districts now serving breakfast in the classroom and several districts are considering serving dinner. Other strategies such as sharing tables where uneaten packaged foods can be set aside rather than thrown out are cited and encouraged as best practices and are recommended by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). In addition, food banks and food service directors collaborate to fill homeless students'' backpacks for weekends and school breaks.

Other strategies used to ensure homeless children and youth's access to healthy meals have included the following.

- The State Nutrition programs are based at ESE and have collaborated with the state coordinator to extend summer feeding programs to hotels serving as shelters. This has required a waiver from the USDA and the coordination of sponsors and hotels. During the summer of 2016, more than 1,000 homeless children received more than 10,000 summer meals through this effort.
- The State's Nutrition staff regularly monitors homeless student participation in free school meals. Where they find a lack of compliance they communicate that to the state coordinator who in turn addresses the issue with the local homeless liaison, notes it for further monitoring and highlights homeless student access to nutrition programming in trainings.

vi. Describe the SEA's strategies to address problems with respect to the education of homeless children and youths, including problems resulting from enrollment delays and retention, consistent with sections 722(g)(1)(H) and (I) of the McKinney-Vento Act.

The point at which children enter a school is often the point at which they are identified as homeless. One of the strongest strategies to ensure identification at enrollment and to eliminating enrollment delays has been the training of enrollment staff. This group is often overlooked for training and professional development opportunities so when their role in working with families is spotlighted, they respond enthusiastically. The detail knowledge of the community and each family within the school is framed as the foundation for spotting the clues to possible homelessness. These trainings offered by the state coordinator and local homeless liaison together have time and again ensured greater immediate access for incoming students and has facilitated access to support services for families and students that might otherwise have become disconnected.

- The MA ESE Homeless Education Advisory has been reviewed and revised to reflect reauthorization under ESSA and addresses the immediate enrollment of homeless students, with or without the documentation normally required for enrollment including academic records, records of immunization and other required health records, proof of residency birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs, as well as school records, school selection, and transportation. The Advisory

is posted on the MA EHCY webpage and is covered in the all Orientation and training sessions for homeless liaisons.

- Districts may offer residency affidavits to be completed by host families in doubled up situations. While helpful, districts are reminded that a child may *not* be held out of school while an affidavit is being obtained or if the host refuses to complete one.
- Unpaid fees and fines must be waived and cannot delay enrollment or the transfer of school records.
- The MA Migrant Education Program and the MA EHCY Program have developed a homeless verification form used by Migrant recruiters when they are with families in their homes. Provided with training from the state coordinator recruiters are able to smooth out the enrollment process for those students that are both in migrant families and homeless. This has increased the identification of migrant children living in homeless situations.
- School to school transfer of records has expedited appropriate placement of students with the services they need, particularly when the transfer of records complements discussions with parents about a student's needs.
- The MA EHCY program serves as a third party conduit for the transfer of records in severe domestic violence cases and the state coordinator on many occasions has reached out to counterparts in other states to facilitate the transfer of records across state lines.
- The MA Department of Public Health (DPH) reviews its policies on immunizations and health records annually. Notifications of these updates go out to all school health providers and include McKinney-Vento citations and contact information for the state coordinator. This collaboration with DPH has removed barriers during enrollment and has built awareness among school nurses who are often the front line staff identifying already enrolled homeless students. Similarly, guidance and adjustment counselors may become aware of already enrolled students' homelessness before other staff or faculty members. Training for this group focuses on the impact of homelessness on learning and behavior and equips guidance and adjustment counselors with the knowledge they need to support their students including high school students who are approaching graduation and planning for post-secondary education.
- As a best practice, larger districts and most mid-size districts have implemented building contacts that are able to support the district's homeless liaison in identifying and supporting homeless students at the building level. This expands the liaison's capacity, ensures students' rights, and reduces disruptions.
- The state coordinator stresses collaboration with local medical, dental and mental health clinics that can provide immunizations and physical examinations. This collaboration has facilitated homeless students being treated for their needs and ensure access to sports and other school activities.
- The state coordinator has presented to school-based health clinic staff and clarifies communications between school health providers and homeless liaisons. School nurses and health providers have been grateful to know how to answer questions and to refer students and families that have self-disclosed their homelessness.
- Only a few districts require uniforms and they are prepared to provide uniforms for students that need them, particularly homeless students.

- The attendance rate for homeless students in Massachusetts is 89%. Sometimes this is a result of the state shelter system placing families long distances from the community and school of origin but is also impacted the chronic and severe shortage of drivers. To address these issues MA EHCY has collaborated with the MA Department of Housing and Community Development (the state agency charged with running the state shelter system) regarding shelter placements. MA EHCY has also worked with the MA Department of Transportation, the Massachusetts Association of Pupil Transporters and transportation vendors to review options for ensuring appropriately licensed drivers and vehicles. As the economy improves drivers leave for better paying year-round jobs even as the numbers of homeless students continues to rise.

vii. <u>Assistance from Counselors</u> *(722(g)(1)(K))*: A description of how youths described in section 725(2) will receive assistance from counselors to advise such youths, and prepare and improve the readiness of such youths for college.

