Minnesota's Consolidated State Plan Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

To be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education in September 2017

IMPORTANT NOTE:

This is an early draft prepared for the joint meeting of the Minnesota Senate Committee on E-12 Policy and the Minnesota House Committee on Education Innovation Policy scheduled for Wednesday, July 19, 2017.

This early draft will undergo revisions prior to being open for the required 30-day public comment period on August 1, 2017.

Page numbers restart for each section.

Last Updated: July 17, 2017

Cover Page

Contact Information and Signatures

SEA Contact (Name and Position)	Phone
Mailing Address	Email Address

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)	Phone
Authorized SEA Representative (signature)	Date
Governor (printed name)	Date SEA provided plan to Governor under ESEA 8540
Governor (signature)	Date

Programs Included in the Consolidated State Plan

***Instructions**: Indicate below by checking the appropriate box(es) which programs the [State Educational Agency, i.e., the Minnesota Department of Education] 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 wishes to receive funds under the program(s), it must submit individual program plans for those programs that meet all statutory and regulatory requirements with its consolidated State plan in a single submission.*

☒ Check this box if the SEA has included all of the following programs in its consolidated State plan.

or

If all programs are not included, check each program listed below that the SEA includes in its consolidated State plan:

☐ Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by 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: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement

☐ 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: Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program (McKinney-Vento Act)

Federal Template Instructions

Each SEA must provide descriptions and other information that address each requirement listed below for the programs included in its consolidated State plan. Consistent with ESEA section 8302, the Secretary has determined that the following requirements are absolutely necessary for consideration of a consolidated State plan. An SEA may add descriptions or other information, but may not omit any of the required descriptions or information for each included program.

Introduction

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed in December 2015 as the nation's new pre-K through grade 12 federal education law. ESSA reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), previously known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). ESSA replaces NCLB, empowering states develop systems and policies that place a greater focus on continuous improvement for all students.

ESSA was passed with the intention of shifting the country's education law from relying solely on federal oversight, to giving states and districts even more flexibility and decision-making power. The law requires states to develop plans that address standards, assessments, school and district accountability, support for struggling schools and support for educators.

This is not new for our schools in Minnesota. Minnesota has been a leader with our accountability system, starting with our NCLB flexibility waiver in 2012, and then the adoption of our state accountability plan—the Worlds Best Workforce—which required school districts to strategically align their budgets and improvement strategies to our overall state goals. As you will see, this plan complements our state system and is an important lever for addressing disparities and inequities in our system for students living in poverty, students of color, American Indian students, students with disabilities and any other student, teacher, school or district who needs our help.

In order to raise achievement and eliminate predictable disparities between student groups, Minnesota's system will be equitable, coherent and meaningfully guided by students, families and educators.

While ESSA is a broad federal law, some of the major focus areas include:

- Eliminating disparities and creating opportunities for better student outcomes.
- Rigorous academic standards that align with the demands of career and college.
- Requirements for annual testing in math, reading and science to provide data on how students are performing in school.
- Reporting data to the public on outcomes and opportunities for all students both through the accountability system and other measures included in a state report card.
- Accountability systems that use measures to prioritize schools for support.
- State strategies to intervene and support low-performing schools and schools with consistently underperforming student groups.
- Access for all students to effective, in-field and experienced teachers.

The state plan describes Minnesota's school accountability and support system, the Northstar Excellence and Equity System. Polaris—the North Star that Minnesotans know well and are fond of referencing—is famous for holding nearly still in our vision while the entire northern sky moves around it. The North Star marks the way due north, just as Northstar guides our way towards supporting our schools, and the nearly one million students we collectively serve every day.

This plan also describes how Minnesota will put into place federal programs that support:

- Low-income students
- Minority students
- English Learners
- Migratory children and youth
- Neglected, delinquent, or at-risk children and youth
- Homeless children and youth
- Effective instruction
- Well-rounded education opportunities
- Community learning centers
- Rural and low-income schools

As with our Multiple Measurements Rating system under our waiver, the Minnesota Department of Education believes strongly that in addition to identifying schools that are in need of support, there is an equally crucial need to identify schools that are succeeding in providing every student with an excellent education. In order to support and improve schools that may be struggling, Minnesota is committed to recognizing and learning from those schools that are beating the odds, and sharing that information so that other schools may consider how their strategies may be useful in their own unique settings. The department will continue to work with stakeholders to develop the process for school recognition.

Although Minnesota has been working steadily to develop its state plan since the passage of ESSA in 2015, federal requirements regarding state plan development, including the template provided to states by the U.S. Department of Education, have changed since during this time. In March 2017, a template was released that was more concise than previous versions and organized by Title program rather than by theme. Given this streamlined federal approach to the state plan template, Minnesota's state plan has been written to describe how our state plans to use, manage, and monitor federal funds to ensure all students are successfully meeting the state's rigorous state academic standards.

Readers of this plan may notice that there are areas where more detail may be needed to fully understand how a program may be implemented at the district and school level. Much work remains for Minnesota school districts and charter schools to engage with their local communities to make decisions on how to implement parts of ESSA. One example of this includes how a district may use Title I funding to support students with a well-rounded education.

Minnesota's NCLB flexibility waiver remained in effect until August 1, 2016. The 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years serve as transition years to our new accountability, reporting, school improvement and recognition system under ESSA. Some components of ESSA take effect this coming school year, while much of the data reporting, school improvement and accountability requirements are not in place until 2018-19. An overview of ESSA requirements going into effect this school year is available on our website (http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/ESSA/Imp/).

As part of Minnesota's transition to the ESSA, the state will submit a required ESSA Consolidated State Plan (State Plan) to the U.S. Department of Education in September 2017. The state is required to develop the plan in consultation with stakeholders and make the plan available for a 30-day public comment period.

The complete draft of Minnesota's ESSA State Plan is being made available for public comment August 1–August 31, 2017.

During the public comment period, Minnesota's education commissioner and Minnesota Department of Education staff are hosting regional meetings to review the contents of the draft state plan and the public comment process. Information regarding these opportunities, including a link to a survey to submit comments, is available on the department's Every Student Succeeds Act webpage (http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/ESSA/index.htm).

We welcome comments in various formats, including via email to mde.essa@state.mn.us, by mail at Minnesota Department of Education, ATTN: ESSA Comments, 1500 Highway 36 West, Roseville, MN 55113, or via phone at 651-582-8800.

Engagement

The Minnesota Department of Education has worked with a diverse group of stakeholders, including consultation with Minnesota's 11 Tribal Nations, to shape the state's ESSA plan. Beginning January 2016, we hosted a broad array of engagement activities, providing multiple means for Minnesota residents to provide input on the Minnesota state plan. These activities included topic-specific meetings, public listening sessions, focus groups, surveys and community meetings.

Over the course of 20 months, MDE held more than 300 meetings and public events throughout the state to educate, listen and receive invaluable input from Minnesota citizens.

We asked students, parents, educators, education partners, advocacy organizations, business leaders, community members and members of the public to participate in five committees to delve into specific topics. The five committees were accountability, assessment, English learners, school improvement, and educator quality. The purpose of the committees was to meaningfully involve voices of Minnesotans to support the development of Minnesota's ESSA plan. All meetings were open to the public and documents were posted to the ESSA committee webpage (http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/ESSA/meet/).

Attendees of these many meetings were encouraged to strive to bridge gaps in understanding, and seek creative resolution of differences in order to integrate the needs of all stakeholders. Members were encouraged to build consensus on options by considering and including the perspectives and needs of all stakeholder groups. Members raised, reflected on, and found equitable solutions throughout the process.

The shared work reflects a vision of a well-rounded education system where all children succeed. In order to raise achievement and eliminate predictable disparities between student groups, a guiding principal of the engagement work was an unwavering commitment to ensuring that Minnesota's system be equitable, coherent and meaningfully guided by students, families and educators.

Equity

Equity is at the center of all of our work at the Minnesota Department of Education, and throughout the State of Minnesota. The department's mission statement is "Leading for educational excellence and equity. Every day for every one." This is expanded upon in the department's vision statement:

> *The Minnesota Department of Education provides an excellent education for Minnesota students by implementing Governor Mark Dayton's 7-Point Plan for Better Schools for a Better Minnesota. We strive for excellence, equity and opportunity by focusing on closing the achievement gap, supporting high-quality teaching, using innovative strategies to improve educational outcomes, and ensuring all students graduate from high school well-prepared for college, career and life.*

Governor Dayton's 7-Point Plan, in place since February 2011,[1] lays the framework for a long-term vision for pre-K through grade 12 education in Minnesota over the coming years. Fundamental to the 7-Point Plan is the belief that an aligned vision for educational excellence must be created from the ground up. Stakeholder engagement and collaborative partnerships are essential to our success. Equally important is to build on our strengths. That concept—taking what's good and making it better—provides a clear path for Minnesota to create a strong system of public schools, in which excellent teaching and learning are recognized, supported and celebrated, every day, in every school.

Minnesotans want an equitable system. This was evident in the development of our state's NCLB flexibility waiver, and it remains true today. Our ESSA state plan emphasizes meaningful inclusion of *all* students in the system and upholds the civil rights spirit of ESSA by holding every public school accountable for the outcomes of every student group.

During MDE's work on this plan, and with the input of stakeholders, it was important to work from a shared definition of what equity means.

Minnesota's Definition of Equity

Education equity is the condition of justice, fairness, and inclusion in our systems of education so that all students have access to the opportunity to learn and develop to their fullest potential. The pursuit of education equity recognizes the historical conditions and barriers that have prevented opportunity and success in learning for students based on their race, income, and other social conditions. Eliminating those structural and institutional barriers to educational opportunity requires systemic change that allows for distribution of resources, information, and other support depending on the student's situation to ensure an equitable outcome.

[1] More about Governor Dayton's 7-Point Plan http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/about/cmsh/bsbmn/.

Equity is different from equality; equity is a principle that is based upon justness and fairness, while equality demands everyone be treated at the same level.

A series of guiding questions were developed to ensure that discussion and decision-making held up our shared commitment and belief in the importance of equity.

Equity-Focused Guiding Questions

- What groups are impacted by the decision and what is the nature of the impact? Groups may include:
  - Students of color
  - Native American students
  - Ethnic background
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students
  - Students with disabilities
  - Students in poverty
  - English learners
  - Gender
- What are the potential positive, neutral or harmful impacts on the identified groups?
- Have representatives from these groups been collaboratively engaged on the decision?
- How will the decision advance equity, address structural barriers, and reduce or eliminate disparities?

Conclusion

Minnesota's state plan reflects the input of stakeholders from across Minnesota and is rooted in the goal of an equitable, well-rounded education for all students. It reflects lessons learned under No Child Left Behind and Minnesota's NCLB flexibility waiver. While the work of transitioning to ESSA is far from complete—much remains to be done at the state and local level with respect to implementation—the vision laid out here is a starting point. The Minnesota Department of Education is committed to continuing and building on the work that was done to reach this point in close collaboration with the students, families, educators, school and district leaders, and engaged community members of this state.

A Note About Reading the Plan

The state plan includes language from the federal template, in the form of an outline, providing instruction to states on what to include. While this information is important for understanding the context of the state's responses, it does not lend itself to simple reading.

Language from the Minnesota Department of Education describing our plan in the following sections appears highlighted in green for added emphasis and clarity. An executive summary of the state plan is posted [NOTE: STILL BEING DESIGNED] on the Minnesota Department of Education's website, along with an interactive e-learning module that walks through the plan in plainer language. We hope these will be helpful in providing Minnesotans with an understanding of our state plan.

Title I, Part A: Assessments

A. Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies

1. Challenging State Academic Standards and Assessments (ESEA section 1111(b)(1) and (2) and 34 CFR §§ 200.1–200.8.)

Minnesota will continue to administer the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS). These assessments are aligned to the most recent version of Minnesota's Academic Standards. The current assessments have been submitted to peer review. When Minnesota's Academic Standards are revised the MCA and MTAS will be aligned to the most recent version.

2. Eighth Grade Math Exception (ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C) and 34 CFR § 200.5(b)(4)):

   i. Does the state administer an end-of-course mathematics assessment to meet the requirements under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA?
   ☐ Yes
   ☑No

   ii. If a state responds "yes" to question 2(i), does the state wish to exempt an eighth-grade student who takes the high school mathematics course associated with the end-of-course assessment from the mathematics assessment typically administered in eighth grade under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(aa) of the ESEA and ensure that:
      a. The student instead takes the end-of-course mathematics assessment the state administers to high school students under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA;
      b. The student's performance on the high school assessment is used in the year in which the student takes the assessment for purposes of measuring academic achievement under section 1111(c)(4)(B)(i) of the ESEA and participation in assessments under section 1111(c)(4)(E) of the ESEA;
      c. In high school:
         1. The student takes a state-administered end-of-course assessment or nationally recognized high school academic assessment as defined in 34 CFR § 200.3(d) in mathematics that is more advanced than the assessment the state administers under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA;
         2. The state provides for appropriate accommodations consistent with 34 CFR § 200.6(b) and (f); and
         3. The student's performance on the more advanced mathematics assessment is used for purposes of measuring academic achievement under section 1111(c)(4)(B)(i) of the ESEA and participation in assessments under section 1111(c)(4)(E) of the ESEA.
            ☐ Yes
            ☐ No

iii. If a state responds "yes" to question 2(ii), consistent with 34 CFR § 200.5(b)(4), describe, with regard to this exception, its strategies to provide all students in the state the opportunity to be prepared for and to take advanced mathematics coursework in middle school.

N/A

3. Native Language Assessments (ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(F) and 34 CFR § 200.6(f)(2)(ii)) and (f)(4):

iv. Provide its 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.

Beginning in 2018 Minnesota will provide translations in Spanish, Somali and Hmong for math and science MCAs. The translations will be of academic words using a pop-up in the online test and a word list in the paper accommodation. During stakeholder input meetings in 2016, it was determined that these three languages are the languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating student population. The table below demonstrates the significant difference between the numbers of students with these home languages in comparison to the other home languages.

Counts per Home Language based on 2016 MCA Administration

Language	Avg. per grade
Spanish	Around 4,000
Somali	Under 2,000
Hmong	Under 1,750
Karen	Under 500
Vietnamese	Under 350
Russian	Around 200
Oromo	Under 200
Ojibwa, Chippewa, Anishinaabemowin	Under 25

In 2017, Minnesota will continue to conduct research related to English Learners and the most meaningful and appropriate translations presentation. This will involve literature reviews as well as stakeholder engagement with Minnesotans that speak a language other than English at home. At this time, some of our questions include the value of including audio, prioritization of adding more languages by grade level or by language, and prioritization of translated supporting documentation. Minnesota plans to have these as face-to-face meetings and webinars with discussion with educators and families of English learners and smaller user/focus groups to obtain student feedback.

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

N/A

vi. Indicate the languages identified in question 3(i) for which yearly student academic assessments are not available and are needed.

N/A

vii. Describe how it 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 including by providing
    a. The state's plan and timeline for developing such assessments, including a description of how it met the requirements of 34 CFR § 200.6(f)(4);
    b. 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
    c. As applicable, an explanation of the reasons the state has not been able to complete the development of such assessments despite making every effort.

N/A

Title I, Part A: Accountability

1. **Statewide Accountability System and School Support and Improvement Activities (ESEA section 1111(c) and (d)):**

The Northstar Excellence and Equity System ("Northstar") outlined in this ESSA Consolidated State Plan builds off of the work we have done under our NCLB waiver in the last five years to provide meaningful data about school performance and provide collaborative support to schools with a goal of raising achievement and closing achievement gaps. With that, some significant changes informed by in-depth input and values from a variety of stakeholders are included in this accountability plan.

There are three distinct, yet related, parts of Northstar.

1. Accountability indicators and process to identify schools for support (outlined in this plan).
2. Accountability indicators and process to recognize schools for success.
3. Data reporting to the public that includes accountability indicators and other measures for the public to understand the contextual factors and student outcomes in schools and districts.

Theory of Action

The theory of action below has helped to guide the development of Northstar thus far and will continue to shape our implementation plans moving forward.

If Minnesota's accountability system:

- Is coherent, transparent and easy to understand.
- Is well-aligned to the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the state World's Best Workforce (WBWF) requirements.
- Includes meaningful stakeholder engagement.

Then we will be able to establish a statewide system of recognition and support that raises student achievement for all students and eliminates predictability in disparities.

Throughout the stakeholder engagement process, including extensive work among two statewide accountability committees, some key priorities and guiding principles emerged, including a focus on equity, coherence with World's Best Workforce, transparent data reporting, the future of the school quality or student success indicator, and opportunities for school recognition.

A Focus on Equity

In this plan's introduction, we presented the fact that Minnesotans want an equitable system, sharing an understanding that equity is the condition of justice, fairness and inclusion in our systems of education so that all students have access to the opportunity to learn and develop to their fullest potential. This accountability

plan emphasizes meaningful inclusion of *all* students in the system and upholds the civil rights spirit of ESSA by holding every public school accountable for the outcomes of every student group.

A few specific examples of an equity-focused approach in this accountability plan include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying and supporting any public high school with a four-year graduation rate below 67 percent overall or for any student group.
- Maintaining a primary focus on the four-year graduation rate but also using a seven-year rate in the accountability and reporting systems to capture all students, including students with disabilities that receive an education until age 21.
- Equally weighting each student group in a school's overall performance on each accountability indicator to ensure small groups, often including our disadvantaged students, are meaningfully represented.
- Using a cell size minimum of 10 for reporting purposes and 20 for accountability purposes.

Coherence with World's Best Workforce (WBWF)

In 2013, the WBWF legislation passed to ensure every Minnesota school district is making strides to improve student performance. Each district must develop a plan that addresses the following five areas:

1. Meet school readiness goals.
2. Have all third grade students achieve grade-level literacy.
3. Close academic achievement gaps.
4. Have all students attain career and college readiness.
5. Have all students graduate from high school.

This state WBWF strategic planning and accountability framework strives to align district efforts, resources and programs around these five common goals. School boards are to adopt a long-term, strategic, comprehensive plan to support and improve teaching and learning with clearly defined student achievement goals and benchmarks.

MDE provides regional WBWF data profiles to inform district planning. MDE designed these annual data profiles to provide districts with updates on their progress toward the WBWF goals. These data include the measures MDE has available at the state, but districts set their own SMART (strategic, measurable, achievable, results-based and time-bound) goals and track progress at the local level.

Under the requirements of WBWF, the commissioner "must identify those districts in any consecutive three-year period not making sufficient progress toward improving teaching and learning for all students … and striving for the world's best workforce." MDE is aligning district identification time lines under WBWF with school identification time lines under ESSA, and is working to align indicators used to identify districts and schools under both WBWF and ESSA.

Transparent Data Reporting for Families, Communities and Educators

Stakeholders also expressed the importance of having a system that is transparent and used by families, communities and educators. The goals, indicators and identification of schools on the subsequent pages of this plan were developed with a focus on transparency and understandability, but it is important to acknowledge the significant work ahead to collaboratively determine how to publicly present these data in a way that is beneficial for families, communities and educators.