As discussed in question iv the MA EHCY program continues to ensure homeless youth as defined in section 725(2) are provided with equal access to college and career counseling, assistance in completing FASFA applications and verification of their homelessness. In addition, through both internal and external collaboration MAEHCY has sought to expand support prior to secondary graduation, through the transition to and graduation from post-secondary education. Strategies to ensure support include the following.

- Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) are designed by students to explore their interests, career options, and to support post-secondary education planning. ILPs travel with a student and provide a way for students to communicate and engage with a school to meet their needs. This is a positive platform particularly for students who are highly mobile and/or homeless. Similarly, the state coordinator has reached out to ESE's dropout prevention staff to incorporate other strategies such as Early Warning Indicators.
- The state coordinator represents ESE on the Massachusetts Commission for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Young Adults and actively participates on its Identification and Connections working group which has overseen three annual statewide Youth Counts. This commission has built awareness of unaccompanied youth, their needs, and is piloting programs and services to address those needs.
- The state coordinator is a founding and active member of the Post-Secondary Homeless Student Network and has helped to design and co-presented the Post-Secondary Homeless Education Regional Forums during 2015-2016 to bring higher education administrators, admissions, and financial aid officers and staff together with homeless liaisons, high school guidance counselors, local providers and child welfare to expand awareness of the growing population of homeless youth transitioning to higher education, their unique needs for housing, food, and support, and the abyss they fall into when those needs are not met.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, through the MA EHCY Program, strives to ensure educational access and stability of homeless children and youth through building awareness, increased identification, policy revision, public notice of

educational rights, and equal access to comparable services. Strategies to accomplish this include training, outreach, technical assistance and guidance, monitoring and intra- and interagency coordination and collaboration with a broad array of stakeholders.

APPENDIX TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDIX LETTER	DOCUMENT TITLE
A	Measurements of Interim Progress
B	Educator Equity Differences in Rates Tables
C	Documentation of Stakeholder Engagement Activities
D	Information Regarding Equitable Access to, and Participation in, the Programs Included in its Consolidated State Plan as Required by Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act

APPENDIX A: Measurements of Interim Progress

Instructions: Each SEA must include the measurements of interim progress toward meeting the long-term goals for academic achievement, graduation rates, and English language proficiency, set forth in the State's response to Title I, Part A question 4.iii, for all students and separately for each subgroup of students, including those listed in response to question 4.i.a. of this document. For academic achievement and graduation rates, the State's measurements of interim progress must take into account the improvement necessary on such measures to make significant progress in closing statewide proficiency and graduation rate gaps.

A. Academic Achievement

Massachusetts will be administering a new statewide assessment in grades 3-8 in the 2016-17 school year. The new assessment, the Next-Generation MCAS, will build upon the successes of both the original MCAS and Massachusetts' two-year trial of the PARCC assessments. The Next-Generation MCAS will be scored on a scale that differs from both the original MCAS and PARCC. Because baseline data from the new assessments will not be available until the summer of 2017, it is not possible for Massachusetts to determine final long-term goals for the state at this time. However, in the interim Massachusetts has set ambitious, long-term academic achievement goals for all students and all subgroups in English language arts, Mathematics and Science based on assessment results from the 2015-16 school year, and plans to apply the same methodology once Next-Generation MCAS results are available. The overall goal is consistent for all groups and subjects: reduce the proficiency gap by one-third over the next six years.

Group	Subject	2016 % Proficient or above	2017 Target	2018 Target	2019 Target	2020 Target	2021 Target	2022 Target
All students		**71.7**	**73.3**	**74.8**	**76.4**	**77.9**	**79.5**	**81.0**
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.		61.9	64.0	66.1	68.2	70.3	72.4	74.5
Asian		83.0	83.9	84.9	85.8	86.7	87.7	88.6
Afr. Amer/Black		56.3	58.7	61.1	63.5	65.9	68.3	70.7
Hispanic/Latino		52.8	55.4	58.0	60.6	63.2	65.8	68.4
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	ELA	72.2	73.7	75.3	76.8	78.3	79.8	81.4
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.		75.7	77.0	78.4	79.7	81.0	82.4	83.7
White		78.1	79.3	80.5	81.7	82.9	84.1	85.3
Econ. Disadvantaged		54.6	57.1	59.6	62.1	64.6	67.1	69.6
ELL and Former ELL		42.7	45.9	49.0	52.2	55.3	58.5	61.6
High needs		52.3	54.9	57.5	60.2	62.8	65.4	68.0
Students w/disabilities		37.6	41.0	44.5	47.9	51.3	54.8	58.2
All students		**64.1**	**66.1**	**68.0**	**70.0**	**72.0**	**74.0**	**75.9**
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.		52.6	55.2	57.8	60.4	63.0	65.6	68.2
Asian		83.4	84.3	85.2	86.1	87.1	88.0	88.9
Afr. Amer/Black	Math	44.0	47.1	50.2	53.2	56.3	59.4	62.5
Hispanic/Latino		44.5	47.6	50.6	53.7	56.7	59.8	62.8
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.		64.3	66.3	68.2	70.2	72.2	74.1	76.1
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.		63.3	65.3	67.3	69.4	71.4	73.4	75.4

Subgroup							
White		70.5	72.1	73.7	75.4	77.0	78.6	80.2
Econ. Disadvantaged		45.6	48.6	51.6	54.6	57.6	60.6	63.6
ELL and Former ELL		40.7	44.0	47.2	50.5	53.7	57.0	60.3
High needs		44.0	47.1	50.2	53.2	56.3	59.4	62.5
Students w/disabilities		30.0	33.9	37.7	41.6	45.4	49.3	53.1
All students		**54.7**	**57.2**	**59.7**	**62.2**	**64.7**	**67.2**	**69.6**
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.		42.4	45.6	48.7	51.9	55.1	58.2	61.4
Asian		70.0	71.7	73.3	75.0	76.6	78.3	79.9
Afr. Amer/Black		30.9	34.7	38.5	42.3	46.1	49.9	53.7
Hispanic/Latino		30.6	34.4	38.2	42.1	45.9	49.7	53.5
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	Science	55.7	58.1	60.6	63.0	65.4	67.9	70.3
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.		51.4	54.1	56.7	59.4	62.1	64.8	67.4
White		62.6	64.7	66.7	68.8	70.8	72.9	74.9
Econ. Disadvantaged		33.8	37.4	41.1	44.7	48.4	52.0	55.6
ELL and Former ELL		19.8	24.2	28.6	33.0	37.4	41.9	46.3
High needs		33.2	36.9	40.5	44.2	47.9	51.6	55.2
Students w/disabilities		26.5	30.5	34.6	38.6	42.7	46.7	50.8

B. Graduation Rates

Four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate

Subgroup	2015 Baseline	2017 Target	2018 Target	2019 Target	2020 Long-term Goal
All students	87.3	88.8	89.5	90.3	91
Economically disadvantaged students	78.2	80.7	82.0	83.2	84.5
Children with disabilities	69.9	73.4	75.1	76.9	78.6
English learners	64	68.2	70.2	72.3	74.4
High Needs	78.5	81.0	82.2	83.5	84.7
African American/Black	77.5	80.1	81.4	82.7	84
Asian	92.4	93.3	93.7	94.2	94.6
Hispanic/Latino	72.2	75.4	77.0	78.6	80.2
American Indian/Alaska Native	79.5	81.9	83.0	84.2	85.4
Multi-race, Non-Hispanic	85.9	87.5	88.4	89.2	90
Native Haw./Pacific Islander	83.8	85.7	86.6	87.6	88.5
White	91.6	92.6	93.0	93.5	94

C. Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency

The WIDA ACCESS for ELLs test is in the midst of a transition from paper and pencil to online testing. This transition requires us to carefully study the adjusted standard setting results and scales to ensure that

the changes support valid determinations of progress toward proficiency, and to determine the best approach to measuring progress. Currently, we base growth-to-proficiency targets on the amount of growth needed by a student to reach English language proficiency (ACCESS Level 5) within six years in a Massachusetts school. When our ongoing transition is complete we will determine the appropriate number of years within which students will be expected to attain English language proficiency, up to the current six year basis, and the associated targets for making progress toward proficiency. We will provide additional information once this work has been completed. In the interim, Massachusetts is setting a long-term goal with interim targets based on the ACCESS for ELLs results from the 2015-16 school year. The goal will be to reduce the percentage of students that are not making sufficient progress towards English language proficiency by 50 percent over the next six years. The baseline and associated targets are detailed below.

Percent of Students Making Progress Toward English Proficiency							
Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
% Making Progress	61.8%	65.0%	68.2%	71.4%	74.6%	77.8%	81.0%

APPENDIX B: Educator Equity Difference in Rates

Percent of learning experiences with types of teachers over the past five years, by student subgroup, for all schools in state

<3 years of experience

Subgroup	Value
Econ. Disadvantaged	16.7
Non-Econ. Disadvantaged	13.5
Students of color	17.3
White students	12.7
ELL	16.9
Non-ELL	14.3
SWD	14.3
Non-SWD	14.4