A key next step in the ESSA stakeholder engagement process will be focused on meaningful and transparent data reporting. These data will include the indicators and school identifications outlined in the accountability section of this plan as well as school recognition categories that are yet to be determined and the many other measures required in ESSA report cards. It will be particularly important to make sure the presentation of the data reflects what families, communities and educators value. Some priorities that have emerged related to data reporting include:

- Providing a dashboard with a variety of measures so users can fully understand the context of a school, including student outcomes, climate indicators, funding information, access to a well-rounded education, teacher and school leader factors (including access to student support services), and student demographics.
- Ensuring users can easily access an at-a-glance report on school performance at a high level, possibly by combining measures into an easy-to-understand visual, while also allowing users to dig deeper into particular areas as desired.
- Allowing the ability to compare:
  - Student group performance.
  - School and district performance to the state.
  - Schools and districts to other successful schools and districts with similar contexts.
  - Data over time to show progress.
- Ensuring the data is presented in an accessible format, including by language and disability status.
- Transparently reporting school and district performance relative to statewide goals.

This is just a start. Minnesota will consult with stakeholders in the 2017-2018 school year to continue to develop shared priorities for data reporting and to determine how to present data in a useful way to empower families, communities and educators.

School Quality or Student Success Indicator

Stakeholders in Minnesota have expressed significant interest in the school quality or student success indicator of the state's accountability system. In line with ESSA, there is a desire to expand the indicators of school and district accountability to include not only test-based and graduation measures, but also other important indicators of school success. There is clear interest in adding a measurement of equitable well-rounded instruction as Minnesota's school quality or student success indicator in the future. In the short-term, the school quality or student success indicator informed by stakeholders and described in this plan is a measure of consistent pre-K through high school attendance. In the long-term, this indicator could incorporate multiple components at the preschool, elementary, middle and high school level. There is particular interest in including a measure of access and opportunity for *all* students to a well-rounded education (e.g., arts, physical education, science, etc.), comprised also of career and college readiness program participation and outcomes for high schools. Stakeholders want to ensure that this indicator does not solely focus on what is being offered in a school, but also, emphasize student-level access to and success in particular opportunities, when possible.

Expanding this indicator may also help to further align with the WBWF legislation, as described above. WBWF Goal #1 is to have all students ready for school, and Goal #4 is to have all students ready for career and college. The school quality or student success indicator could incorporate both a school readiness measure and a career and college readiness measure in the future.

After a close look at state data systems, the Minnesota Common Course Catalogue (MCCC) has been identified as an existing system that can be used to collect data for the pre-K through grade 12 quality or student success indicator. The Minnesota Common Course Catalogue is used by districts to report data related to course participation and outcomes, but to meet the requirements in ESSA, the MCCC would need considerable enhancement. MDE will continue work with stakeholders on the direction for expanding the school quality or student success indicator in the future for identifications made after the 2020-2021 school year.

Opportunities for School Recognition

Minnesota is committed to ensuring schools are recognized for their successes. While some of the accountability indicators included in this plan will be used, stakeholders have also expressed a desire to include additional data for school recognition. There has been particular interest in exploring the use of school climate measures, equitable access to rigorous coursework, equitable access to diverse and qualified teachers, and science results. This list is just a start. Schools could be recognized with a "badge" for success in one or more of these areas, and stakeholders are especially interested in understanding the school's story behind their success. In addition, Minnesota would like to emphasize schools that are beating the odds, given their particular context or student population.

MDE will continue work with stakeholders in the 2017-2018 school year to determine the process and measures to identify schools for success. Consistent with the timeline for the accountability system outlined in this plan, schools will be recognized beginning in the 2018-2019 school year.

i. Subgroups (ESEA section 1111(c)(2)):
    a. List each major racial and ethnic group the state includes as a subgroup of students, consistent with ESEA section 1111(c)(2)(B).

In Minnesota we believe it is important to use inclusive language that does not marginalize groups of people. For this reason, we use "student groups" instead of "subgroups" when referring to racial and ethnic groups, as well as other categories of students.

Minnesota will use the federally defined set of seven racial and ethnic codes as student groups:

- American Indian
- Asian
- Black
- Hispanic
- Pacific Islander
- Two or more races
- White

    b. If applicable, describe any additional subgroups of students other than the statutorily required subgroups (i.e., economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, children with disabilities, and English learners) used in the statewide accountability system.

In addition to economically disadvantaged students, English Learners, and students with disabilities, the system will use "counter-groups" to promote balance in the number of groups in which a student can be included.

For example, in schools with at least 20 English Learners, the system will also include students who are not English Learners as a separate counter-group if the school serves at least 20 students who are not English learners. These same rules will apply to students who are and are not economically disadvantaged and students with and without disabilities.

Counter-groups will only be included if the required group is included.

For example, if a school has more than 20 non-English-Learners, but fewer than 20 English Learners, non-English-Learners will not be included as a counter-group.

c. Does the state intend to include in the English Learner subgroup the results of students previously identified as English Learners on the state assessments required under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I) for purposes of state accountability (ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(B))? Note that a student's results may be included in the English Learner subgroup for not more than four years after the student ceases to be identified as an English Learner.
   ☑Yes
   ☐ No

Including former English Learners increases the number of schools with English Learners as a student group.

When reporting results on the Minnesota Report Card, readers will be able to see both the results of the expanded English Learner group (including former English Learners as described) and the results of current English Learners only. This will preserve the ability of the public and educators to focus specifically on current English Learners when desired while also honoring the desire of many stakeholders to see former English Learners included.

d. 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.

Recently arrived English learners will be expected to take state academic tests during their first year of enrollment. That first year's results will not be included in accountability calculations. In such a student's second year of enrollment, their scores will be used when calculating academic progress, but not when calculating academic achievement. In their third year of enrollment, their scores will be used when calculating both academic progress and academic achievement.

ii. Minimum N-Size (ESEA section 1111(c)(3)(A)):
   a. Provide the minimum number of students that the state determines are necessary to be included to carry out the requirements of any provisions under Title I, Part A of the ESEA that require disaggregation of information by each subgroup of students for accountability purposes.

Minnesota will use 20 students as the minimum number of students necessary for a group to be included for accountability purposes.

b. Describe how the minimum number of students is statistically sound.

Minnesota has used a minimum number of 20 students for accountability purposes for the past several years. While some variability in current calculations has occurred due to small changes in a school's population, consistent with the agency's mission and vision and the state's World's Best Workforce legislation, Minnesota did not want to increase the minimum n. During the development of the accountability system, analyses were completed examining the number of schools and students that would not be included in the accountability system using different minimum n-sizes (including cell sizes of 30, 20 and 15). These analyses were discussed with stakeholders in meetings about for the accountability system as well as the very early conversations related to the importance of reporting the accountability system and interpretation. Minnesota also completed analyses examining consistency in the accountability system over time to confirm that a minimum n of 20 did not introduce instability to the system.

c. Describe how the minimum number of students was determined by the state, including how the state collaborated with teachers, principals, other school leaders, parents, and other stakeholders when determining such minimum number.

On January 5, 2017, MDE staff surveyed members of the ESSA Accountability Advisory Committee to identify those interested in providing feedback on the minimum number of students. On April 27, 2017, MDE staff met with these interested members of the ESSA Accountability Advisory Committee, including representation from teachers' professional organization and civil rights groups.

Staff also solicited feedback from members of the ESSA Accountability Technical Committee, including district administrators and representatives from higher education in late April and early May 2017.

On May 10, 2017, staff also met with ESSA School Improvement Committee members, including teachers, district administrators, principals and other school leaders. Members of each committee are also parents of children in Minnesota public schools.

When meeting with these groups, staff analyzed and presented data examining different minimum number options (including cell sizes of 30, 20 and 15), considering both (a) the percentage of students in each student group who would be included in that group for accountability purposes, and (b) the percentage of schools serving students in those student groups who would see that group included in their calculation.

Maintaining stability in the accountability system, particularly to avoid seeing drastic swings in school performance that are the result of small groups of students, was one key value driving the feedback supporting this decision. Stakeholders also expressed the importance of closely considering the number of students within student groups and the number of schools that the accountability system can include based on different cell size options. The discussion largely focused on the balance between the desire to have a stable, statistically sound system with the desire to also have a cell size that is low enough to ensure meaningful inclusion of student groups across the state in accountability. In the interest of equity and ensuring local decision makers focus on all student groups, there was also strong interest in providing additional support for local-level analysis of trends in groups below the minimum cell size.

While stakeholder opinions varied, the general feedback supported keeping the minimum cell size for accountability at 20 students and the minimum cell size for reporting at 10 students.

d. Describe how the state ensures that the minimum number is sufficient to not reveal any personally identifiable information.

A minimum number of 20 can be sufficient to not reveal any personally identifiable information when it is combined with appropriate reporting techniques that protect student privacy. The 2017 report *ESSA State Accountability Systems: Best Practices for Determining Subgroup Size in Accountability Systems While Protecting Personally Identifiable Student Information*, released by the Institute of Education Sciences, describes several such techniques. The report acknowledges that to fully protect personally identifiable information through the minimum number alone, the number must be at least 301 students; however, the use of reporting techniques that suppress some information can protect students' personally identifiable information for minimum numbers lower than 20 students.

Minnesota already uses some of these techniques—such as primary suppression that replaces data for students below the minimum number with "Cell Size Too Small to Report"—and the state is continuing efforts to implement additional secondary suppression techniques and establishing reporting minimum and maximum percentages to further protect students' privacy. As a result of these efforts, the minimum number of 20 students is sufficient to protect personally identifiable information.

e. If the state's minimum number of students for purposes of reporting is lower than the minimum number of students for accountability purposes, provide the state's minimum number of students for purposes of reporting.

Minnesota's minimum number of students for the purposes of reporting will continue to be 10 students. Minnesota's efforts to implement additional suppression rules continue.

iii. Establishment of Long-Term Goals (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)):
   a. Academic Achievement. *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(i)(I)(aa))*
      1. Describe the long-term goals for improved academic achievement, as measured by proficiency on the annual statewide reading/language arts and mathematics assessments, for all students and for each subgroup of students, including: (i) baseline data; (ii) the timeline for meeting the long-term goals, for which the term must be the same multi-year length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students in the State; and (iii) how the long-term goals are ambitious.

Minnesota set a goal to reach a reading/language arts and math achievement index rate of 90 with no student group below 85 by the year 2025. The calculation of achievement index rates are further described in section 4.iv.

Consistent with MDE's mission, this statewide goal was established with a clear focus on ensuring excellence and equity for all Minnesota students. It requires that all students reach a high level of achievement but takes into account the accelerated improvement that is necessary for some student groups in order to close achievement gaps. While all groups are expected to improve, student groups that are currently achieving at lower levels than their counterparts have the highest expected gains.

Under the state's World's Best Workforce (WBWF) legislation, Minnesota has had an opportunity to emphasize coherence within schools and districts, as well as across the state, around five common goals, including:

- School readiness
- Third grade reading
- Closing achievement gaps
- Career and college readiness
- Graduation rates

Minnesotans have embraced this opportunity to set aligned goals that meet both state and federal expectations with an eye toward clarity and coherence. The goal to reach an achievement index rate of 90 with no student group below 85 by the year 2025 can be used as the state achievement gap goal under WBWF. This provides consistency and focus on common goals in schools and districts across the state.

This achievement goal also offers a way for families, community members, and educators to understand how schools and districts are doing in closing achievement gaps relative to statewide expectations. It is important that MDE provide the data in a way that families, communities and educators can clearly understand achievement relative to goals in order to support local planning and improvement efforts under ESSA and the WBWF.

The required increases by student group outlined in Appendix A demonstrate the rigor of this 2025 goal. This is ambitious, but it is also important to note that it is grounded in how the state's best schools perform. The current performance for the all students group in the top 10 percent of schools is similar to the 2025 goal to reach achievement index rates of 85 for each student group, with some differences between math and reading/language arts. This sets a motivating expectation that all Minnesota schools can strive to ensure all student groups achieve at the same levels as our schools with the highest performance.

2. Provide the measurements of interim progress toward meeting the long-term goals for academic achievement in Appendix A.
3. 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.

All schools and all student groups are expected to reach a high bar in the year 2025. Different expectations are not set for different student groups

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The establishment of this statewide achievement goal was driven by the Northstar vision: excellence and equity for all. All schools and all student groups are expected to reach a high bar in the year 2025. Different expectations are not set for different student groups. This ambitious goal to tackle disparities in achievement instills a sense of urgency and high expectations with an eye toward collectively ensuring all students are put on the path to success after high school.

The long-term goals and measurements of interim progress in Appendix A demonstrate the improvements needed by student group.

b. Graduation Rate. (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(i)(I)(bb))
    1. Describe the long-term goals for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for all students and for each subgroup of students, including: (i) baseline data; (ii) the timeline for meeting the long-term goals, for which the term must be the same multi-

year length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students in the state; and (iii) how the long-term goals are ambitious.

Minnesota has an existing goal to reach a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate of 90 percent with no student group below 85 percent by the year 2020. As a commitment to this goal and in an effort to not change expectations for Minnesota schools and districts, Minnesota will keep the 2020 graduation rate goal that was established in 2012. Appendix A provides the baseline, interim measurements of progress and goal using the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate.

Similar to the achievement goals outlined above, this ESSA graduation rate goal also aligns with the WBWF legislation to ensure consistency and coherence in schools and districts across the state. Minnesota is currently tracking progress for every district in the state relative to this 2020 graduation rate goal, and MDE provides annual WBWF data profiles to districts to show progress toward meeting the goal.

A goal of 90 percent with no student group below 85 percent by the year 2020 is ambitious. This requires a high graduation rate for all students while also taking into account the accelerated improvement that is necessary for some student groups in order to close graduation rate gaps. Student groups that are currently graduating at lower levels than their counterparts have the highest expected gains.

The 2016 graduation rates, using the new seven federal race/ethnic codes, show that the black, Hispanic and American Indian student groups all need to demonstrate the most improvement in order to reach the 2020 goal. Data show that the white student group 2016 graduation rate is at 87 percent. Students with disabilities, English learners, and students receiving free or reduced-price lunch are at 60 percent, 63 percent and 69 percent, respectively. Under ESSA, Minnesota will provide support to both Title I and non-Title I high schools with a graduation rate below 67 percent overall or for any student group which will give the state an opportunity to target assistance to schools contributing the most to the statewide graduation rate gaps in order to accelerate progress toward this 2020 goal.

2. If applicable, describe the long-term goals for each extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, including (i) baseline data; (ii) the timeline for meeting the long-term goals, for which the term must be the same multi-year length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students in the State; (iii) how the long-term goals are ambitious; and (iv) how the long-term goals are more rigorous than the long-term goal set for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate.
3. Provide the measurements of interim progress toward the long-term goals for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and any extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate in Appendix A.
4. Describe how the long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and any extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate take into account the improvement necessary to make significant progress in closing statewide graduation rate gaps.

The four-year graduation rate goal requires significant closure in statewide graduation rate gaps. Similar to the math and reading achievement goals described above, the graduation rate goals were driven by the overarching vision of the Northstar Excellence and Equity System. Minnesota has persistent graduation rate gaps and needs to continue the sense of urgency to make sure every Minnesota student, including students of color and

American Indian students, English Learners, students with disabilities and students in poverty, graduates from high school well prepared for success in career and college.

The rate of graduation rate improvements for all students and each student group demonstrated in the tables above and in Appendix A show the improvement that is necessary to close graduation rate gaps. It is important to Minnesota stakeholders to ensure high expectations for all students, and these goals reflect that. The four-year graduation rate goal sets the same high expectation for every student group and ensure groups with lower graduation rates improve at much faster rates than their counterparts.

c. English Language Proficiency. (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(ii))
    1. Describe the long-term goals for English learners for increases in the percentage of such students making progress in achieving English language proficiency, as measured by the statewide English language proficiency assessment including: (i) baseline data; (ii) the State-determined timeline for such students to achieve English language proficiency; and (iii) how the long-term goals are ambitious.

English Language Proficiency goal will be added when data is available.

    2. 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 in Appendix A.

Consistent Attendance Long-Term Statewide Goal

Minnesota is setting an additional goal in the ESSA state plan to reach a 95 percent consistent attendance rate overall, with no group below 90 by the year 2020.

Consistent attendance will be used as the state's school quality or student success indicator in the short-term, with plans to expand this indicator in the future. A student is considered a consistent attendee if they attend school at least 90 percent of the time. This is the inverse of the commonly used definition of chronic absenteeism as missing 10 percent or more of days enrolled.

A measure of consistent attendance is not the same as average attendance rates. A school could have high overall average daily attendance, but some students or student groups could be chronically absent. This goal will shed light on the urgency to ensure every Minnesota student is consistently attending school.

Consistent attendance is one indicator, among many that were discussed by stakeholders, of school climate and student engagement. A welcoming school environment and meaningful supports should be in place to improve attendance for all students, but particularly to decrease the number of students that are missing school more than 10 percent of the time. Consistent attendance data is an early warning sign that a student may be at risk of falling behind academically and off track for graduation.

This is also an equity issue. Low consistent attendance rates—or high chronic absenteeism rates—are more prevalent among students of color and American Indian students, students with disabilities, English Learners and students in poverty. This needs to change. The goal to reach a 95 percent consistent attendance rate overall with no group below 90 by the year 2020 is rigorous and ambitious. Meeting this goal requires significant improvement for student groups that demonstrate particularly low attendance. Every Minnesota school will

have consistent attendance data publicly reported for *every student group* in order to track progress toward the statewide goal.

Minnesota looks forward to elevating work with schools related to consistent attendance and providing supports to identify and address local root causes for why students are not in school, the challenges these students face, and effective strategies to support them. Among the many potential strategies to support increasing attendance based on local needs, access to student support services was communicated as a priority among stakeholders. To increase engagement and improve academic performance, every Minnesota student should have access to a team of student support personnel, including counselors, social workers, nurses, school psychologists and others.

The ambitious consistent attendance long-term, statewide goal and interim measurements of progress are included in Appendix A.

iv. Indicators (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(B))
    a. Academic Achievement Indicator. Describe the Academic Achievement indicator, including a description of how the indicator (i) is based on the long-term goals; (ii) is measured by proficiency on the annual statewide reading/language arts and mathematics assessments; (iii) annually measures academic achievement for all students and separately for each subgroup of students; and (iv) at the state's discretion, for each public high school in the state, includes a measure of student growth, as measured by the annual statewide reading/language arts and mathematics assessments.

The academic achievement indicator is based on the statewide reading/language arts and math Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) in grades 3-8 and once in high school.