Out-of-field

Subgroup	Value
Econ. Disadvantaged	5.4
Non-Econ. Disadvantaged	3.2
Students of color	5.7
White students	2.6
ELL	8.3
Non-ELL	3.5
SWD	5.3
Non-SWD	3.6
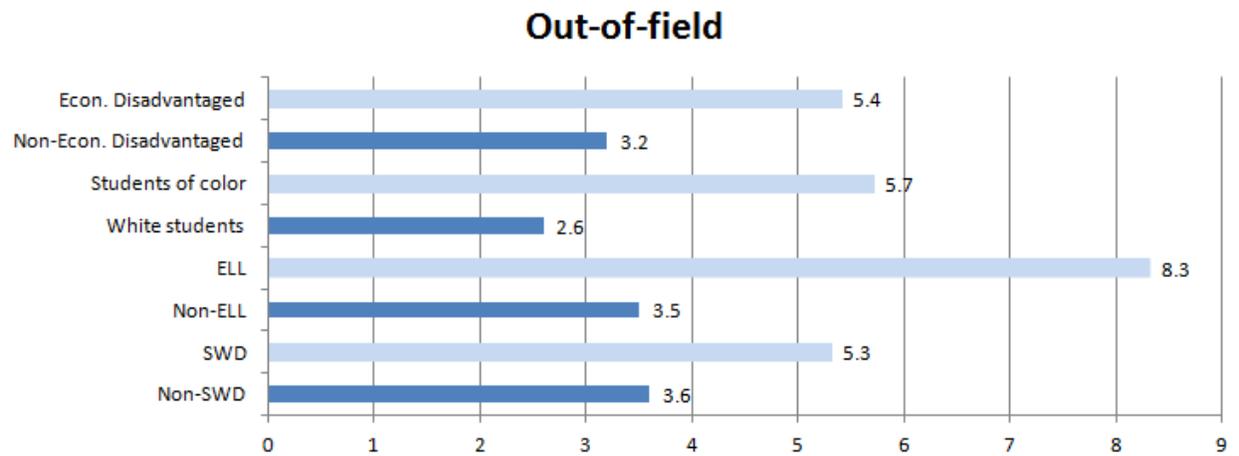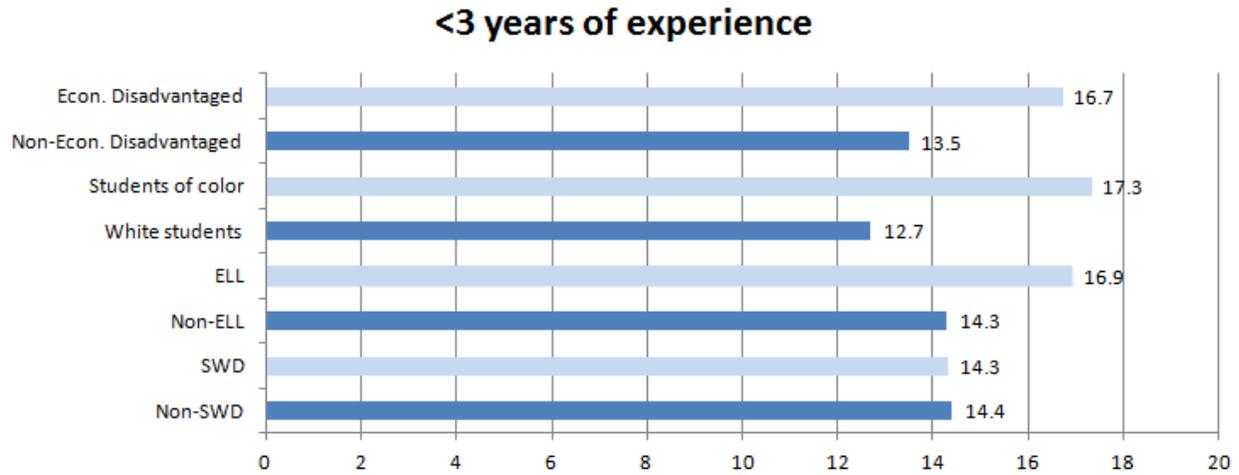
Needs Improvement/Unsat. overall rating

Category	Value
Econ. Disadvantaged	10.1
Non-Econ. Disadvantaged	6.2
Students of color	9.9
White students	5.7
ELL	9
Non-ELL	7.3
SWD	7.1
Non-SWD	7.5
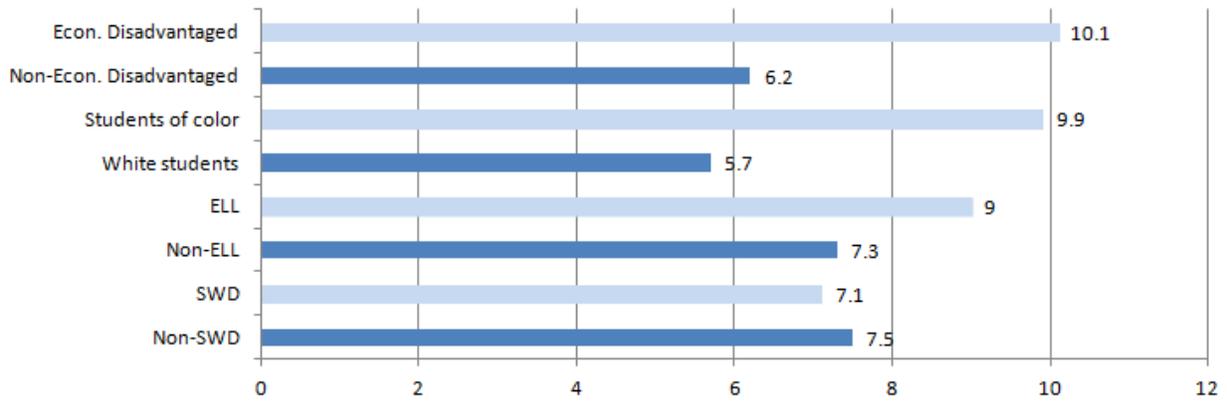
Teachers without Professional Teacher Status

Category	Value
Econ. Disadvantaged	25.9
Non-Econ. Disadvantaged	20.1
Students of color	25.9
White students	19.2
ELL	28
Non-ELL	21.3
SWD	22.1
Non-SWD	21.6

Long-term substitutes

Category	Value
Econ. Disadvantaged	1.8
Non-Econ. Disadvantaged	1.4
Students of color	1.8
White students	1.4
ELL	2
Non-ELL	1.5
SWD	1.6
Non-SWD	1.5
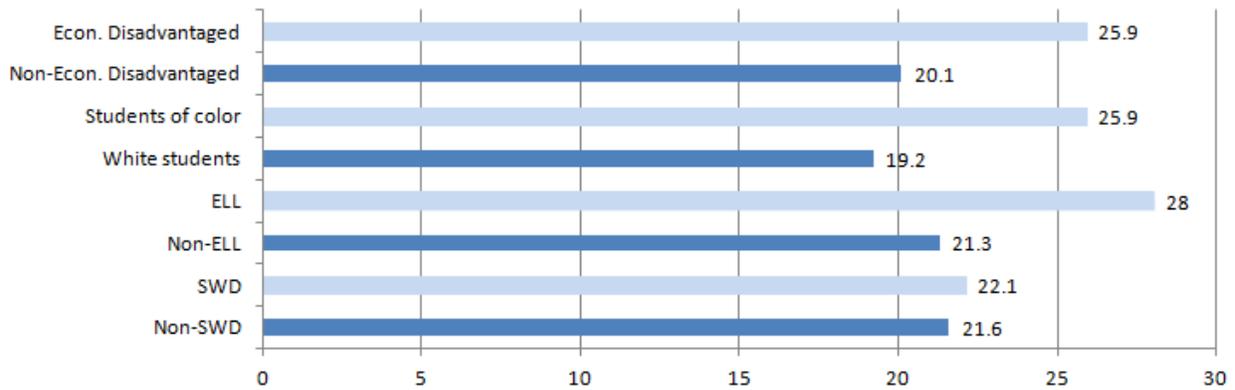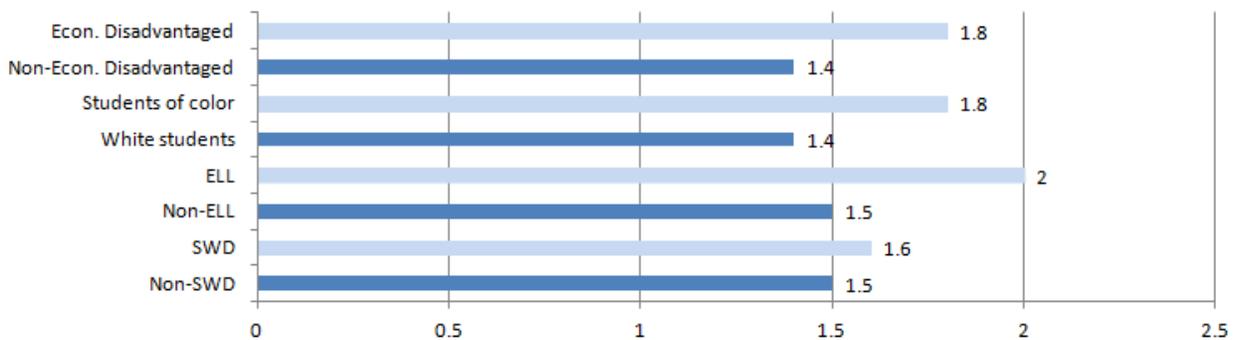
Teachers absent 10+ days

Subgroup	Value
Econ. Disadvantaged	34.1
Non-Econ. Disadvantaged	31.1
Students of color	33.7
White students	30.9
ELL	36.3
Non-ELL	31.6
SWD	32.6
Non-SWD	31.7

Sizes of gaps between student subgroups and their peers not in the subgroup, in percent of learning experiences with teachers

Red (positive) bars indicate that a subgroup has had *more* experiences with the designated type of teacher (measured in percentage-point difference). Blue (negative) bars indicate that a subgroup has had *fewer* experiences with the designated type of teacher (also measured in percentage-point difference).