Minnesota will use an achievement index as its Academic Achievement indicator, and the index will be calculated at all school levels, including elementary, middle, and high schools. This index will award schools 0.5 points for every student in the "partially meets standards" achievement level and 1.0 points for every student in either the "meets standards" or "exceeds standards" achievement level. The number of index points at a school will be divided by the number of students enrolled at the school who attended for at least half an academic year. Achievement indices will be calculated separately for math and reading/language arts, and the two subjects will receive equal weight in the system of annual meaningful differentiation. Additional technical information is provided in APPENDIX , PAGE .)

i. This indicator is based on the same measurement (an achievement index) as Minnesota's long-term goals. This is important, because Minnesota will be able to provide school performance on this indicator relative to the state's long-term goals. Minnesota's system of annual meaningful differentiation has been designed such that schools where each student group is meeting Minnesota's state goals will not be identified for support until nearly every school in the state is meeting those goals.
ii. The achievement index will be calculated separately for the statewide reading/language arts and statewide mathematics assessments, and is based on the achievement levels set for those tests, with full points given only for students achieving proficiency, as indicated by reaching either the "meets standards" or "exceeds standards" achievement levels.
iii. This indicator will annually measure academic achievement for all students and separately for each student group. The index will be calculated at the group level first (including for the "all students" group), and then a school average will be calculated by averaging student group indices, awarding equal

weight to each student group in the school. This will allow the indicator to be disaggregated by student group.

For example, consider the following school's academic achievement in math:

Student Group	All Students	White	Black	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (FRP)	Not-FRP
Number of Students	100	75	25	20	80
Math Achievement Index	83	83.7	81	75	85

The school's average academic achievement index would be calculated as follows:

$$\frac{(83 + 83.7 + 81 + 75 + 85)}{5}$$

The result of that calculation is 81.5, which would be used as the average math achievement index at the school.

iv. This indicator will not include a measure of student growth in high schools.

d. Indicator for Public Elementary and Secondary Schools that are Not High Schools (Other Academic Indicator). Describe the Other Academic indicator, including how it annually measures the performance for all students and separately for each subgroup of students. If the Other Academic indicator is not a measure of student growth, the description must include a demonstration that the indicator is a valid and reliable statewide academic indicator that allows for meaningful differentiation in school performance.

For elementary and middle schools, Minnesota will use a transition matrix growth-to-proficiency model that awards points based on students progressing in achievement levels on the state math and reading/language arts tests. Schools will receive a score in each subject.

Students will receive points based on the change in their achievement levels between their previous test and their current test. Students who show the most progress in increasing achievement levels will receive the most points.

To determine the number of points awarded for each possible transition between levels, the likelihood of each transition was calculated based on recent historical data. A draft set of values based on the order of likelihood was shared with stakeholders, who offered additional feedback about the perceived difficulty of making each transition. This feedback was then used to refine the points assigned to each possible transition.

The matrix will award points to each student using the following values:

Current Level (across) → Previous Level (down) ↓	Does Not Meet Standards	Partially Meets Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
Exceeds Standards	0	0	0	3
Meets Standards	0	0	2	5
Partially Meets Standards	0	2	6	9
Does Not Meet Standards	0	8	12	15

Student points will be totaled at the group level first (including for the "all students" group), and then divided by the number of students with scores to find the student group average. A school average will then be calculated by averaging the student group averages, awarding equal weight to each student group in the school. This will allow the indicator to be disaggregated by student group.

For example, consider the following school's academic progress in mathematics:

Student Group	All Students	White	Black	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (FRP)	Not-FRP
Number of Students	100	75	25	20	80
Number of Points	392	299	93	64	328
Student Group Average	3.9	4.0	3.7	3.2	4.1

The school's average would be calculated as follows:

$$\frac{(3.9 + 4.0 + 3.7 + 3.2 + 4.1)}{5}$$

The result of that calculation is 3.8, which would be used as the average math progress at the school.

e. Graduation Rate. Describe the Graduation Rate indicator, including a description of (i) how the indicator is based on the long-term goals; (ii) how the indicator annually measures graduation rate for all students and separately for each subgroup of students; (iii) how the indicator is based on the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate; (iv) if the state, at its discretion, also includes one or more extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rates, how the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is combined with that rate or rates within the indicator; and (v) if applicable, how the state includes in its four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and any extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rates students with the most significant cognitive disabilities assessed using an alternate assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(D) and awarded a state-defined alternate diploma under ESEA section 8101(23) and (25).

The graduation rate indicator will separately use a school's four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and seven-year adjusted cohort graduation rate. Students who drop out after less than half an academic year at a school will be counted at the school they attended for the greatest share of their high school years.

Minnesota strives to ensure every student receives the support they need in order to obtain a high school diploma. While the primary goal is to reach on-time graduation (within four years), some students may take additional time. Stakeholders were particularly interested in incorporating a seven-year graduation rate into the accountability system to include students that are most likely to receive a regular high school diploma after four years, including some students with disabilities receiving transition services, recently arrived English Learners and at-risk students.

It is important to note that the four-year rate is weighted higher than the seven-year graduation rate in the system, as described in the method for identification below. In addition, Minnesota will continue to use the four-year graduation rate in WBWF accountability and to identify low graduation rate high schools for support.

i. This indicator is based on the same measurement (the cohort-adjusted graduation rate) as Minnesota's long-term goals. This is important, because Minnesota will be able to provide school performance on this indicator relative to the state's long-term goals. Minnesota's system of annual meaningful differentiation has been designed such that schools where each student group is meeting Minnesota's state goals will not be identified for support until nearly every school in the state is meeting those goals.

ii. Each rate (four-year and seven-year) will be calculated at the student group level first (including for the "all students" group), and then a school average will be calculated by averaging student group rates, awarding equal weight to each student group in the school. This will allow the indicator to be disaggregated by student group.

For example, consider the following school's four-year graduation rates:

Student Group	All Students	White	Black	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (FRP)	Not-FRP
Number of Students	100	75	25	20	80
Graduation Rate	84.1	85.4	80.2	68.5	88

The school's average would be calculated as follows:

$$\frac{(84.1 + 85.4 + 80.2 + 68.5 + 88)}{5}$$

The result of that calculation is 81.2, which would be used as the average four-year graduation at the school.

iii. The indicator uses the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate.

iv. Minnesota will also use a seven-year adjusted cohort graduation rate. The system for differentiating schools first sorts schools by the four-year rate before using the seven-year rate to prioritize within the set of schools with lower four-year rates.

v. Minnesota does not award alternate diplomas. Only students with a regular high school diploma, per the ESSA law, are counted as graduates in the graduation rates.

d. Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency (ELP) Indicator. Describe the Progress in Achieving ELP indicator, including the State's definition of ELP, as measured by the State ELP assessment.

Minnesota uses the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 test to measure English language development. English language proficiency (ELP) on the ACCESS test in Minnesota is defined as achieving a composite score of 4.5 and a minimum of 3.5 in at least three of the four domains. For the purposes of calculating this indicator, the composite score of 4.5 is used as the definition of proficiency.

A path-to-proficiency model based on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 test will calculate scores for English learners in grades 1-12.

At the student level, the model will use a four-step process the first time a student is included.

Step 1. Determine the maximum amount of time expected to achieve proficiency, based on the student's starting grade and ACCESS composite scale score.
Step 2. Set annual targets for the student, based on the understanding that progress tends to be quicker at lower levels and slower at higher levels.
Step 3. Calculate the points a student received in the current year, based on their score relative to their target for the year.
Step 4. Update annual targets, based on the current year's score.

Step 1. Determine the maximum amount of time
The model categorizes the student's first ACCESS composite scale score as beginning, intermediate, or advanced. It then uses the following table to set the maximum amount of time expected for the student to achieve proficiency.

Level of First ACCESS Score	Grade of First ACCESS Score	Years to Reach Proficiency (Including Year of First ACCESS Score)
Beginning	Kindergarten	7
Beginning	1-8	6
Beginning	9 or higher	7
Intermediate	Kindergarten	7
Intermediate	1-3	5
Intermediate	4-8	6
Intermediate	9 or higher	7
Advanced	Kindergarten	3
Advanced	1 or higher	2

Step 2. Set annual targets
Students receive a growth target for each year along their path to proficiency. These targets are set based on the knowledge that ACCESS scores tend to improve faster at lower scale scores than at higher ones. For example, a student with seven years to reach proficiency would receive targets set using the following table:

Year	Target
1	Start
2	28.6% from Start to Proficiency
3	52.4% from Start to Proficiency
4	71.4% from Start to Proficiency
5	85.7% from Start to Proficiency
6	95.2% from Start to Proficiency
7	Proficiency

Tables for each possible timeline are in APPENDIX __, PAGE __.

Step 3. Calculate points

The student's points are based on the percentage of their target they reached for the current year. For example, a student who progressed 80 percent of the way from their initial score to this year's target would receive 80 points. A student who meets or exceeds their target for the year receives 100 points. Additional technical information, including the treatment of several special cases, is available in APPENDIX , PAGE .

Step 4. Update annual targets

The student's score from this year is treated as their new starting point. The timeline remains the same. For example, if the student had six years to reach proficiency this year, next year they will only have five left. Their score from this year will be treated as the "start" score in the table "For Students with 5 Years to Reach Proficiency."

After the first time a student is included, only two steps are needed:

Step 1. Calculate the points a student received this year, based on their score relative to their target for the year.
Step 2. Update annual targets, based on this year's score.

At the school level, once each student has received points, the total number of student points is divided by the number of students expected to have a growth calculation that year (that is, those students expected to take the ACCESS test and receive at least their second ACCESS score) who were also enrolled for at least half the academic year.

e. School Quality or Student Success Indicator(s). Describe each School Quality or Student Success Indicator, including, for each such indicator: (i) how it allows for meaningful differentiation in school performance; (ii) that it is valid, reliable, comparable, and statewide (for the grade span(s) to which it applies); and (iii) of how each such indicator annually measures performance for all students and separately for each subgroup of students. For any School Quality or Student Success indicator that does not apply to all grade spans, the description must include the grade spans to which it does apply.

Minnesota has a short-term and long-term plan for developing and using indicators of school quality or student success. Based on the limitations of existing data systems and with an eye toward building on opportunities in other data systems, Minnesota will initially use consistent attendance—defined by the percentage of students in a student group who are not chronically absent—as its indicator of school quality or student success for all school levels, including pre-K, elementary, middle and high schools. In the future, it will add indicators of a well-rounded education, including measures of career and college readiness.

Specifically, beginning with the identifications made after the 2020-21 school year, Minnesota intends to add a measurement of equitable well-rounded instruction for all students, including in high school courses focused on career readiness and those focused on college readiness, as reported in the Minnesota Common Course Catalogue (MCCC). As those indicators are developed, Minnesota's state plan will be amended to use them, through the process defined by 1111(a)(6) of the Every Student Succeeds Act.

With respect to chronic absenteeism, a student will be determined to be chronically absent if their attendance rate is at or below 90 percent during the days they were enrolled at a school. A student must be enrolled for at least half an academic year to be included in a school's calculation. The consistent attendance rate will be calculated by subtracting the percentage of chronically absent students from 100 percent. For example, if 3 percent of English learners at a school are chronically absent, the consistent attendance rate for English learners at that school would be 97 percent.

i. Consistent attendance rates in Minnesota tend to vary at both the student group and school level. Sample calculations find that school-level consistent attendance averages, calculated as described in (ii) can vary from 100 to less than 83 at the elementary school level, and range from 100 to less than 60 at the middle and high school levels. This allows consistent attendance rates to be a source of meaningful differentiation between schools. Additional analysis demonstrates that the rates between the lowest and highest performers vary greatly.
ii. Minnesota collects student-level attendance and enrollment data from schools and districts statewide through the Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS), which allows for computation of absenteeism based on uniform submission standards. Dividing a student's average daily attendance by their enrollment allows for a standardized comparison of chronic absenteeism that is valid and reliable.
iii. The consistent attendance rate (that is, the percentage of students in a group who were not chronically absent) will be calculated at the student group level first (including for the "all students" group), and then a school average will be calculated by averaging student group rates, awarding equal weight to each student group in the school. This will allow the indicator to be disaggregated by student group.

For example, consider the following school's chronic absenteeism and consistent attendance rates:

Student Group	All Students	White	Black	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (FRP)	Not-FRP
Number of Students	100	75	25	20	80
Chronic Absenteeism Rate	3.4	3.1	4.3	7	2.5
Consistent Attendance Rate	96.6	96.9	95.7	93	97.5

The school's consistent attendance average would be calculated as follows:

$$\frac{(96.6 + 96.9 + 95.7 + 93 + 97.5)}{5}$$

The result of that calculation is 95.9,which would be used as the consistent attendance average at the school.

vi. Annual Meaningful Differentiation *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(C))*

a. Describe the State's system of annual meaningful differentiation of all public schools in the State, consistent with the requirements of section 1111(c)(4)(C) of the ESEA, including a description of (i) how the system is based on all indicators in the State's accountability system, (ii) for all students and for each subgroup of students. Note that each state must comply with the requirements in 1111(c)(5) of the ESEA with respect to accountability for charter schools.

Minnesota will use a decision tree process, also described as a funnel, to meaningfully differentiate between all public schools, including charter schools.

This decision tree will include all indicators, and will evaluate each student group against each indicator. The decision tree's order has been designed to grant substantial weight to each indicator and greater weight to the academic indicators. The decision tree will be applied in a consistent order when identifying:

- Category A schools: The lowest 5 percent of schools receiving Title I, Part A funds.
- Category C schools: Schools where any student group is performing similarly to Category A schools.
- Category D schools: Schools where any student group does not exit Category C status after three years.
- Category E schools: Schools where any student group is consistently underperforming.

Additionally, Category B schools will be those schools with a four-year graduation rate below 67 percent overall or for any student group.

The process includes several components:

- Calculation of each indicator separately for each student group (including the "all students" group) at each school. "Each indicator" refers to:
  - Academic achievement in math.
  - Academic achievement in reading/language arts.
  - Academic progress in math (for elementary and middle schools).
  - Academic progress in reading/language arts (for elementary and middle schools).
  - Four-year graduation (for high schools).

- Seven-year graduation (for high schools).
- Progress toward English language proficiency (ELP).
- School quality or student success, in the form of consistent attendance.

- Calculation of a school average for each indicator, based on student group performance as described in "Indicators."

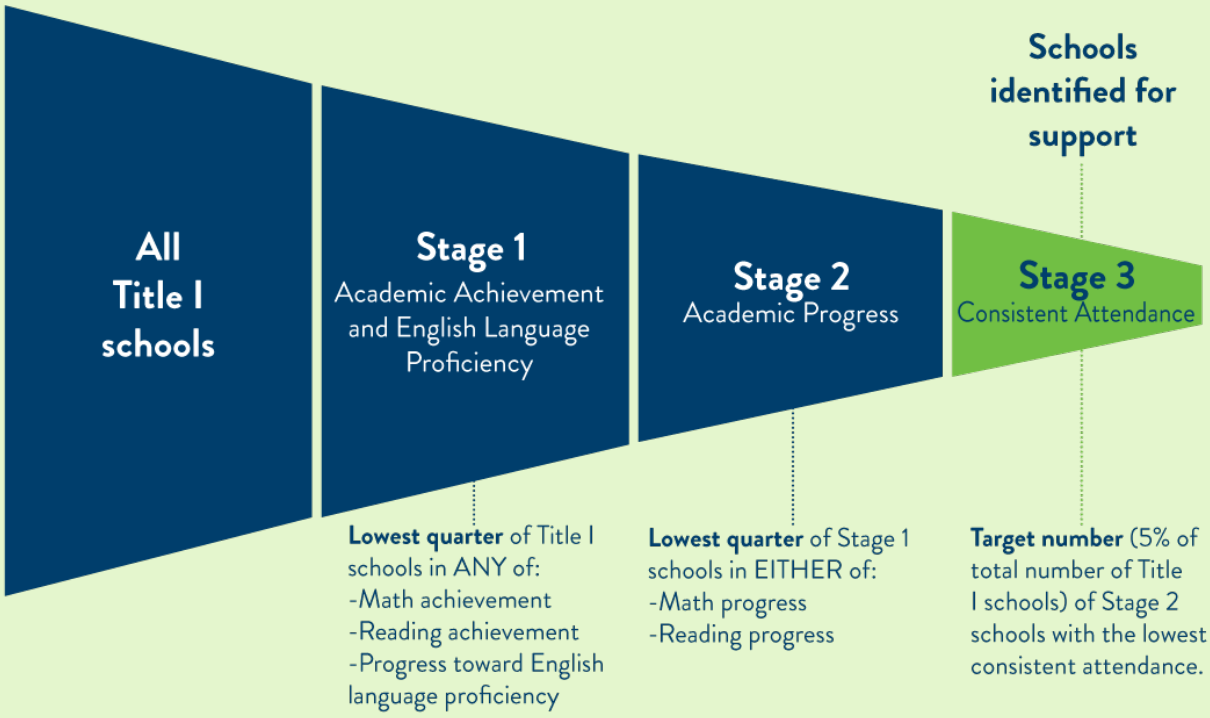
- The student groups used for this purpose are:
  - American Indian
  - Asian
  - Black
  - Hispanic
  - Pacific Islander
  - Two or more races
  - White
  - Students receiving free or reduced-price lunch
  - Students not receiving free or reduced-price lunch (only for schools with the minimum n-size of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch)
  - English learners
  - Students who are not English learners (only for schools with the minimum n-size of English learners)
  - Students with disabilities
  - Students without disabilities (only for schools with the minimum n-size of students with disabilities)

- Comparison of the average performance of all schools receiving Title I, Part A funds, for the purpose of identifying Category A schools for comprehensive support.

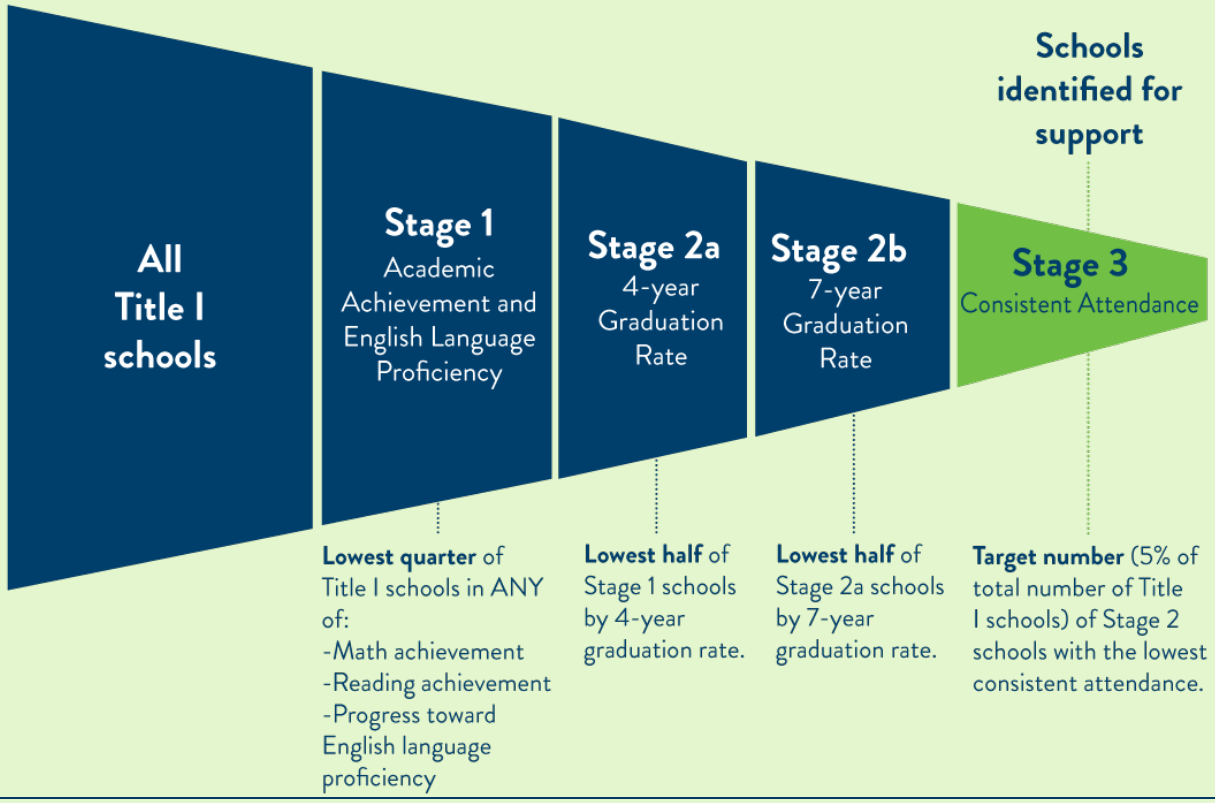
- Comparison of each student group in each school to two different thresholds on each indicator:
  - The average performance of Category A schools, for the purpose of identifying Category C schools for additional targeted support.
  - The lowest quarter (or half, for graduation indicators) of each indicator at each of three stages in the process of identifying Category A schools, for the purpose of identifying Category E schools. (For more information on this, see "Identification of Schools.")