Teachers with <3 years of experience

Subgroup	Value
Economically disadvantaged	3.2
Students of color	4.6
English Language Learners	2.6
Students with Disabilities	-0.1

Non-HQT

Subgroup	Value
Economically disadvantaged	2.2
Students of color	3.1
English Language Learners	4.8
Students with Disabilities	2.7

Overall NI/U Ed Eval Rating

Subgroup	Value
Economically disadvantaged	3.9
Students of color	4.2
English Language Learners	1.7
Students with Disabilities	-0.4

Without PTS

Subgroup	Value
Economically disadvantaged	5.8
Students of color	6.7
English Language Learners	6.7
Students with Disabilities	0.5

Long-Term Subs

Subgroup	Value
Economically disadvantaged	0.4
Students of color	0.4
English Language Learners	0.5
Students with Disabilities	0.1

Absent 10+ days

| Subgroup	Value
Economically disadvantaged	3
Students of color	2.8
English Language Learners	4.7
Students with Disabilities	0.9

Percent of learning experiences with types of teachers over the past three years, by student subgroup, for all schools receiving assistance under Title I, Part A

| Student group	# of students	Years of experience in MA			In-field		Summative Educator Evaluation Rating	
		% 3+ yrs	% 1-2 yrs	% 0-1 yrs	% Highly Qualified	% not Highly Qualified	% Exemplary/ Proficient	% Needs Improvement/ Unsatisfactory
Economically Disadvantaged	144115	79.6	12.7	7.7	92.5	7.5	91.6	8.4
Non-Economically Disadvantaged	275043	83.4	10.7	6.0	95.5	4.5	94.7	5.3
African American/Black	48038	76.8	14.7	8.5	88.9	11.1	91.7	8.3
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1084	82.0	11.5	6.5	94.4	5.6	93.7	6.3
Asian	24003	84.9	9.8	5.2	95.6	4.4	95.3	4.7
Hispanic or Latino	117386	77.1	14.0	8.9	91.1	8.9	90.3	9.7
Multi-race, non-Hispanic or Latino	13926	82.9	10.9	6.2	95.3	4.7	94.1	5.9
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	372	82.6	10.7	6.7	92.9	7.1	94.5	5.5
White	214349	85.4	9.5	5.2	97.2	2.8	95.6	4.4
Students of color (all)	204809	78.4	13.4	8.2	91.4	8.6	91.5	8.5

The table above shows the percentage of teacher assignments that students in various subgroups in Title I schools have had with teachers of different characteristics, and shows disparities in access to experienced, in-field and highly-rated teachers. Over the past three years, economically disadvantaged students were more likely than their non-economically disadvantaged peers to be assigned to inexperienced, out-of-field and lower-rated teachers. For example, economically disadvantaged students were about 67 percent more likely to be assigned to a class with an out-of-field teacher. We see the same trend when comparing the experiences of students of color to those of white students. For example, Hispanic/Latino students had more than twice as many experiences with lower-rated teachers, compared to white students' experiences. To address these disparities, the Department continues to pursue the strategies described in our state plan to address overall gaps in access to experienced, in-field and highly-rated educators.

APPENDIX C: Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Summary of Public Outreach on Draft Massachusetts ESSA Plan: Public Comment Period, February 7 - March 9, 2017

After nearly a year of public outreach, which included several rounds of focus groups, special meetings, public forums, phone calls, and other engagements, ESE drew up a draft plan required under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and officially solicited public comment on it from February 7 through March 9, 2017. During this official public comment period, ESE received scores of letters, postcards, phone calls, and emails, along with over 1,000 responses to an online survey. The Department also continued to hold meetings with key stakeholders to capture their good thinking in person. The following synthesis represents the feedback that the agency received during the official public comment period. The Department extends its sincere gratitude to all of the people who engaged with the agency on this important matter.

The Department's Priorities

The four focus areas laid out in the draft plan received strong support from respondents. When asked to what degree these topics should be special priorities or focus areas, a majority of the 1,039 survey respondents[19] strongly agreed with all four.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Early grades literacy	78.8%	17.3%	2.3%	1.6%
Additional supports for students who have historically struggled to attain proficiency	74.7%	20.2%	2.9%	2.2%
High quality pathways to educational and career opportunities after secondary school	66.7%	27.3%	4.6%	1.3%
Middle grades math	60.1%	35.5%	2.9%	1.4%

Providing access to a well-rounded curriculum

Respondents frequently and consistently expressed their strong desire for students to receive a well-rounded education. Generally, they expressed that ESSA presents an opportunity for the state and local school districts to strengthen more areas of the curriculum so that the needs of the whole student are addressed. Whether through the inclusion of a metric in the accountability system or specific programming funded through federal entitlement grants, most respondents wanted the ESSA plan to direct attention, resources, and supports for all parts of a well-rounded curriculum. Though not an

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[19] 52 percent educators, 29 percent concerned citizens, 28 percent parents, 16 percent administrators, 10 percent advocacy groups, 1 percent students (respondent categories do not add up to 100 percent because respondents were permitted to select multiple roles (such as teacher and parent)

exclusive list, ESE received responses for the following elements of such a curriculum during the public comment period: (They are sorted here by volume of responses to the open response items on the survey.).