When identifying schools for support, the indicators are clustered into stages of the decision tree. The stages are then placed in an order, as follows:

Elementary and Middle School Identification Process



High School Identification Process



Additional information about how these stages are used to identify schools is provided in section 4.vi, "Identification of Schools."

b. Describe the weighting of each indicator in the State's system of annual meaningful differentiation, including how the Academic Achievement, Other Academic, Graduation Rate, and Progress in ELP indicators each receive substantial weight individually and, in the aggregate, much greater weight than the School Quality or Student Success indicator(s), in the aggregate.

The order of stages in the decision tree establishes the weight placed on each indicator and allows the state to prioritize and place much greater weight on the academic indicators in the first and second stages.

The first stage of indicators includes Academic Achievement in math, Academic Achievement in reading/ language arts, and Progress Toward English Language Proficiency. These achievement and English language proficiency indicators are considered to have equal weight to one another and greater weight than subsequent indicators, as low performance on any of them causes a school to progress to the next stage of differentiation.

For elementary and middle schools, the second stage includes the Other Academic indicator, Academic Progress in math and Academic Progress in reading/language arts. These other academic indicators are considered to have equal weight to one another and much greater weight than the subsequent indicator, as low performance on either of them causes a school to progress to the next stage of differentiation.

For high schools, the second stage includes Four-Year Graduation Rate, followed by Seven-Year Graduation Rate. Of the two, Four-Year Graduation Rate is considered to carry greater weight, as schools are evaluated on their seven-year rates after they are evaluated on their four-year rates. Both graduation rate indicators are considered to have much greater weight than the subsequent indicator, as low performance on both of them causes a school to progress to the next stage of differentiation.

The third and final stage uses Consistent Attendance, which is Minnesota's School Quality or Student Success indicator in the short term. Since this stage comes last, it carries the least weight; it differentiates between schools that are already low on the academic indicators.

c. If the States uses a different methodology or methodologies for annual meaningful differentiation than the one described in 4.v.a. above for schools for which an accountability determination cannot be made (*e.g.*, P-2 schools), describe the different methodology or methodologies, indicating the type(s) of schools to which it applies.

Minnesota will not use a different methodology for annual meaningful differentiation for other types of schools. Those schools that do serve exclusively early grades are still included in the system on the basis of their progress toward ELP and consistent attendance indicators.

vii. Identification of Schools (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D))

a. Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools. Describe the State's methodology for identifying not less than the lowest-performing five percent of all schools receiving Title I, Part A funds in the State for comprehensive support and improvement, including the year in which the State will first identify such schools.

At the time of writing, 5 percent of schools receiving Title I, Part A funds in Minnesota would describe 35 elementary schools, nine middle schools, and seven high schools.

To identify **the lowest-performing 5 percent of all elementary and middle schools** receiving Title I, Part A funds, the state will use the following rules in the elementary/middle school decision tree described in section 4.v, "Annual Meaningful Differentiation," keeping elementary schools and middle schools separate:

Stage 1 – Achievement and ELP: Rank all schools receiving Title I, Part A funds in each of math academic achievement, reading/language arts academic achievement, and progress toward English language proficiency. If a school is in the bottom quarter of one or more of these indicators, it moves to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Progress: Rank all schools that moved out of Stage 1 by math academic progress and reading/language arts academic progress. If a school is in the bottom quarter of one or both of these indicators, it moves to Stage 3.

Stage 3 – Consistent Attendance: Rank all schools that moved out of Stage 2 by consistent attendance. The lowest 35 elementary schools and the lowest nine middle schools would be identified for comprehensive support and improvement. (These numbers may change slightly as the number of schools receiving Title I, Part A funds changes so that they continue to represent 5 percent of schools receiving those funds in each grade span.)

To identify **the lowest-performing 5 percent of high schools** receiving Title I, Part A funds, the state will use the following rules in the high school decision tree described in section 4.v, "Annual Meaningful Differentiation":

Stage 1 – Achievement and ELP: Rank all schools receiving Title I, Part A funds in each of math academic achievement, reading/language arts academic achievement, and progress toward English language proficiency. If a school is in the bottom quarter of one or more of these indicators, it moves to Stage 2a.
Stage 2a – Four-Year Graduation: Rank all schools that moved out of Stage 1 by their four-year graduation average rates. If a school is in the bottom half of that ranking, it proceeds to Stage 2b.
Stage 2b – Seven-Year Graduation: Rank all schools that moved out of Stage 2a by their seven-year graduation average rates. If a school is in the bottom half of that ranking, it proceeds to Stage 3.
Stage 3 – Consistent Attendance: Rank all schools that moved out of Stage 2b by consistent attendance. The lowest seven schools would be identified for comprehensive support and improvement. (This number may change slightly as the number of schools receiving Title I, Part A funds changes so that it continues to represent 5 percent of high schools receiving those funds.)

When identifying Category A schools, an average of the previous three years' data will be used after the 2017-18 school year for the academic achievement, academic progress, graduation and consistent attendance indicators. Initially, only one year of progress toward English language proficiency data will be able to be calculated given the introduction of the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 test in 2016 and guidance from the WIDA Consortium to only use data from 2017 onward to calculate progress. Additional years of data will be used for the progress toward English language proficiency indicator as they become available, with up to three years of data used to make identifications.

When the first identifications are made after the 2017-18 school year, they will use 2016-17 and 2017-18 data for test-based indicators. Data from 2015-16 and 2016-17 will be used for the graduation and consistent attendance indicators, due to state data collection and quality control practices.

b. Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools. Describe the State's methodology for identifying all public high schools in the State failing to graduate one third or more of their students for comprehensive support and improvement, including the year in which the State will first identify such schools.

All public high schools in the state, and every student group in those schools that meets the minimum cell size of 20, will be evaluated based on their four-year graduation rate. Using an average of the most recent three years' data, if the four-year graduation rate for a school, or for any student group at that school, is below 67 percent, that school will be identified for comprehensive support and improvement as a Category B school. These schools will be identified for the first time after the 2017-18 school year.

c. Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools. Describe the methodology by which the State identifies public schools in the State receiving Title I, Part A funds that have received additional targeted support under ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C) (based on identification as a school in which any subgroup of students, on its own, would lead to identification under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i)(I) using the State's methodology under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)) and that have not satisfied the statewide exit criteria for such schools within a State-determined number of years, including the year in which the State will first identify such schools.

Any school identified for additional targeted Support (see "Additional Targeted Support") in one identification cycle which would be re-identified for additional targeted support in the next identification cycle (three years later) is considered to not be meeting exit criteria and will be identified for comprehensive support and improvement. These schools will be identified for the first time after the 2020-21 school year, based on the group of schools identified for additional targeted support after the 2017-18 school year.

d. Frequency of Identification. Provide, for each type of school identified for comprehensive support and improvement, the frequency with which the State will, thereafter, identify such schools. Note that these schools must be identified at least once every three years.

Category A schools will be identified for comprehensive support and improvement after the 2017-18 school year and every three years thereafter.

Category B schools (high schools with a four-year graduation rate below 67 percent overall or for any student group) will be identified for comprehensive support and improvement after the 2017-18 school year and every three years thereafter.

Category C schools will be identified for additional targeted support after the 2017-18 school year and every three years thereafter.

Category D schools (Category C schools that do not meet exit criteria) will be identified for comprehensive support and improvement after the 2020-21 school year and every three years thereafter.

Category E schools will be identified for targeted support and improvement after the 2017-18 school year and annually thereafter.

e. Targeted Support and Improvement. Describe the State's methodology for annually identifying any school with one or more "consistently underperforming" subgroups of students, based on

all indicators in the statewide system of annual meaningful differentiation, including the definition used by the State to determine consistent underperformance. *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(C)(iii))*

The same stages of indicators used to identify Category A schools will also be used to identify schools where any student group is consistently underperforming. Each student group will be compared against **the threshold used to define the bottom quarter of each indicator** (or the bottom half of the graduation rate indicators) when Category A schools were identified.

A student group will be considered consistently underperforming if, in three consecutive years it performed:

- Below the threshold of any Stage 1 indicator.
- Below the threshold of any Stage 2 indicator (or both Stage 2 indicators for high schools).
- Below the threshold of consistent attendance.

A school with a consistently underperforming student group will be identified for targeted support and improvement. These schools will be identified after the 2017-18 school year and annually thereafter.

An average of the previous three years' data will be used after the 2017-18 school year for the academic achievement, academic progress, graduation, and consistent attendance indicators. Initially, only one year of progress toward English language proficiency data will be able to be calculated given the introduction of the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 test in 2016 and guidance from the WIDA Consortium to only use data from 2017 onward to calculate progress. Additional years of data will be used for the progress toward English language proficiency indicator as they become available, with up to three years of data used to make identifications.

f. Additional Targeted Support. Describe the State's methodology, for identifying schools in which any subgroup of students, on its own, would lead to identification under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i)(I) using the State's methodology under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D), including the year in which the State will first identify such schools and the frequency with which the State will, thereafter, identify such schools. *(ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C)-(D))*

The same stages of indicators used to identify Category A schools will also be used to identify schools where any student group is performing similarly to the lowest 5 percent of schools receiving Title I, Part A funds. Each student group will be compared against the average performance of Category A schools on each indicator.

A student group will be considered to be performing similarly to Category A schools if, in three consecutive years it performed:

- Below the average performance on any Stage 1 indicator of the lowest 5 percent of schools receiving Title I, Part A funds.
- Below the average performance on any Stage 2 indicator of the lowest 5 percent of schools receiving Title I, Part A funds (or both Stage 2 indicators for high schools).
- Below the average performance on consistent attendance of the lowest 5 percent of schools receiving Title I, Part A funds.

These schools will be identified after the 2017-18 school year and schools that do not demonstrate sufficient progress with the student group that was identified will move into Category D.

An average of the previous three years' data will be used after the 2017-18 school year for the academic achievement, academic progress, graduation, and consistent attendance indicators. Initially, only one year of progress toward English language proficiency data will be able to be calculated given the introduction of the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 test in 2016 and guidance from the WIDA Consortium to only use data from 2017 onward to calculate progress. Additional years of data will be used for the progress toward English language proficiency indicator as they become available, with up to three years of data used to make identifications.

g. Additional Statewide Categories of Schools. If the State chooses, at its discretion, to include additional statewide categories of schools, describe those categories.

Minnesota will not be identifying additional statewide categories of schools under the ESEA. It will differentiate supports for identified schools based on their districts' status under Minnesota's state-level World's Best Workforce law. As noted previously, Minnesota will also identify schools for recognition based on successes.

viii. Annual Measurement of Achievement (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(E)(iii)): Describe how the State factors the requirement for 95 percent student participation in statewide mathematics and reading/language arts assessments into the statewide accountability system.

As described in 4.iv.a, "Academic Achievement Indicator," Minnesota will base its calculation of academic achievement on the number of students enrolled for at least half an academic year in tested grades. Students expected to test but who do not receive a valid score will be included in the denominator for calculations of academic achievement unless they have a documented medical excuse. In all other cases, students will be included in the denominator of the achievement index, which means that students who do not participate will functionally count the same as students at the "does not meet standards" achievement level. (This only applies to the math and reading/language arts academic achievement indicators but does not apply when calculating the academic progress indicator.)

Title I, Part A: School Support

i. Continued Support for School and LEA Improvement (ESEA section 1111(d)(3)(A))

a. Exit Criteria for Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools. Describe the statewide exit criteria, established by the State, for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement, including the number of years (not to exceed four) over which schools are expected to meet such criteria.

Identifications for comprehensive support and improvement will be made every three years, based on data since the previous identification. If a school identified in one identification year would not be identified in the next identification year, it will be exited from comprehensive support and improvement status. For example, if a school is identified for comprehensive support and improvement in 2018, but would not be identified in 2021 (based on data from 2019, 2020 and 2021), that school would exit comprehensive support and improvement status.

b. Exit Criteria for Schools Receiving Additional Targeted Support. Describe the statewide exit criteria, established by the State, for schools receiving additional targeted support under ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C), including the number of years over which schools are expected to meet such criteria.

A school identified under ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C) is identified for additional targeted support because one or more student groups at that school perform similarly to the identified lowest 5 percent of Title I schools. Such schools will be identified on a three-year cycle. If a school identified in one identification year would not be identified in the next identification year, it will be exited from additional targeted support status. For example, if a school is identified for additional targeted support in 2018, but would not be identified in 2021 (based on data from 2019, 2020 and 2021), that school would exit additional targeted support status.

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)(I) of the ESEA.

For schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement in 2018 that fail to meet exit criteria by the end of the three-year school improvement timeline, Minnesota will implement increased supports and interventions aligned with state supports and requirements under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, commonly known as World's Best Workforce. All Minnesota districts must adopt strategic plans to support and improve teaching and learning. Local strategic plans must be aligned with students meeting school readiness goals, having all third grade students achieving grade-level literacy, closing academic achievement gaps, having all students attain career and college readiness, and having all students graduate from high school. Under WBWF, districts must also ensure that students equitably have access to diverse, experienced, qualified and

effective teachers. The commissioner "must identify those districts in any consecutive three-year period not making sufficient progress toward improving teaching and learning for all students…and striving for the world's best workforce." The commissioner, in collaboration with identified districts, may require districts to use up to 2 percent of basic general education revenue to implement "commissioner-specified strategies and practices."

Additionally, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) will conduct an external, in-depth needs assessment in each school re-identified. The goal of the assessment will be to inform the local comprehensive needs assessment and to identify more rigorous supports from the state, the Regional Centers of Excellence, and the district. The assessment will be facilitated on-site by teams of MDE staff, Regional Center staff, and practitioners from other districts. After the assessment, results will be used to identify root causes for not exiting (e.g., ineffective leadership, high attrition rates) in order to properly balance the use of consequences and more intensive supports. The assessment will specifically examine access to experienced, qualified, and effective teachers for underserved students at the school and classroom levels.

Informed by the external assessment, districts will conduct new school-level needs assessments in order to amend school improvement plans to:

- Address reasons schools did not meet exit criteria, including whether schools implemented interventions with fidelity.
- Address results of new needs assessments.
- Establish other measures of progress in areas such as climate, culture, adult behavior change and leadership, and monitor these indicators during plan implementation and use them with more focus and in shorter feedback cycles for extended support.
- Update how they will continue to address previously identified resource inequities.
- Identify and address any new resource inequities.
- Implement additional interventions that:
    - Must be approved by MDE before implementation.
    - Must be more rigorous.
    - Increase access to experienced, qualified and effective teachers for underserved students at the school and classroom levels.
    - May be required to be from the state-developed list of evidence-based practices if appropriate to school needs and populations.
    - May address school-level operations such as changes to budgeting, staffing, or the school day or year.

There will be increased requirements for use of funds for re-identified schools. Schools will be required to set aside a minimum of 20 percent of Title I funds to support implementation of the amended school support and improvement plan. The district Title I plan will be reviewed to ensure alignment with school improvement support strategies and requirements, and to ensure that the plan contains evidence-based practices that will improve performance in re-identified schools and address root causes identified in the external audit.

Districts with re-identified schools will be required to implement strategies to increase access to experienced, qualified, and effective teachers for underserved students at the school and classroom levels. These strategies will be collaboratively identified by the state and district based on the external assessment and new school-level needs assessment.

MDE is designing and implementing an audit process focusing on implementation of school improvement plans to be used with a small percentage of schools identified for support and improvement. All re-identified schools will be audited annually using this process. The audit process will use a checklist of improvement plan requirements to monitor compliance as well as provide feedback on plan implementation.

d. Resource Allocation Review. Describe how the State will periodically review resource allocation to support school improvement in each LEA in the State serving a significant number or percentage of schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement.

The Minnesota Department of Education will regularly assess the allocation of school improvement resources to support districts serving schools identified for support and improvement by reviewing grant budgets and work plans and by implementing a comprehensive program evaluation. Results will be used to address inequities so that districts can better serve identified schools.

Annual Reviews of Grant Budgets and Work Plans

Minnesota will provide support to districts serving identified schools by using school improvement funds and state funds to: (1) make grants to the Minnesota districts serving the highest proportions of schools identified for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement and that have capacity to support school improvement activities in schools; and, (2) make grants to regional educational service agencies—the Minnesota service cooperatives—to serve schools implementing comprehensive and targeted support improvement plans through Minnesota's Regional Centers of Excellence. MDE reviews resource allocations between grants to address inequities.

These grants are reviewed annually by MDE. The review process includes a full review and approval of grant budgets and work plans. Through the budget and work plan review MDE can ensure that resources are distributed between districts and support providers equitably based on planned activities to support schools and based on school needs.

Grantees are required to conduct full program evaluations in order to demonstrate results and revise work plan activities and budgets. Program evaluation reports are collected from grantees every six months.

Program Evaluation

The system of support offered to districts and schools by the Regional Centers of Excellence is evaluated and informed by a rigorous program evaluation conducted by an external evaluator from MDE. The evaluation has been designed to provide information in the areas of effort, fidelity and results. The program evaluation is based on the following measures:

1. Quarterly reviews of school leadership teams in identified schools using a rubric measuring quality of team functions.
2. Quarterly reviews of school improvement plans implementation using a checklist of requirements and using a rubric measuring quality of the implementation of continuous improvement activities.
3. Twice yearly administration of the Regional Capacity Assessment from the State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-Based Practices Center.
4. Participants' evaluations of professional development.
5. Professional development participation data.