Physical, Health, and Wellness Education

In approximately 48 percent of the open response items on the survey, respondents made the case that improving students' physical health should be a priority, given the research on the links between a healthy, active lifestyles and student achievement, as well as concerns about the opioid crisis and the growing childhood obesity epidemic. Despite the fact that physical education for each student in every grade is a statutory requirement in Massachusetts, many respondents pointed out that this state law is rarely enforced and that the inclusion of physical and health education in the ESSA plan, especially under the Social-Emotional Learning, Health, and Safety strategy, would help reinforce that such programming is essential for all students and that a student's ability to self-manage their health has long-term benefits. Respondents also noted that ESSA should provide resources and opportunities for both in-school and out-of-school programs that promote physical fitness and health.

Arts Education

In over 24 percent of the open response items on the survey, as well as in dozens of letters, emails, and Pantone color swatch postcards, respondents made the case that access to the arts was a fundamental component of the humanities and a critical piece of becoming a well-rounded citizen. Many asked that ESE include access to the arts both as an accountability measure, as it was presented in the draft plan, and as an area where the Commonwealth could enhance its programming (specifically among its Title IV programs, but also in professional development programs such as Title IIA). Some respondents also cited evidence that shows the positive effects of arts education in improving student engagement and corresponding academic improvement in English language arts and mathematics. It is important to note, however, that while no respondents disagreed with the idea of broadening students' access to the arts, a few expressed a specific concern about including access to the arts as an accountability measure. Their argument was that certain specialized schools with an intentionally narrow program of study, or where arts is "baked into" other courses within the general curriculum, might be adversely impacted by such an accountability measure and that the state ought to consider publicly reporting on student access to the arts rather than using such a measure as part of a formal accountability system.

Career and Technical Education

In over 5 percent of open response survey items, respondents expressed a desire for ESSA programs to address, either through career and technical education (CTE) programming, personalized learning programming, or through a metric in the accountability system, the importance of building career pathways throughout the K-12 system. As part of the broader push for a well-rounded curriculum, respondents from both the education and business sectors would like to see ESSA incentivize career-readiness skills being part of schools' general, accepted curriculum rather than existing in a separate niche area of the curriculum.

Computer Science Education

In over 5 percent of open response survey items, respondents wrote about the importance of computer science and advanced math skills in the current economy. Respondents wanted to ensure that ESSA provided more opportunities to build upon the momentum established with

Massachusetts' new digital literacy and computer science standards and expand science, technology, engineering and mathematics offerings in the context of a well-rounded curriculum.

Gifted and Talented Education

In over 5 percent of open response survey items, respondents lamented the dearth of opportunities for gifted and talented students in the Commonwealth and expressed hope that ESSA could provide resources and/or incentives to develop high-quality talented and gifted programming in districts. The Department heard concerns expressed on behalf of talented and gifted students, as well as those who are profoundly gifted.

Library and Media Education

In approximately 2 percent of open response survey items, respondents stated that they would like each student to have access to a library and a professional librarian and that the ESSA plan ought to provide resources **and**/or incentives for high-quality libraries and media centers.

Civics Education

In approximately 1 percent of open response survey items, respondents discussed the importance of including civics education, financial literacy, and media literacy as part of a well-rounded curriculum and said that ESSA could provide opportunities for schools and districts to focus on those areas.

Providing supports to students who have historically struggled to reach grade-level proficiency

Respondents offered comments on behalf of a wide range of student groups, all of which have historically struggled to reach grade-level proficiency. Below is a summary of many of the concerns and comments the agency received on behalf of said groups.

English Learner Education

Many respondents expressed concerns that the state plan needs to focus more on providing supports so that all English learners attain proficiency in all domains of English literacy. Some respondents made the case that low proficiency English learners should be exempt from all state testing. Others argued that a greater emphasis should be placed on growth and progress for English learners and cautioned against putting too much weight on attainment, especially for those students who are new to the language.

Special Education

Respondents advocating for more supports for students with disabilities gave feedback on the increasing number of students with emotional and behavioral disabilities and said that ESSA provides an opportunity to help both educators and students address those students' learning needs. Feedback was also nearly universal that the Commonwealth should continue to report on the special education subgroup and take advantage of the flexibility in ESSA that allows states to also report on those students who formerly qualified for special education services.

Education for Minority Populations

The agency engaged in conversations with a number of groups from minority populations. All were strong proponents of the provision in ESSA to continue to report on proficiency and growth by racial and ethnic group so that a spotlight is shone on their progress. Representatives of the Hispanic/Latino community expressed concerns about the needs of undocumented and first-generation families who hope ESSA will result in their receiving clearer and more digestible

information about the quality of education their students are receiving. Representatives of the African-American community expressed support for the continuation of holding all students and educators to high standards. The Native American community expressed enthusiasm about new provisions in ESSA that enable closer partnerships between tribal education agencies and state education agencies, but representatives of that community also expressed concerns about the stresses of colliding cultures, inequities in the curriculum, and providing the right kinds of social/emotional/behavior supports for their student population.

Modifications to the Accountability System

The survey results show that many of the indicators that were proposed in the draft plan were strongly supported by respondents to the survey. This is consistent with the information that the agency gathered throughout the ESSA consultation process.