6. Annual surveys of school leadership teams.
7. Annual Regional Center staff focus groups and interviews on the implementation of practice profiles and schools' uses of fidelity measures and feedback loops to inform implementation.
8. Annual Regional Center staff focus groups and interviews on needs, challenges, and successes.
9. Time and effort data from the program's online activity reporting system.
10. Standardized assessment results on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments in reading and math.
11. Results of Minnesota's accountability indicators under ESSA.
12. Annual Regional Center staff survey.

Evaluation results are reviewed monthly by MDE staff and Regional Center directors, and two times per year by stakeholders on the Regional Centers of Excellence Advisory Committee. The advisory committee makes recommendations for activities and resource allocations informed by evaluation results, and MDE and center directors determine final activities and allocations.

e. Technical Assistance. Describe the technical assistance the State will provide to each LEA in the State serving a significant number or percentage of schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement.

As part of ESSA school improvement planning and stakeholder engagement, Minnesota developed the following theory of action to guide the design of technical assistance for schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement:

School Improvement Theory of Action

If Minnesota:

- Partners with districts to facilitate school improvement.
- Focuses school improvement efforts on equity and underserved student groups.
- Builds districts' and schools' capacity to use the principles of active implementation.
- Delivers supports through on-site coaching, opportunities to network and leadership development.
- Meaningfully involves stakeholders in school improvement planning and implementation.
- Focuses school improvement on developing implementation infrastructures that include innovation-specific capacity, general capacity, and enabling context for implementation and continuous improvement.

Then:

- Districts and schools will be able to engage in comprehensive needs assessment to identify, name and eliminate inequities.
- Districts and schools will have the capacity to implement evidence-based practices using continuous improvement processes.
- All schools will have highly effective educators and instructional leaders.
- Educators and stakeholders will be meaningfully engaged in the improvement process.
- District and schools will be standard-focused and ensure educational quality.

And the result will be:

- Improved outcomes for all students.
- The elimination of achievement gaps between groups of students.
- Increased capacity of districts and schools to implement sustained continuous improvement processes.

- Increased educator effectiveness.
- Improved conditions for teaching and learning.

So that schools can meet the needs of each student and so that each student benefits from a high-quality school.

The theory of action defines priorities for how the state will approach supports for identified schools as well as reinforces the focus on eliminating achievement gaps and inequities while improving outcomes for all students. Technical assistance must be built and implemented in partnership with schools, districts, and stakeholders. It is a priority that technical assistance for school improvement creates capacity in schools and districts and integrates what the state knows about implementation science through our partnership with the State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-Based Practices Center.

Minnesota will employ two strategies to provide differentiated technical assistance to schools and districts that helps them conduct comprehensive needs assessments, select appropriate evidence-based interventions and strategies, develop and implement school support and improvement plans, and address resource inequities. Minnesota will grant Title I school improvement funds to the districts serving the most significant numbers of identified schools and will provide direct supports to districts and schools that do not receive grants for school improvement.

Grants to Districts Serving Significant Numbers of Schools Identified for Support and Improvement

Minnesota will use a portion of the state's 7 percent Title I set-aside for school improvement to provide three-year grants to the state's districts that serve the highest proportions of schools identified for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement and that have capacity to support school improvement activities in schools. The grants will be renewed by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) each year through an application process that includes budget review, an updated work plan and program evaluation results to evaluate districts' use of school improvement funds.

To receive grants and have grants renewed annually, districts must submit applications that include:

- Statements of commitments to activities and an outline of the capacity districts have to support school improvement activities.
- Planning year activities in the first year of grants.
- Needs assessment results and identification of resource inequities for identified schools including review of:
  - Academic achievement information from math and reading MCAs for all students and for student groups.
  - Performance on all indicators of the state accountability system for all students and for student groups.
  - The reason(s) schools were identified for support and improvement.
  - Schools' unmet needs including those with respect to students, school leadership and instructional staff, quality of instructional programs, family and community involvement, school climate, and distribution of resources.

- At the districts' discretion, performance on locally selected indicators that affect student outcomes.
- Disproportionate rates of inexperienced, out-of-field, or ineffective teachers.
- Access and availability of advanced coursework.
- Access to full-day kindergarten and to preschool programs.
- Access to specialized instructional support personnel.
- Per-pupil expenditures.
- At the districts' discretion, district- and school-level budgeting and resource allocation, and access to instructional materials and technology.

- Descriptions of evidence-based interventions that will be implemented in schools.
- How districts will carry out responsibilities; address resource inequities identified by the needs assessment process; help schools develop support and improvement plans; monitor implementation of school improvement plans; recruit, screen, select and evaluate any external partners; align resources to carry out activities; and provide operational flexibility.
- Grant budgets with justifications.
- A summary of the program evaluation that will be implemented to evaluate supports for identified schools.
- Strategies that will be used to collaborate with the MDE to ensure alignment with other state supports for school improvement from the Regional Centers of Excellence.
- Assurances that schools will receive all of the state and local funds they would have otherwise received.

Grant recipients will submit school's improvement plans quarterly for review by the Minnesota Department of Education. The department also will conduct on-site reviews with district school improvement staff at least twice yearly to monitor grant and school improvement plan implementation.

One full-time equivalent position at MDE will be dedicated for technical assistance and grant administration. This position will review and approve grant applications, review school improvement plans quarterly, and conduct on-site monitoring visits. Quarterly, the position will approve expenditures by grant recipients to monitor recipients' use of school improvement funds. In addition, the position will provide direct technical assistance and professional development to identified schools in partnership with districts receiving grants.

Direct Support from the Regional Centers of Excellence

Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.115 establishes Regional Centers of Excellence "to assist and support school boards, school districts, school sites, and charter schools in implementing research-based interventions and practices to increase the students' achievement within a region." The Regional Centers "establish a coherent statewide system of regional support, including consulting, training and technical support, to help school boards, school districts, school sites and charter schools effectively and efficiently implement the world's best workforce goals … and other state and federal education initiatives." Assistance and supports from the Regional Centers are built using the five active implementation frameworks from the National Implementation Research Network—implementation stages, linked implementation teams, operationalized usable interventions, implementation drivers and Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles. Minnesota's Regional Centers of Excellence deliver support and services straight to schools. Center staff deliver on-site coaching support and technical assistance, professional development, resources, and networking opportunities to districts and schools. Regional Centers are staffed by specialists with a full range of expertise, from math and reading to special education, English language development, implementation and data analysis.

Using state funds and the portion of the state's 7 percent Title I set-aside for school improvement not granted to districts with significant numbers of identified schools, Minnesota will provide direct support to the remaining districts with schools identified for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement under our ESSA accountability system through the Regional Centers. Under ESSA, Minnesota will expand center staffing to address specific improvement needs and ESSA requirements (e.g., reading, math, district support specialists, equity specialists, graduation support reform and dropout prevention specialists, and principal leadership specialists). Under ESSA, Minnesota will also redefine support strategies to include district roles and activities as well as school-level supports. The goal is to shift supports so that the district is entry point for supports, not just the schools.

Under Minnesota's approved No Child Left Behind flexibility waiver, MDE identified Priority and Focus schools every three years. Priority schools were the 5 percent most persistently low-performing Title I schools. Focus schools were the 10 percent of Title I schools with the largest achievement gaps. The designations, part of Minnesota's school accountability system under the waiver, were based on reading and math proficiency, student academic growth, reductions in achievement gaps, and graduation rates. Once designated, Priority and Focus schools created plans to increase student achievement with direct support from Minnesota's Regional Centers.

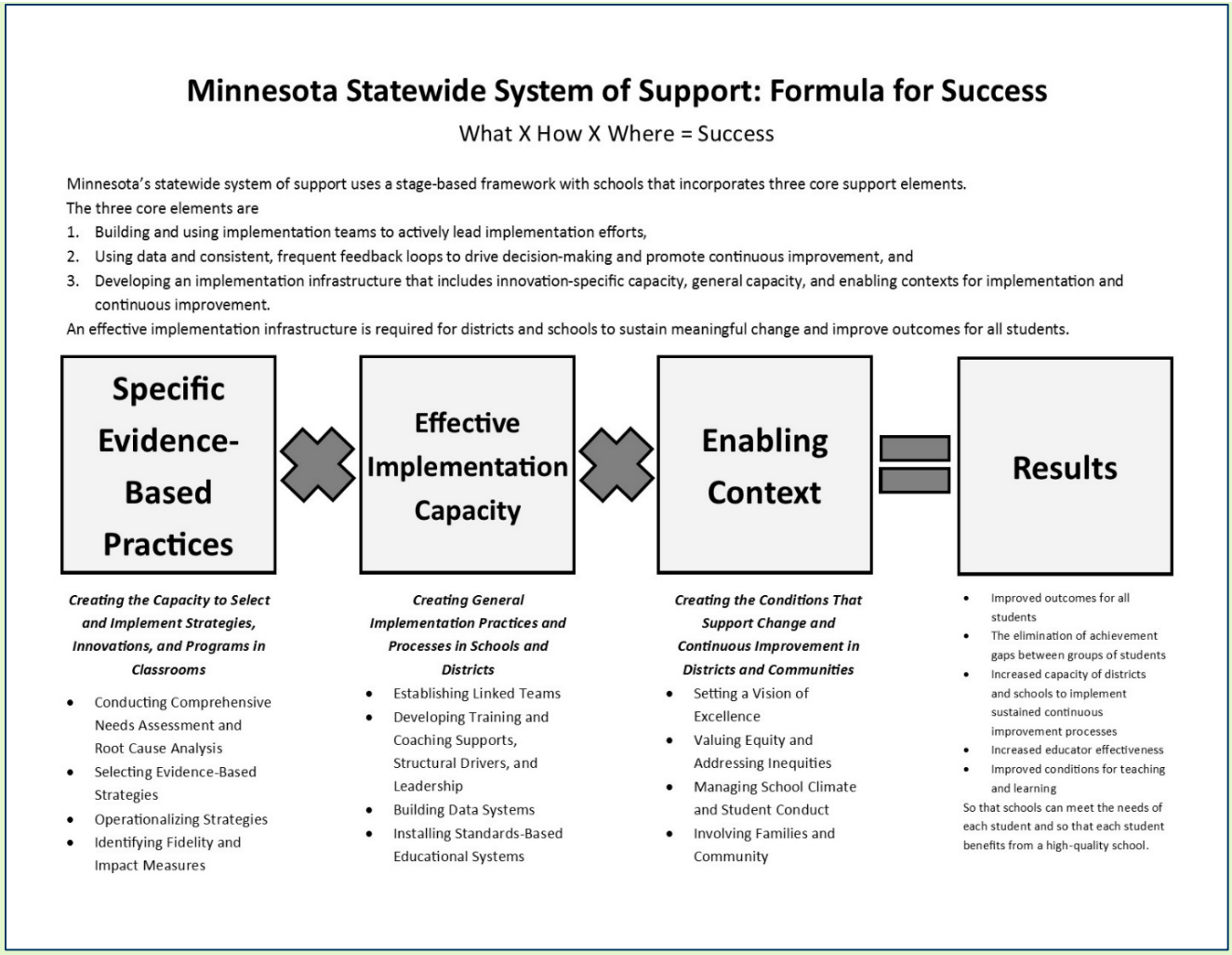
A collaboration between MDE and Minnesota's educational service cooperatives, there are six Regional Centers of Excellence, located in Thief River Falls, Mountain Iron, Fergus Falls, Sartell, Marshall and Rochester. In addition to content expertise, center specialists offer an outside perspective on schools' efforts to increase student achievement. They guide and support staff at identified schools through the process of needs assessment, building and strengthening leadership teams, and developing school improvement plans.

Of the first cohort of Priority schools, 74 percent showed improved student growth from 2011 to 2015, while 56 percent of the first cohort of Focus schools showed improved student growth from 2011 to 2015. Nearly 20 percent of schools designated Priority or Focus in 2012 that worked with the Regional Centers improved so much that they were recognized as Reward schools or Celebration-Eligible schools under the waiver three years later.

From 2014 to 2015, Regional Center specialists spent nearly 13,000 hours in direct service to 78 identified schools. As a result, 65 percent of Priority and 63 percent of Focus schools showed improved growth in just one year. Supported schools continued to outperform other Title I schools in growth in proficiency rates, student academic growth, and achievement gap reduction in 2016.

Under ESSA and based on Minnesota's theory of action for school improvement, resources and supports have been designed based on the following formula for success:

[GCM - Graphic that follows needs URL to where it is available on the MDE website with FULL description of what information is included in the graphic. Otherwise, document where formula is fully explained in narrative format.]

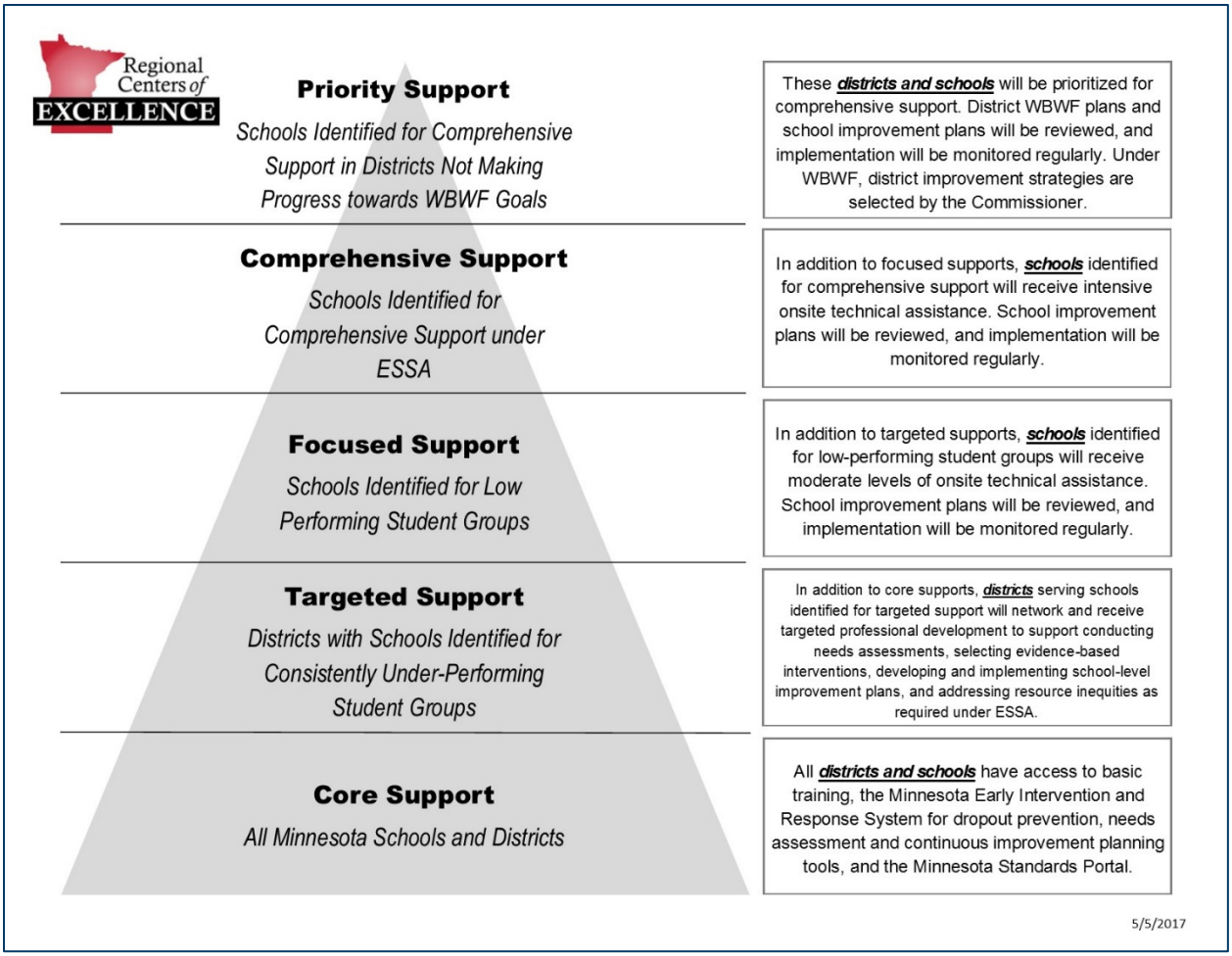


Regional Center of Excellence supports for districts and identified schools focus on facilitating improvement by establishing leadership teams, using continuous data and feedback loops to inform implementation of the school improvement plan, and developing implementation infrastructure at three levels as reflected by the formula. The formula demonstrates the fact that significant and sustainable improvement includes not only the implementation of specific evidence-based interventions, programs, and instructional strategies but also includes building the general capacity of districts to support schools in continually improving as well as creating an enabling context that supports continuous improvement. While identified schools must engage in a comprehensive needs assessment, select evidence-based practices and implement practices through a school support and improvement plan, they must also be supported in building overall capacity and conditions that support sustained improvement. The formula for success incorporates the five active implementation frameworks as well as Minnesota's Common Principles of Effective Practice—educational equity, school leadership teams, continuous improvement processes, learning teams of teachers, standards-based educational systems, family engagement, and teaching and learning conditions.

Supports, Tools, and Resources

Intensity of supports from the Regional Centers of Excellence will be differentiated based on levels of identification under Minnesota's accountability system for ESSA and requirements under Minnesota's World's Best Workforce statute. As stated previously, under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, commonly known as World's Best Workforce, all Minnesota districts must adopt strategic plans to support and improve teaching and learning. And these local strategic plans must be aligned with students meeting school readiness goals, having all third-grade students achieving grade-level literacy, closing academic achievement gaps, having all students attain career and college readiness, and having all students graduate from high school. The commissioner "must identify those districts in any consecutive three-year period not making sufficient progress toward improving teaching and learning for all students…and striving for the world's best workforce." The commissioner, in collaboration with identified districts, may require districts to use up to 2 percent of basic general education revenue to implement "commissioner-specified strategies and practices."

Minnesota has designed the following differentiated support model that aligns the identification of schools under ESSA with identification of districts under World's Best Workforce. The model increases supports for districts and schools as they move from targeted support and improvement to identification for comprehensive support and improvement under ESSA. The Regional Centers will develop differentiated supports and interventions in the differentiated support model based on accountability results and on district and school needs, and will create individualized service plans to determine support resource and personnel allocations.



At the base of the model, all districts will receive resources and tools from MDE. Tools will include needs assessment and continuous improvement planning resources, access to the Minnesota Early Intervention and Response System (MEIRS), and resources through the Minnesota Standards Portal supporting the implementation of instructional practices based on Minnesota's rigorous academic standards.

MEIRS is a tool that can be used to provide a snapshot of students in grade six and grade nine who are at increased risk of not completing high school in four years. Using validated research-based variables associated with dropping out of school (i.e., attendance, multiple enrollments, state accountability test scores and suspension/expulsion), supports can be developed and targeted to students who may need additional assistance to stay on track for graduation. The purpose of MEIRS is to screen for students who are at risk of not completing high school in four years and to facilitate student success by using the data to match appropriate supports to student needs. Each of the tools at the core support levels are supported by basic training and technical assistance provided by MDE and available to all districts.

Districts with schools identified for targeted support and improvement under ESSA will have increased supports from the Regional Centers of Excellence. The centers will offer these supports through three district support specialists. Additional supports will include access to more intensive professional development and access to networking opportunities. Training and networking opportunities will focus on establishing school leadership

teams, conducting comprehensive needs assessments, selecting appropriate evidence-based interventions and strategies, developing and implementing support and improvement plans, and addressing resource inequities, pre-K through grade 12. Districts will also receive training support using tools in the Minnesota Standards Portal and the MEIRS system.

In addition to the supports described above, schools identified for targeted support and improvement because of low-performing student groups will also receive moderate (1-2 instances of on-site coaching per month) levels of direct support from Regional Center specialists. Implementation of schools' support and improvement plans will also be monitored quarterly.

The most support from the Regional Centers will be provided to schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement under ESSA. The centers will offer these supports through content specialists in the areas of reading, math, equity, special education, implementation, graduation support and high school reform, English learning, and data. Schools will receive intensive (2-4 instances of on-site coaching per month) levels of direct support from Regional Center specialists. Additionally, as part of the comprehensive needs assessment, these schools will be required to identify resource inequities that affect the low-performing student group(s) for which schools were identified. School improvement plans will be required to address resource inequities identified in the comprehensive needs assessment. Implementation of these schools' support and improvement plans, pre-K through grade 12, will also be monitored quarterly.

Within the model's comprehensive support level, levels of support will be further differentiated based on: (1) level of school challenge (i.e., demographics, teacher mobility, principal mobility, funding); (2) previous identification status, progress, and effectiveness of past support (e.g., Has the school previously been identified as a Priority or Focus school? Has the school failed to meet exit criteria? Has the school made academic progress with previous support activities?); (3) ESSA accountability results at the indicator levels; (4) WBWF data not included in the ESSA accountability system, such as school readiness, third-grade literacy, achievement gaps, graduation, and career and college readiness measures, (5) district and school willingness; and, (6) district capacity to support school improvement.

As shown in the differentiated support model, schools in districts also identified under World's Best Workforce will be prioritized for the most support at both the school and district levels. As outlined above, strategies in the districts' strategic plans are selected and approved by MDE.

MDE and the Regional Centers of Excellence will also be utilizing four school leadership specialists to support schools. The specialists will be implementing network opportunities and professional development throughout Minnesota. Specific to school identified for targeted or comprehensive support, the specialists will offer mentoring support for new principals and offer the Instructional Feedback Observation (IFO) process to support principal supervisors. Using IFO, principal supervisors collect evidence to coach principals in improving their skills delivering feedback. The IFO program will be available to all principals and principal supervisors in identified schools but will specifically target high school principals.

Implementation of the differentiated support model under ESSA will require MDE to partner with stakeholders and Regional Center staff to modify existing tools and resources and to develop new tools and resources to meet school support and improvement requirements in ESSA. MDE has established eight project groups focused

on developing and modifying not only tools and resources used to support school improvement but also processes and activities.

1. The **high schools support** project group is developing supports for MEIRS, differentiating continuous improvement tools for high schools, and engaging stakeholders to develop differentiated supports for credit- and dropout-recovery schools.
2. The **three-year calendar** project group is creating an outline of the three-year cycle of school improvement (which outlines key activities, action steps, and deliverables) and creating the Initial Inquiry tool and protocol for identifying "quick wins" for school improvement in year one.
3. The **teaching and learning conditions** project group is embedding social-emotional and school climate indicators in the comprehensive needs assessment and other tools and is identifying tools for assessing teaching and learning conditions in schools and districts.
4. The **evidence-based practices** project group is creating a list of evidence-based practices for schools and districts and is designing protocols for districts and schools to identify evidence-based practices from the state list or practices not on the state list.
5. The **district supports** project group is creating a tool for the district to self-assess the conditions that support rapid school improvement, designing the training and networking aligned to the three-year cycle of school improvement support, and creating communications clearly defining school improvement roles and requirements.
6. The **school leadership** project group is designing activities to support school leaders (especially high school principals) in the areas of school improvement, providing instructional feedback and instructional leadership, and is designing activities for new school leaders (especially new principals in identified and previously identified schools).
7. The **staff induction and development** project group is planning activities to support Regional Center staff in the transition to the ESSA school improvement activities and requirements.
8. The **document updating and alignment** project group is updating existing Regional Center tools and resources based on the ESSA school improvement activities and requirements and on the work other project groups. This group is designing the checklist of the requirements for school improvement plans, including a district process for stakeholder engagement in creation and approval of plans, which will be used by MDE and districts to review and approve school improvement plans. The team is also preparing guidance to districts for how to use the checklist and meet requirements to review and approve school improvement plans locally for schools identified for targeted support and improvement for consistently underperforming student groups.

This group will also redesign the comprehensive needs assessment process and tools to create a focus on equity. The needs assessment will be used by districts to determine reasons why schools were identified and practices for schools' improvement plans. Needs assessment data examples include district capacity to support school improvement; student academic data as required under ESSA; schools' unmet needs; performance on locally selected indicators; partnerships with community and families; resource allocation including teacher effectiveness, assignments, leadership, per pupil expenditures, and use of Title I funds; well-rounded education programming; school climate, suspension rates, and engagement; adult behaviors and mindsets; teaching and learning conditions; standards implementation; professional learning community performance; current continuous improvement processes; student survey data; and review of district- and school-level resources among and within schools with respect to the following:

a. Access to experienced, qualified, and effective teachers for underserved students at the school and classroom levels.
b. Access and availability of advanced coursework.
c. Access to full-day kindergarten and to preschool programs.
d. Access to specialized instructional support personnel.
e. Per-pupil expenditures.
f. District- and school-level budgeting and resource allocation, and access to instructional materials and technology.

The eight project groups are coordinated by a core team at MDE that consists of the chief academic officer, director of school support, program manager for school improvement programs, and program manager for the Regional Centers of Excellence. The work of the project groups will continue through school year 2017-18 for implementation with school identifications in 2018.

Three-Year School Improvement Timeline

Minnesota will implement a three-year cycle of school improvement support and will design the first year as a planning year for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement. Using the first year of identification as planning year will allow the Regional Centers to:

- Assess needs of identified schools and plan differentiated supports.
- Ensure that appropriate stakeholders are engaged.
- Provide adequate planning time.
- Check for strong and sustainable district and school leadership.
- Recognize balance between comprehensive and actionable school improvement plans.
- Connect districts and schools to sources and research on evidence-based practices.
- Establish a results versus compliance orientation for monitoring and support.
- Ensure that plans connect and coordinate with other state and district initiatives.

MDE is developing an outline of the three-year cycle of school improvement support that reflects stage-based implementation as defined by National Implementation Research Network for identified schools and which includes clear action steps and deliverables.

Year one will focus on exploration and installation of evidence-based practices, building effective implementation capacity, creating enabling contexts for improvement, and “quick wins.” Specifically, schools and districts in the first year of identification will establish leadership teams, engage stakeholders, complete comprehensive needs assessments and root-cause analyses, identify evidence-based practices that fit and are feasible, and submit two-year school improvement plans by March 1. The remainder of the year will focus on acquiring or repurposing the resources needed to do the work ahead, operationalizing evidence-based practices, usability testing, and preparing staff for new practices.

The comprehensive needs assessment and informed decision-making in choosing evidence-based practices for implementation are the key year-one activities. As outlined above, MDE is providing a comprehensive needs assessment template and process as well as direct technical assistance through the Regional Centers. The Regional Centers also use multiple tools and processes (e.g., Hexagon tool, Initiative Inventory, needs assessment coaching process) to facilitate a robust decision about evidence-based practices to choose for

implementation. This decision is informed by the best balance of not only evidence but also fit, need, resources, capacity and readiness.

Training and Regional Centers specialists' on-site support in year one will also:

- Provide an orientation to the purpose, meaning, and calculation of the ESSA accountability system; the requirements for school, district, and state that result from designations; and the vision and design of the differentiated support model and opportunities.
- Build relationships among Regional Center, district and school staff.
- Clearly establish roles and responsibilities for the state, regions, districts and schools.
- Provide an opportunity to hear from school leaders and teachers who were previously supported by Regional Center staff.
- Share the three-year cycle of school improvement support that reflects stage-based implementation and discuss implications.
- Overview active implementation frameworks, the school improvement theory of action, the school improvement formula for success and other foundational information.
- Provide separate and unique events for high school leaders.
- Provide separate and unique events for district leaders responsible for supporting school improvement.

Year one will also include an initial inquiry process at schools and a self-assessment of district conditions that support rapid school improvement, both facilitated by Regional Center staff. These two processes will assess current conditions, inform needs assessment, and identify "quick wins" for the first year in the areas of standards implementation, teaching and learning conditions, district capacity to support school improvement, staffing, and instructional time. In the area of staffing, the first year will specifically include implementing strategies to ensure that identified schools and underserved students in identified schools have access to experienced, qualified and effective teachers.

Years two and three will focus on initial implementation and full implementation, as reflected in the two-year school improvement plan. The second year is when the evidence-based practices will used for the first time. Leadership teams at the school and district levels will use feedback loops to assess fidelity of implementation and impact, and refine implementation using training and coaching supports, structural drivers and leadership. Results and progress will be continually recorded in the school improvement plan.

Identification of Evidence-Based Interventions and Practices

To assist schools and districts with identifying evidence-based interventions that are supported by the strongest levels of evidence available and that are appropriate to the needs of the schools and their student populations, MDE is developing a non-exhaustive list of evidence-based practices at evidence tiers I, II, and III as defined in ESSA from which districts and schools may choose. Minnesota's list will reflect practices in areas reflecting the indicators of the state accountability system—reading, math, progress towards English language proficiency, and consistent attendance. It will also include practices for supporting special education students since preliminary data show schools being identified for targeted support and improvement more frequently because of their special education student groups.

Minnesota stakeholders have provided the following recommendations regarding list development, purpose and implementation:

- Include practices beyond instruction such as leadership, organization and school climate that ensure educational equity.
- Consider grade spans, disciplines and social-emotional issues.
- Include practices on the menu that the state and regions have the capacity to support (e.g., those with operationalized core components and tools developed to measure fidelity) to help ensure that practices are implemented as intended.
- Build and focus the capacities of MDE and partners to support practices on the list.
- When feasible, ensure that the list includes practices that have been studied at the high school level and represent secondary needs including, but not limited to dropout prevention, instructional and assessment practices, standards implementation, credit and course offerings, staffing and their roles (e.g., school counselors), special programming for transition years, wrap-around services, staff development to build relationships with students, and career and college readiness programming.

    - Include, highlight and support practices, interventions and programs that are targeted to increase graduation rates of specific student groups (e.g., students of color, American Indian students, students with disabilities).
    - To the degree that research is available, also include evidence-based practices that demonstrated success in alternative learning center and credit recovery settings.

We will assume that because Minnesota needs to close racial and economic achievement gaps by raising achievement for all students, educator and instructional quality is the foundation of any evidence-based practice.

Continuous improvement supports from the Regional Centers and tools and resources will help schools match evidence-based practices with needs based on the results of the comprehensive needs assessment and the review of resource allocations. Tools and processes will support schools and districts as they examine multiple evidence-based practices to determine the best balance of evidence, fit, need, resources, capacity and readiness.

Since Minnesota's list of evidence-based practices is non-exhaustive, MDE in partnership with the Midwest Comprehensive Center will provide a process for districts to select evidence-based practices not on the state list to best meet identified needs. School improvement plans that do not reflect evidence-based practices from the state list will demonstrate how they implemented the process (or another local process) to select practices that are evidence-based.

Differentiated Supports for High Schools and Schools Serving Primarily Credit-Recovery and Dropout Recovery Students

Identification of high schools for support and improvement will be new for many Minnesota high schools. In the accountability system under Minnesota's NCLB flexibility waiver, few high schools were identified since most do not receive Title I funds and because graduation was one of multiple indicators in the accountability system. Since high schools will primarily be a new group of schools identified for support from the Regional Centers, MDE and center staff will provide clear communication for high schools and stakeholders regarding:

- The purpose, meaning and calculation of the accountability system for graduation rates.
- The requirements for school, district and state that result from the designation.

- The vision and design of the support model and the opportunities.

Based on stakeholder feedback around the needs of high schools, MDE and the Regional Centers will differentiate supports for identified high schools by including support for the MEIRS system and by building the capacity of secondary principals as instructional leaders.

Regional Center supports for high schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement due to low graduation rates will include use of MEIRS and training and technical assistance to help schools in these areas:

- Review and interpret MEIRS data to make decisions about how to support students who are at increased risk of not graduating in four years.
- Select strategies and practices that will better engage at-risk students.
- Use tools and guidelines to effectively implement practices and measure progress.

To build the instructional leadership capacity of high school principals, MDE and the Regional Centers will support principals and their supervisors using the Instructional Feedback Observation (IFO) process. Principals' abilities to deliver instructional feedback and conduct "critical conversations" with staff are essential instructional leadership skills that often need to be honed and improved. Working with the premise that you get what you measure, American Institutes for Research developed the IFO process to advance principals' skills as teacher evaluators. Using IFO, principal supervisors collect evidence, using videos of principals' post-observation conference meetings with teachers, to coach principals in improving their skills delivering feedback. MDE has piloted a train-the-trainer program to deliver statewide support for use of the IFO tool through the formal training and coaching of principal supervisors.

Finally, MDE is differentiating comprehensive needs assessment processes and tools for high schools to reflect relevant secondary data (e.g., course offerings, credit accumulation, MEIRS). This will include graduation data, college career readiness data, and other indicators of student success that MDE and districts have available.

Minnesota is convening a stakeholder group representing alternative learning center and credit- and dropout-recovery schools. This group's purpose will be to provide recommendations for differentiated services, materials, and other supports for alternative learning centers and credit recovery schools identified for support and improvement.

Review, Approval and Monitoring of School Support and Improvement Plans

MDE is providing a clear checklist of requirements for support and improvement plans including a district process for stakeholder engagement in creation and approval of plans. The checklist will include the following requirements for the approval of school improvement goals and plans:

- Plans must address accountability system indicators and be likely to improve student outcomes.
- Goals and plans must align with Minnesota's long-term goals.
- Plans must include at least one evidence-based practice that is aligned to accountability indicators of the state accountability system for which the school was identified, that is supported by the strongest level of evidence, and that is appropriate for the school and its population of students.
- Plans that do not include an evidence-based practice from the state list will reveal the local process used to select practices that are evidence-based.
- Practices and activities in plans are based on the school comprehensive needs assessments.

- Plans include strategies to increase access to experienced, qualified and effective teachers for underserved students at the school and classroom levels.
- Plans identify and address resource inequities identified in the comprehensive needs assessment.
- Plans are resourced appropriately.
- For schools identified for targeted support and improvement because of one or more consistently under-performing student groups, plans include district-defined exit criteria.
- Plans describe stakeholder involvement that is meaningful during needs assessment, plan development and plan implementation.
- Plans are approved by the school and district.
- Plans are public and posted with required materials under World's Best Workforce.

MDE and the Regional Centers will review, approve and monitor school improvement plans for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement and plans for schools identified for targeted support and improvement because of one or more low-performing student groups. The approval and monitoring process will be actively embedded in the on-site technical assistance provided by Regional Center specialists and implemented as a supportive coaching opportunity as opposed to a compliance activity. Schools that are meaningfully involved with Regional Center support activities meet requirements for approval of their school improvement plans as outlined above. School leadership teams regularly record feedback loop results, track implementation activities, and update implementation progress in their school improvement plans as an ongoing record of continuous improvement. Quarterly, center staff collect updated school improvement plans, review plans collaboratively, and plan ongoing coaching and supports for individual schools. Interventions for schools and districts not meeting requirements for plan review and approval will be implemented by MDE.

Districts will review, approve, and monitor school improvement plans for schools identified for targeted support and improvement because of one or more consistently under-performing student groups. Districts will use the checklist of requirements for support and improvement plans provided by MDE, and MDE will offer guidance for how to use the checklist and meet requirements to review and approve school improvement plans locally. Annually, every district must report publicly on its activities and progress towards goals under Minnesota World's Best Workforce and must submit a summary of the report to MDE. Districts will confirm that plans approved locally have been reviewed and monitored through their annual World's Best Workforce summaries.

As part of program evaluation and support for schools identified for targeted support and improvement, MDE is designing and implementing an annual audit process to be used with a small percentage of schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement, a small percentage of schools identified for targeted support and improvement, and all schools that have failed to meet exit criteria. The audit process will use the checklist of requirements to monitor compliance as well as provide process feedback to improve state and local improvement supports and planning.

Other State Strategies to Improve Low-Performing Schools

Prekindergarten-Third Grade Framework

Minnesota's pre-K through 3rd Grade Framework focuses on transforming schools through four main goal areas:

- Expanding a high-quality voluntary prekindergarten.
- Increasing teacher and school leader effectiveness.
- Aligning of policies and practices across the pre-K through 3rd grade learning continuum.

- Providing high-quality, job-embedded professional development for staff and administrators.

Under Minnesota's World's Best Workforce statute, districts must set goals in the area of school readiness.

Minnesota currently is implementing many of the early learning strategies noted by the U.S. Department of Education as evidence-based, effective school improvement strategies and includes transition programs or investing in professional development as a way to incorporate collaboration across grade levels.

Currently Minnesota is:

- Providing full-day kindergarten.
- Expanding access to high-quality voluntary prekindergarten programs.
- Providing educators, including prekindergarten teachers, with time for joint planning across grades to facilitate effective teaching and learning and positive teacher-student interactions.
- Using data to identify and implement an instructional program that is evidence-based, developmentally appropriate, and vertically aligned from one grade to the next (pre-K through 3rd grade) as well as aligned with state early learning and development standards and state academic standards.
- Providing administrators and staff with ongoing, high-quality job-embedded professional development regarding subject-specific pedagogy, instruction that reflects a deeper understanding of the community served by the school, or differentiated instruction.
- Supporting the ability of effective charter schools to offer high-quality pre-K programs.

The following early learning strategies are being implemented to impact the performance of children, staff and administrators in state identified Title I schools:

- Strategy I: Increase access to high-quality voluntary prekindergarten in all Title I schools.
- Strategy II: Recruit all Title I schools to participate in the pre-K through 3rd grade professional development activities.
- Series I: Pre-K through 3rd grade Principal Leadership Series.
- Series II: Building Rigorous and Robust pre-K through 3rd grade Learning Environments: The Art of Communication in Classrooms for Young Children.
- Series III: Building pre-K through 3rd grade Systems: From Alignment to Coherence.
- Series IV: Building Rigorous and Robust pre-K through 3rd grade Family Engagement.
- Strategy III: Train all pre-K through third grade staff in Title I schools in the Kindergarten Entry Profile tools and provide ongoing coaching to appropriately analyze and use data to inform daily instruction. All tools are designed to be used pre-K through 3rd grade.