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Student access to the arts	76.0%	20.1%	2.7%	1.1%
Student access to a broad curriculum	68.6%	27.8%	2.3%	1.3%
Student access to advanced coursework	60.6%	35.3%	3.0%	1.1%
School climate and culture (as measured by a student survey)	54.8%	32.0%	9.4%	3.8%
Chronic absenteeism	43.3%	39.2%	12.2%	5.3%
9th grade course passing rates	34.8%	49.4%	12.5%	3.3%

When asked to what degree they supported the following statements about the proposed accountability system, respondents were generally in favor of all the statements made:

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Accountability status for a district should be determined by the performance of all of its students taken together, rather than by the performance of its weakest school.	49.3%	36.5%	9.6%	4.5%
In aiming to provide a multidimensional picture about school performance, the proposed system strikes a good balance between too few and too many data elements.	21.7%	56.3%	16.3%	5.7%

The proposed system includes the right amount of indicators related to outcomes (e.g., student academic attainment, high school graduation).	23.1%	53.8%	16.4%	6.7%
The proposed system includes the right amount of indicators related to inputs (e.g., access to arts or advanced courses).	31.1%	42.9%	17.4%	8.6%

With respect to the accountability system in general, respondents offered a wide range of perspectives on what ought to be modified. Some offered that the proposed system is overly complex, difficult for families and educators alike to comprehend, and does not accurately or fairly measure school quality. Some argued for a five-month delay in submitting the plan to the federal government and/or a two-year delay in implementing the accountability system ratings to allow for the Commonwealth's transitions to both ESSA and to a new, next-generation MCAS. Others had an opposing point of view, contending that the proposed system ought to be enacted immediately and include even more measures, such as the extent to which exclusionary discipline practices are used, more nuanced and advanced measures of school climate and culture (such as family and community involvement), and more specific measures related to academically advanced pathways. However, almost all respondents agreed that an accountability system in general is an important part of the state's role in improving the education system; the challenge is in getting all of the components right to arrive at what's best for all students.

Strengthening Transitions between K-12 and Early Education
Many respondents wanted to see a clearer and more pronounced narrative around collaboration between K-12 and early education. Throughout the plan, these stakeholders were looking for a clearer vision across state agencies about greater integration for the critical transitions that students make early in their lives. Some respondents expressed the need for more definition around transition activities (such as shared K-12 and early education professional development, shared assessment data, curriculum alignment, summer learning programs, etc.). Respondents expressed hope that the new ESSA provisions that require coordination of K-12 and Head Start, as well as other specific provisions, will enable smoother transitions and more high-quality opportunities for young children.

Provisions related to non-public schools
A number of respondents expressed concern that, aside from a formal assurance provided in the form of a checkbox, the draft report did not adequately address the new provisions in ESSA related to funding non-public (private, parochial, etc.) schools and opportunities for professional staff to engage in equitable professional learning activities alongside public sector colleagues. Many of these respondents believe that ESSA, more than any federal education legislation ever has, extends the notion of equitable access to high-quality education for all students, public and private, and that it calls for a partnership between the public and private sectors to provide for the needs of all students.

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APPENDIX D: Statement and Assurances Related to Section 427 of GEPA

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

(1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.

(2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

(3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how

it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

(4) An applicant that proposes a project to increase school safety might describe the special efforts it will take to address concern of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and efforts to reach out to and involve the families of LGBT students

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Section 427 of GEPA: Assurance Statement

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education adheres to Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). In carrying out its educational mission, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) will ensure to the fullest extent possible equitable access to, participation in, and appropriate educational opportunities for individuals served. Federally funded activities, programs, and services will be accessible to all teachers, students and program beneficiaries. ESE ensures equal access and participation to all persons regardless of their race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, citizenship status, disability, gender or sexual orientation in its education programs, services, and/or activities.

For state-level activities as well as all other activities supported by federal assistance through our grant applications for LEAs, ESE will fully enforce all federal and state laws and regulations designed to ensure equitable access to all program beneficiaries and overcome barriers to equitable participation. ESE will hold LEAs accountable for ensuring equal access and providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the needs of a diverse group of students, staff, community members and other participants.

Steps taken to ensure equitable access may include, but are not limited to;
- collecting information on potential special accommodation needs (e.g., assistive technology, wheelchair access, translation) as a standard component of meeting/conference registrations;
- printing materials in multiple languages;
- offering multi-lingual services for participants and others as needed and appropriate;
- responsiveness to cultural differences;
- fostering a positive school climate through restorative practices;
- conducting outreach efforts and target marketing to those not likely to participate;
- providing assistive technology devices to translate/make accessible grant and program materials for participants requiring such accommodations;
- using technology to convey content of program materials;
- using materials that include strategies for addressing the needs of all participants;
- pre-program gender and cultural awareness training for participants;
- development and/or acquisition and dissemination of culturally relevant and sensitive curriculum and informational materials; and
- use of transportation services that include accommodations for individuals with disabilities.