The framework is funded primarily with state funds.

Compensatory Revenue Pilot Project

The Compensatory Revenue Pilot Project was established in 2005 for two purposes:

1. To evaluate whether allowing districts greater flexibility in allocating state compensatory funding among school sites based on student performance would be an effective strategy for improving overall student performance.

2. To direct additional state funds to selected large suburban districts to correct inequities in the state's compensatory revenue formula.

The project provides grant funding and allows eligible school districts to allocate compensatory revenue received under the Laws of Minnesota 2015, Article 2, Sec. 70, Subdivision 8, among their school buildings according to each building's school performance measures. Eligible school districts choosing to participate must submit to the commissioner a grant application and board-approved plan that includes the following information:

- Identification of the test results that will be used to assess student performance.
- Description of the method the district will use to distribute the compensatory revenue.
- Summarization of the evaluation procedure the district will use to determine if the redistribution of compensatory revenue results in an improvement of measurable student performance.

English Learner (EL) Leadership Institute

The EL Leadership Institute works with schools with high EL populations to review EL student achievement and identify how ELs might be better supported. Principals, EL teachers, and classroom teachers from these schools participate in workshops that review EL evidence-based practices and review EL data. At the end of the year the schools submit an EL specific school improvement goal. The professional development cycle lasts for one year. The program is funded through state funds.

Project North Star

Project North Star is a three-year federal grant intended to elevate the identification and programming approaches provided for disadvantaged and underserved rural populations by preparing their teachers, school administrators and communities with the knowledge and skills their gifted students need to be successful in the greater world. The Minnesota Department of Education Division of Academic Standards, in collaboration with the department's Office of Indian Education, selected six Minnesota elementary schools in various regions to participate in Project North Star based on specific grant criteria including strong school leadership, high poverty rate and a significant American Indian population. The first three schools began the project in June 2016 as Group A, and the last three schools will begin in June of 2017. Project North Star is funded through the U.S. Department of Education Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program through August 2018.

Singing-Based Pilot Program to Improve Student Reading

The purpose of this state grant is to pilot the implementation of a research-supported, computer- and singing-based reading intervention designed to improve the reading performance of students in grades three through five. The pilot is being conducted by the "Rock'n'Read Project." The law states that pilot sites should represent "urban, suburban, and greater Minnesota" schools and "give priority to schools in which a high proportion of students do not read proficiently at grade level and are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch." This is funded by a one-time legislative appropriation of $100,000.

Full Services Community Schools Grants

Full Services Community Schools is a state program established in 2015 that provides funding to eligible schools to plan, implement and improve full-service community schools. The program prioritizes schools identified for improvement. Additional funds were allocated in 2016 for expansion of the program. The current funding has provided grants to 13 schools—four in round one and nine additional schools in round two. Full service community school grant funds allow schools to partner with community agencies to provide on-site health and dental clinics, mental health services, family resource centers, college access information, out-of-school program information, and other family support services as outlined in Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.231.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

MDE has provided training to schools and districts across Minnesota to support their implementation of school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) since 2005.

School-wide PBIS across multiple school buildings within the district helps improve consistency in behavioral practices and student experiences at school, particularly as they transition from one school building to the next. To date, 583 schools have participated in the state training, including 93 middle schools and 141 high schools or alternative learning centers.

PBIS is an evidence-based framework for preventing problem behavior; providing instruction and support for positive and prosocial behaviors; and supporting student's social, emotional and behavioral needs. School-wide implementation of PBIS requires training, coaching and evaluation for school staff to consistently implement the key components that make PBIS effective:

- Establish, define, and teach 3-5 positively stated school-wide behavioral expectations.
- Develop and implement a consistent response system across staff with positive feedback when students demonstrate the school-wide expectations.
- Develop and implement a consistent response system for student behaviors that do not meet the school-wide expectations.
- Utilize data system to support decision-making related to behavioral practices.
- Implement a continuum of evidence-based interventions to support academic and behavioral success for all students.
- Utilize a team-based approach to support implementation and evaluation of outcomes.

f. Additional Optional Action. If applicable, describe the action the State will take to initiate additional improvement in any LEA with a significant number or percentage of schools that are consistently identified by the State for comprehensive support and improvement and are not meeting exit criteria established by the State or in any LEA with a significant number or percentage of schools implementing targeted support and improvement plans.

As stated earlier, under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, commonly known as World's Best Workforce (WBWF), all Minnesota districts must adopt strategic plans to support and improve teaching and learning. Local strategic plans must be aligned with students meeting school readiness goals, having all third grade students achieving grade-level literacy, closing academic achievement gaps, having all students attain career and college readiness, and having all students graduate from high school. Under WBWF, districts must also ensure that students equitably have access to diverse, experienced, qualified, and effective teachers.

Under the requirements of WBWF, the commissioner "must identify those districts in any consecutive three-year period not making sufficient progress toward improving teaching and learning for all students…and striving for the world's best workforce." MDE is aligning district identification time lines under WBWF with school identification time lines under ESSA, and is aligning indicators used to identify districts and schools under WBWF and ESSA.

The commissioner, in collaboration with identified districts, may require districts to use up to 2 percent of basic general education revenue to implement "commissioner-specified strategies and practices." MDE will use authorities under WBWF to initiate additional guided improvement district activities for identified schools in the districts identified under WBWF. Specifically, MDE will review school and district improvement strategies in WBWF plans, collaboratively identify and approve strategies, and ensure strategies are resourced with general education revenue.

Title I, Part A: Access to Educators, School Conditions and School Transitions

1. **Disproportionate Rates of Access to Educators (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(B)):** Describe how low-income and minority children enrolled in schools assisted under Title I, Part A are not served at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers, and the measures the SEA will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the SEA with respect to such description.

In 2015, the Minnesota Department of Education submitted our *State Plan to Ensure Poor and Minority Students Have Equitable Access to Experienced, Qualified, In-field Teachers* (referred to hereafter as the state equitable access plan) to the U.S. Department of Education in response to Secretary Duncan's 2014 letter to state education agencies (SEAs) and guidance released in 2014. At that time, Minnesota engaged stakeholders in a process (described thoroughly in the state equitable access plan) to analyze statewide data, identify gaps in equitable access, determine root causes, and identify and implement strategies to address those root causes. Minnesota stakeholders also crafted definitions for certain terms (e.g., inexperienced teacher) that were critical in determining what will be measured and reported in our equitable access work.

While the Every Student Succeeds Act continues the focus on student access to teachers, there were some changes in requirements that became one focus area of MDE's ESSA stakeholder engagement. The inclusion of "ineffective" (which was optional under the 2015 U.S. Department of Education guidance) and the regulation to report student-level data (since repealed) were new areas that would impact our equitable access work. Consequently, MDE convened a diverse group of stakeholders—the ESSA Educator Quality Committee—to offer direction and advice to the commissioner relative to equitable educator access. In particular, stakeholders were to respond to three guiding questions:

- How should Minnesota best define, measure, collect and report "effective/ineffective" teacher data?
- What should be the local's role to ensure equitable access?
- How should the state support local efforts to ensure equitable access?

Minnesotans believe that many factors contribute to a teacher's overall effectiveness. Stakeholders brainstormed dozens of characteristics of effective teachers, including but not limited to:

- Pedagogy—meets/exceeds professional teaching standards, standards-based and culturally relevant instructional and assessment practices, etc.
- Dispositions—collaborative, recognizes cultural assets, intentional professional choices, etc.
- Professionalism—engaged in the wider school system, fulfills assignments, conduct, etc.
- Student impact—students experience academic growth; students of all racial, cultural, economic, language, religious, gender and orientation backgrounds feel safe, supported, engaged, etc.

In the end, committee members seemed to agree that multiple measures of effectiveness should be considered, including measures of adult practice (e.g., instruction, pedagogy, relationships) and student outcomes (e.g., achievement, growth, engagement).

Minnesota's World's Best Workforce (WBWF) law (Minn. Stat. § 120B.11), reinforces ESSA by requiring local educational agencies (LEAs)—districts, charters, intermediate districts, education cooperatives—to create local equitable access plans to ensure low-income and students of color and American Indian students are not disproportionately taught by inexperienced, ineffective or out-of-field teachers. Furthermore, this law requires local educational agencies to improve student access to teachers of color and American Indian teachers.

Minnesota has a state law requiring local education authorities to implement local plans to develop and evaluate teachers based on common professional teaching standards and on student outcomes. The teacher development and evaluation law explicitly requires local educational agencies to identify teachers not meeting professional teaching standards, support them to improve, and discipline teachers who have not improved after being supported. Furthermore, the law requires schools to ensure that students are not taught in consecutive years by teachers who are on an improvement plan or being disciplined for not meeting professional teaching standards. While the statute provides the criteria that must be met by local educational agencies, it is a local control mandate, giving local educational agencies the flexibility to design evaluation systems that best meet the needs of their communities, students, and educators.

Minnesota stakeholders have defined the following terms which, in turn, will determine the measures used in Minnesota's equitable access work.

- **Equitable access**: The situation in which low-income students, students of color or American Indian students are educated by ineffective, inexperienced and out-of-field teachers at rates that are at least equal to the rates at which other students are educated by ineffective, inexperienced and out-of-field teachers.
- **Equity gap**: The difference between the rate at which low-income students, students of color or American Indian students are educated by ineffective, inexperienced and out-of-field teachers and the rate at which other students are educated by ineffective, inexperienced, and out-of-field teachers.
- **Ineffective teacher**: For the purpose of evaluating equitable access data, an ineffective teacher shall be defined as a teacher who is not meeting professional teaching standards as defined in local teacher development and evaluation (TDE) systems.
- **Inexperienced teacher**: An inexperienced teacher shall be defined as a licensed teacher who has been employed for three years or less.
- **Out-of-field teacher**: An out-of-field teacher shall be defined as a licensed teacher who is providing instruction in an area which he or she is not licensed.
- **Low-income student**: A low-income students should be defined as a student who qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch.
- **Student of color**: A student of color shall be defined as a student who meets the definition under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as most recently authorized, excluding the student categories of poverty, disability and English Learners. This definition includes students in the following student groups: Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan native, black (not of Hispanic origin), and Hispanic.

Current data regarding Minnesota's equitable access gaps are displayed in the following table.

Equitable Access Gaps

Profile	Count Inexperienced Teachers	Count Total Teachers	Percent Inexperienced Teachers	Count Classes Out Of Field	Count Total Classes	Percent Classes Out Of Field
Statewide-All	8,564	59,908	14.3%	19,396	411,395	4.7%
Statewide – Non-Title I	3,926	32,100	12.2%	11,565	259,347	4.5%
Statewide – Title I	4,638	27,808	16.7%	7,831	152,048	5.2%
Highest Quartile FRP – Non-Title I	310	1,923	16.1%	2,719	25,992	10.5%
Lowest Quartile FRP – Non-Title I	1,566	14,651	10.7%	3,808	11,0763	3.4%
Highest Quartile FRP – Title I	1,905	8,692	21.9%	2,789	65,829	4.2%
Lowest Quartile FRP – Title I	571	4,336	13.2%	1,263	21,290	5.9%
Highest Quartile SOC –Non-Title I	483	3,314	14.6%	2,772	59,067	4.7%
Lowest Quartile SOC – Non-Title I	887	7,486	11.8%	1,310	40,455	3.2%
Highest Quartile SOC – Title I	2,124	10,551	20.1%	2,852	74,535	3.8%
Lowest quartile SOC – Title I	776	5,400	14.4%	1,592	21,824	7.3%

FRP = Free/Reduced-Price lunch students (low income)

SOC = Students of Color and American Indian students

A number of equitable access gaps are revealed by this data.

- Statewide, students in Title I schools are more likely to be taught by an inexperienced teacher or an out-of-field teacher.
- Students in Title I schools with the largest proportion of low income students are more likely to be taught by inexperienced teachers (21.9 percent) compared with non-Title I schools statewide (12.2 percent). At the same time, students in these settings are more likely to have an in-field teacher (4.2 percent compared with 4.5 percent).
    - Also, students in non-Title I schools with the largest proportion of low income students are more likely to be taught by out-of-field teachers (10.5 percent) compared with Title I schools statewide (5.2 percent).
    - Taken together, schools with large proportions of low income students—regardless of Title I status—are more likely to be taught by inexperienced teachers.
- Students in Title I schools with the largest proportion of students of color and American Indian students are more likely to be taught by inexperienced teachers (20.1 percent) compared with non-title I schools

statewide (12.2 percent). At the same time, students in these settings are more likely to have an in-field teacher (3.8 percent compared with 4.5 percent).

MDE is in the process of convening an ongoing stakeholder group who will continue to monitor state data and assist MDE with updating the state equitable access plan and state-level strategies. This group will start with the above data set and will have the opportunity to review additional data. They will also review previous and current strategies that the state has pursued since the original state equitable access plan in 2015.

Stakeholders will conduct a root-cause analysis and eventually identify strategies that the state can pursue to address the root causes. While MDE has identified and made publicly available our timelines and interim targets for eliminating identified equitable access gaps in our 2015 state equity plan, stakeholders and the commissioner will update these targets during school year 2017-18 based on updated terminology, data and stakeholder feedback.

MDE will also work to provide guidance, training, and other resources to support local educational agencies to engage in local equitable access planning as part of their World's Best Workforce efforts. MDE will encourage local educational agencies to use the state definitions as a starting point for local equitable access planning. Districts are encouraged to study equitable access gaps using state definitions and—based on local context—to identify other student groups not explicitly named in the law (e.g., English learners, students with disabilities, students from cultural or heritage groups where past experience or trauma may affect equitable access), other teacher characteristics (e.g., level of professional license, teacher degree attainment, teacher attendance rates) or both. While the state definition of "ineffective" is a baseline all districts must use, teacher evaluation systems are locally designed and implemented and evaluation systems must use multiple measures of effectiveness based on professional teaching standards in rule and measures of student academic growth. Finally, MDE will provide resources to support districts to look not just at the school-level data, but also at classroom- and student-level data to illuminate educator equity gaps that exist within and between schools and classrooms.

One way MDE will support local educational agencies to create local equitable access plans is through our statewide data collection and reporting. The state data MDE provides local educational agencies will provide useful comparison points as they look for and address local equitable access gaps. MDE will continue to collect and report data with regard to teacher experience and teacher assignment (or, whether teachers are working within their licensure field) as well as some other measures (e.g., teacher degree attainment). These data will be available on the public Minnesota Report Card where stakeholders will be able to search for a district or a school and review information about the staffing profile.

Additionally, MDE provides every Minnesota district and charter school a WBWF data profile on an annual basis. Among other measures, these profiles include district data that show whether minority and low-income students have equitable access to experienced and in-field teachers. This gives MDE the opportunity to provide every district and charter in the state with clear data on how they are contributing to the closing of statewide equity gaps based on the measures required in ESSA. While it is important to measure and publicly report equitable access data at the state level, it is critical for MDE to be transparent with district leaders on the gaps that may exist in their individual districts.

Local educational agencies will be able to use both state and local data in order to identify, document and report the local gaps in equitable access to quality and diverse teachers. Per state law, local educational agencies must

make their WBWF plans public, publicly report progress towards WBWF goals, and submit an annual summary to MDE. Local educational agencies are well-positioned to drill down to the student- or classroom-level for all the available data points, which is often where additional inequities are revealed.

Stakeholders have also asked us to contribute to and to collaborate on community efforts to support educational equity overall and equitable access efforts in particular. Organizations such as the Minnesota Education Equity Partnership are actively seeking legislation and funding to improve and diversify the teacher pipeline among other areas of interest to the organization. Stakeholders have said that MDE should participate and be present in stakeholder-led work rather than limiting ourselves to bringing stakeholders in for state-led work. Community-based organizations are empowered through both ESSA and Minnesota's World's Best Workforce legislation to have meaningful involvement and access to data so that they are well positioned to advocate for students and families.

Lead by community organizations, local educational agencies and MDE, Minnesota is focused on the entire human capital continuum from increasing, improving, and diversifying the teacher pipeline to supporting educators to better serve students of color, American Indian students and low-income students.

2. School Conditions (*ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(C)):* Describe how the SEA agency will support LEAs receiving assistance under Title I, Part A to improve school conditions for student learning, including through reducing: (i) incidences 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.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is uniquely positioned to support the efforts of local educational agencies (LEAs)—districts, charters, intermediate districts, education cooperatives—to improve school conditions for student learning. MDE has staff with knowledge and extensive background in this area of work and brings a unique perspective and position to the table as an entity that can help build the capacity of local educational agencies to implement and sustain school climate improvement efforts, which include specific strategies to reduce bullying and harassment and student discipline.

Bullying and Harassment

Minnesota's bullying prevention and intervention law, the Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.031), provides educators, parents and youth with the tools and resources they need to prevent bullying and harassment. The law not only provides increased protections against bullying in Minnesota schools by requiring school staff to stop, intervene and investigate all reports of bullying, but places an emphasis on prevention by explicitly requiring efforts around school climate improvement and social emotional learning. The law established the School Safety Technical Assistance Center (safety center) at MDE and the School Safety Technical Assistance Council (council), two entities tasked with supporting schools, providing leadership for improving school climate and safety, and ensuring school climate improvement work flows throughout the state. The work of the center and council revolves around providing district-wide guidance, model policy, training and professional development and technical assistance to schools, families and community members on bullying and harassment prevention and intervention.

Discipline Practices

Many local educational agencies in Minnesota are currently implementing a variety of school-wide preventive and positive approaches to discipline. Three of the most successful and widely used approaches are Restorative Practices, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). These approaches are either being implemented all together, one on its own, or a combination of any two of the three.

The center provides local educational agencies support on implementing restorative practices and SEL as a central strategy for creating positive school climates. The center's activities related to restorative practices include developing implementation guidance, provide training and technical assistance to local educational agencies, and building state capacity to support local educational agencies by increasing Minnesota's train-the-trainer network. For SEL, the center is leading the development of statewide SEL Guidance to provide local educational agencies with a framework for integrating SEL into teaching and learning practices. Included in the guidance are learning goals, benchmarks, sample activities and guidance on implementation, assessment, evaluation and professional development. The SEL guidance will be available to all local educational agencies beginning the 2017-18 school year and follow-up support to local educational agencies, including training which will be provided by the center.

MDE's Special Education Division provides leadership to ensure a high-quality education for Minnesota's youth with disabilities and has lead the state's School-wide PBIS initiative since 2005. School-wide PBIS across multiple school buildings within the district helps improve consistency in behavioral practices and student experiences at school, particularly as they transition from one school building to the next. To date, 583 schools have participated in the state training, including 93 middle schools and 141 high schools or alternative learning centers.

Additionally, MDE staff are piloting support for students with disabilities who are black or American Indian in four large districts. Focusing on the evidence-based practice of Check and Connect, district and school capacity is supported to focus additional support on these particular student groups to increase school engagement, school success and graduation. These districts are also exploring the middle schools that feed the high schools so that they can identify students who need additional support early in their transition year of ninth grade.

MDE's Division of Compliance and Assistance provide technical assistance and training to local educational agencies in the area of student rights and discipline. The student rights and discipline training provided in multiple regions of the state, encourages local educational agencies to consider current practices surrounding discipline. Using case studies in training encourages discussion and dialogue surrounding opportunities reducing the use of suspensions in schools, and includes an overview of discipline policy requirements, Minnesota Statutes, sections 121A.40 to 121A.56, student protections, and special education due process.

Beginning with the 2012-13 school year, and annually thereafter, MDE's Compliance and Assistance Division has convened the Restrictive Procedure Work Group to meet on a quarterly basis to develop a statewide plan with specific and measurable implementation and outcome goals for reducing the use of restrictive procedures in the school settings. This is aligned with Executive Orders 13-01 and 15-03, and Minnesota's Olmstead Plan's positive support goals addressing the school setting. MDE's staff provide technical assistance and training to local

educational agencies in facilitating the reduction of the use of restrictive procedures. This training encourages discussion and dialogue on the use of positive behavioral interventions in lieu of physical holding and seclusion, and includes an overview of the statutory provisions pertaining to the use of restrictive procedures allowed only in emergency situations. MDE has posted positive support training modules on its website to help build local educational agencies' capacity in the use of positive supports.

3. School Transitions *(ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(D))*: Describe how the State will support LEAs receiving assistance under Title I, Part A in meeting the needs of students at all levels of schooling (particularly students in the middle grades and high school), including how the State will work with such LEAs to provide effective transitions of students to middle grades and high school to decrease the risk of students dropping out.

Planning for Students' Successful Transition to Postsecondary and Employment: Personal Learning Plans

Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.125, requires all students to have a personal learning plan around several key elements beginning no later than ninth grade. This plan should be looked at as a life plan that includes academic scheduling, career exploration, career and employment-related skills, community partnerships, college access, all forms of postsecondary training, and experiential learning opportunities. When assisting students in developing a plan, districts must recognize the unique possibilities of each student and ensure that the contents of each student's plan reflect the student's unique talents, skills and abilities as the student grows, develops and learns, which will encourage students to stay in school. The *Personal Learning Plans Toolkit*, developed by the Minnesota Department of Education, is a resource for teachers, counselors, parents and administrators to support student career and college readiness. Workshops and conference presentations have been presented around the state to assist districts in determining the means for implementing legislation, selecting resources, and reviewing and record keeping of the students' plans.

Support Our Students Grants

In 2016, Minnesota legislation provided $12,033,000 in grant funding over six years for schools to hire student support services personnel, which include Minnesota licensed school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, school nurses or chemical dependency counselors. The grant funding helps address shortages of student support services personnel within Minnesota schools, decreases caseloads for existing staff to ensure effective services, and ensures that students receive effective academic guidance and integrated and comprehensive services to improve kindergarten through grade 12 school outcomes and career and college readiness. The grant also ensures that student support services personnel serve within the scope and practice of their training and licensure; fully integrates learning supports, instruction and school management within a comprehensive approach that facilitates interdisciplinary collaboration; and improves school safety and school climate to support academic success and career and college readiness. These support services personnel are critical for helping students who are on the verge of dropping out.

Minnesota Early Indicator and Response System (MEIRS)

The Minnesota Department of Education has developed a screening tool to assist educators in tracking and supporting student progress toward graduation from high school. This tool provides a snapshot of students in grades six and nine who are at increased risk of not completing high school in four years. Using validated research-based variables associated with dropping out of school (such as attendance, multiple enrollments, state accountability test scores, and suspension/expulsion), supports can be developed and targeted to students who may need additional assistance to stay on track for graduation. These supports may include systemic responses as well as individual interventions. Once students are identified as being at risk of dropping out, teachers, counselors and community partners can intervene with targeted dropout prevention strategies. Trainings are offered to district personnel who will use the data to plan interventions, and a district team is encouraged to attend the trainings.

Alternative Learning

Minnesota has provided options for students who need an alternative path to a high school diploma. According to Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.68, districts are able to apply to operate State-Approved Alternative Programs (SAAP). There are three types of SAAPs: 1) Area Learning Centers, which must be established between two or more districts excluding Minneapolis, St. Paul or Duluth; 2) Alternative Learning Programs, which can be established by a single district; and, 3) Contract Alternative Programs, which are operated by a private organization that holds a contract with the district to serve their at-risk students. There are other requirements for SAAPs that are detailed in the Annual Report on Learning Year Programs. Access the full report from the MDE 2017 Legislative Reports page.

Minnesota has also allocated additional funding to serve these students in out-of-school-time programs. This additional time is designed to help students gain the skills and knowledge they need to be on track to graduate with their peers. Minnesota will fund an additional 20 percent of the minimum core school year hours for these out of school time (extended learning) programs.

Early/Middle College Programs

An Early/Middle College program is a partnership between a State-Approved Alternative Program (SAAP) and an eligible postsecondary institution, which is specifically designed to offer high school students well-defined pathways to postsecondary degrees and credentials. This unique model opens a door for traditionally at-risk students by providing them the opportunity to earn dual credit with intentional academic and wraparound supports offered by the partnership—an option that was formerly not available for this population of students. Further, Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.09, subdivision 9, allows these programs to access funding for developmental coursework, if needed.

Rigorous Course Taking

Challenging, rigorous learning opportunities are essential to prepare students for success in postsecondary institutions and career options. The Minnesota Legislature has appropriated funding to support the development and growth of the following programs: Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB),

Concurrent Enrollment, and Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO). These programs are designed to offer pathways, preparation for the world beyond high school, and opportunities for high school students to earn free college credit. The programs continue to increase in both student enrollment and success for Minnesota students.

Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.13, appropriates funding specifically for AP and IB student exam fee reimbursements as well as teacher training. Courses taken through the PSEO program and Concurrent Enrollment are supported through separate funding formulas, with PSEO payments made to postsecondary institutions, and Concurrent Enrollment reimbursements provided directly to participating school districts (Minn. Stat. §§ 124D.09 and 124D.091).

The Minnesota commissioner of education must submit a report to the Legislature each year which includes information on rigorous course taking, disaggregated by student subgroup, school district and postsecondary institution. The *Rigorous Course Taking Report* describes specifics and progress of AP, IB, Concurrent Enrollment and PSEO programs, including recent trends, recommendations and expenditures. Access the full report from the MDE 2017 Legislative Reports page.

Online Learning

Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.095, provides Minnesota K-12 students the opportunity to enroll in supplemental or comprehensive online learning programs from one of our 32 state-approved providers. Supplemental online enrollment allows students to access a broader range of course offerings and provides flexibility in a student's schedule while they continue to take courses from their resident district and work toward graduation. A diverse array of comprehensive online schools provide students with a variety of options for their full-time enrollment. Comprehensive programs provide all services to students including special education, student support and issuance of diplomas. Online learning provides a personalized, flexible, supportive approach to help all students be successful.

In 2015-2016, 17,706 students participated in online options. Of those, 9,710 students enrolled in comprehensive programs. Students with Autism in particular are choosing online learning at higher rates. Online enrollments for students with Autism make up 20 percent of the total population of online students receiving special education services.

Career and College Readiness Measure on Transcripts

Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, requires districts, schools, and charter schools to record a student's progress toward career and college readiness on the student's high school transcript. For purposes of accountability, 120B.30, subdivision 1, paragraph (k), states that a student is college and career ready if they are able to successfully complete credit-bearing coursework at a two- or four-year college or university or other credit-bearing postsecondary program without need for remediation. Districts, schools and charter schools select measures of progress that are appropriate for their students and report that progress on the high school transcript in the method they see fit. These measures will help the districts determine which students need assistance to ensure readiness and help prevent students from being unsuccessful and dropping out.

Career Technical Education (CTE) / Career Development

Carl D. Perkins

Career Technical Education (CTE) is supported by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV). This federal grant is distributed to state-approved career and technical education programs with appropriate teacher licensure. Funds are granted to districts and consortia of districts on a formula basis. They can be used for professional development or career counseling and guidance and to promote student attainment of academic and technical skills, upgrade equipment or provide school- and work-based experiences. Minnesota's state plan focuses on five goal areas:

1. Designing and implementing programs of study.
2. Effectively utilizing employer, community, and education partnerships.
3. Improving service to special populations.
4. Continuum of service provision for enabling student transitions.
5. Sustaining the consortium.

The Carl D. Perkins Act requires states to meet negotiated performance indicators in the area of student participation in and completion of CTE programs that are nontraditional by gender. Targets are negotiated annually, and states must meet their targets within 90 percent of the agreed-upon level or develop an improvement plan for the following year. Support for these student success indicators includes assistance identifying strategies to improve participation and completion of males and females in programs that are nontraditional by gender, training for instructors and counselors, or assistance with the development of an improvement plan for these indicators.

CTE programs are administered under Minnesota Rules Chapter 3505, and the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act and are also supported by the CTE levy, which is a permissive levy for school districts to provide extra support based, in part, on the district's CTE expenditures. Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.4531, states that a district with an approved CTE program is eligible for career and technical revenue equal to 35 percent of approved expenditures in the fiscal year in which the levy is certified.

Work-Based Learning

Work-Based Learning (WBL) provides formalized learning which consists of instruction that occurs concurrently at a school and a worksite. It is an instructional strategy that prepares students for success in careers and college and involves a sequential building of knowledge and skills that provide opportunities for student to build career awareness. Employers benefit from the opportunity to nurture student interest in jobs and careers within their companies, jobs in their communities, and/or in their industry. WBL programs are approved by the Office of Career and College Success at the Minnesota Department of Education. All state-approved WBL experiences require a written agreement and training plan between school, employer, student, and parent or guardian. In some instances, WBL experiences may provide postsecondary credit and credentials. Students in WBL experiences must be supervised by a licensed work-based learning teacher in a state-approved work-based learning program.

Access to Career Technical Education for Students with Disabilities (ACTE-SPED)

Minnesota Statutes, section 125A.08, requires that no later than grade nine, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) must address a student's need for transition from secondary services to postsecondary education and training, employment, community participation, recreation and leisure and home living.

Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.454, provides a method to fund components of a student's IEP through Access to Career and Technical Education for Students with a Disability (ACTE-SPED, formerly referred to as Transition-Disabled). ACTE-SPED is designed for students who require curriculum modifications and other supplemental services to participate in CTE programs. A student selected for this program must meet the state definition of a child with a disability per Minnesota Statutes, section 125A.02.

Activities around personal and career awareness are approved activities under either Special Education or ACTE-SPED law. As students with disabilities enter grades 11 and 12, their IEPs may reflect education and training leading to the outcome of competitive, integrated employment. Being prepared starts with exploring careers that interest each student. All students need information on career fields, clusters and pathways available in Minnesota. Within these experiences, students can participate in career assessments to identify post-high school options in employment. Activities may include industry-focused speakers, workplace tours, job shadowing, informational interview experiences and WBL experiences.

Career and College Planning Tools

The Minnesota Career Information System (MCIS) is a fee-based, online subscription system that offers career, educational and labor market information in one comprehensive, easy-to-use tool. MCIS includes learning styles, employability, interest and skill assessments; information on colleges; and program requirements for various occupations. Students build a portfolio so they can plan and track progress toward their educational goals and create a Personal Learning Plan as required by Minnesota law. New versions have been created for special education, Adult Basic Education, and the Department of Corrections. Optional components such as ACT and college placement and practice tests may also be added. MCIS is used by schools, colleges, libraries and many community-based organizations. The system is updated annually to ensure that the information is current and reliable.

A federal grant allowed Minnesota to build Ready Set Go MN, an access and equity website, which utilizes the power of technology to inform, support and engage underrepresented students and their families in participating and succeeding in rigorous courses and postsecondary opportunities. The website also details steps for students and families to take for career and college exploration with a list of valuable links for Minnesota programs.

Check & Connect

MDE staff are piloting support for students with disabilities who are black or American Indian in four large districts. By focusing on the evidence-based practice of Check & Connect, districts and schools can provide additional support on particular student groups to increase school engagement, school success, and graduation.

These districts are also exploring the middle schools that feed the high schools so that they can identify students who need additional support early in their transition year of ninth grade.

Check & Connect is an evidence-based intervention used with K-12 students who show warning signs of disengagement with school and who are at risk of dropping out. At the core of Check & Connect is a trusting relationship between the student and a caring, trained mentor who both advocates for and challenges the student to keep education salient. Students are referred to Check & Connect when they show warning signs of disengaging from school, such as poor attendance, behavioral issues and low grades.

In Check & Connect, the "check" component refers to the process where mentors systematically monitor student performance variables (e.g., absences, tardies, behavioral referrals, grades), while the "connect" component refers to mentors providing personalized, timely interventions to help students solve problems, build skills and enhance competence. Mentors work with caseloads of students and families for at least two years, functioning as liaisons between home and school and striving to build constructive family-school relationships.

Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children

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

1. Supporting Needs of Migratory Children (ESEA section 1304(b)(1)): Describe how, in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs and projects assisted under Title I, Part C, the State and its local operating agencies will ensure that the unique educational needs of migratory children, including preschool migratory children and migratory children who have dropped out of school, are identified and addressed through:

    i. The full range of services that are available for migratory children from appropriate local, State, and Federal educational programs;

The Minnesota Department of Education serves the unique needs of migratory children through implementation of its service delivery plan that was based on assessed student needs and data to inform decisions about the delivery of high-quality services. Various data points include pre- and post-assessment results as well as Fidelity of Strategy Implementation responses as part of the annual program evaluation. This ongoing work was aligned with the federal goals of Title I, Part C that continue to be addressed under the service delivery plan. In order to address the needs of the migrant student population, the Minnesota Migrant Education Program (MEP) provides services during the summer session, when the highest concentrations of migratory students are in the state. The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) administers the Migrant Education Program at the state level and sub-grants to local educational agencies (LEAs)—districts, charters, intermediate districts, education cooperatives—to implement the program.

MDE identifies the unique educational needs of its migratory children through a regularly conducted of statewide migrant comprehensive needs assessment, service delivery plan and evaluation cycle. The process begins with the comprehensive needs assessment which then informs the development of the service delivery plan and continues on through the implementation, and program evaluation. The results of the comprehensive needs assessment guides the overall design of the Minnesota Migrant Education Program on a statewide basis, and the Migrant Education Program assures that the findings of the comprehensive needs assessment are folded into the comprehensive state plan for service delivery.

The service delivery plan helps the Minnesota Migrant Education Program develop and articulate a clear vision of:

1. The needs of Minnesota migrant children.
2. The services the Minnesota Migrant Education Program will provide on a statewide basis.
3. The Minnesota Migrant Education Program's Measurable Program Objectives (MPOs) and how they help achieve the state's performance targets.
4. How to evaluate whether and to what degree the program is effective.

Minnesota's Migrant Education Program comprehensive needs assessment results provide a blueprint for the delivery of services within the state for migrant children and youth. A service delivery plan committee was formed by the state with representatives of the key stakeholders in migrant education within the state. Migrant parents and community members were represented along with Migrant Education Program educators, Minnesota Department of Education staff, administrators and recruiters.

Minnesota has implemented a Migrant Education Program Service Delivery Plan based on assessed student needs and the use of data to inform decisions about the delivery of high quality services. This ongoing work is aligned with the federal goals of Title I, Part C that continue to be addressed under the service delivery plan.

Specifically, the goals are to:

1. Support high quality and comprehensive educational programs for migratory children to help reduce the educational disruption and other obstacles that result from repeated moves.
2. Ensure that migratory children are provided with appropriate educational services (including supportive services) that address their unique needs in a coordinated and efficient manner.
3. Ensure that migratory children have the opportunity to meet the same challenging state content standards and student performance standards that all children are expected to meet.
4. Design programs to help migratory children overcome educational interruptions, cultural and language barriers, social isolation, various health-related problems and other factors that inhibit the ability of such children to do well in school and to prepare such children to make a successful transition to postsecondary education or employment.
5. Ensure that migratory children benefit from state and local systemic reforms.

ii. Joint planning among local, State, and Federal educational programs serving migratory children, including language instruction educational programs under Title III, Part A;

MDE maximizes support from other agencies to ensure effective provision of services to migratory children and families. MDE contracts with the Midwest Migrant Education Resource Center (MMERC) at Hamline University to provide technical assistance and program development for secondary students and out-of-school youth. MMERC also provides resources to teachers serving migrant students through its lending library. MDE contracts with Tri-Valley Opportunity Council (TVOC) to provide identification and recruitment, health and nutrition services. The Minnesota Migrant Education Program has defined six regions of recruitment and employs a regional recruiter for each region. MDE also partners with TVOC to provide direct services to preschool-aged migrant students. MDE participates in a statewide migrant services consortium which consists of stakeholders from local, state and federal social services, labor, legal and agriculture sectors. Additionally, MDE partners with MinneTESOL to host its annual Minnesota English Learner Education conference which features a migrant strand.

iii. The integration of services available under Title I, Part C with services provided by those other programs; and

Minnesota has a unique funding source for summer academic service provision through its Division of Alternative Learning. For districts that are eligible to offer targeted services, Migrant Education Program partners with alternative learning to supplement educational opportunities for migrant students. English learner (EL) services are provided to students who qualify for such services based on the state's criteria for identification

and depending on staffing. MDE encourages programs to coordinate with the local district to make use of Title III funds when available to support the needs of migrant English Learners.

Credit Recovery – Minnesota has a strong working relationship with the Texas Migrant Interstate Program (TMIP) that facilitates the interstate and intrastate coordination of out-of-state testing to meet the educational needs of migratory children whose home base is Texas. Further, staff from the state and local Migrant Education Program sites coordinate on credit accrual by speaking with the registrars or counselors from students' Texas home school/district.

Migratory children are treated as all other students; they too will be assessed for academic and social and language needs and served through general education programs, Title I, Part A and in a language instruction educational program if they qualify for services based on the state's standardized entrance criteria.

iv. Measurable program objectives and outcomes.

Strategies and Measurable Program Objectives (MPOs) are developed during the service delivery plan process. MPOs are the desired outcomes of the strategies included in the service delivery plan. An appropriate MPO is one that articulates the difference that participation in the Migrant Education Program will make for migrant students. Because the strategies are directly related to the identified concerns and needs, which relate to state performance targets, the MPOs, which quantify the differences that the Migrant Education Program will make, are also connected to state performance targets. The *Migrant Education Service Delivery Plan Toolkit: A Tool for State Migrant Directors* (2012) states that a strong MPO is focused, detailed, quantifiable, and provides a clear definition of what you would consider a "success" in meeting a particular need.

The Minnesota Migrant Education Program created a set of MPOs based on the needs identified in the comprehensive needs assessment and the strategies developed during the service delivery plan process. Minnesota MPOs address migrant student assessment results in reading and math, implementation of standards-based reading and math curriculum, gains in parent knowledge of content presented during parent activities, student satisfaction with non-instructional support services, placement of preschool migrant children in early childhood programs, gains in staff knowledge as a result of participating in professional development, secondary credit accrual, and gains on out-of-school youth lesson assessments. The U.S. Department of Education Office of Migrant Education requires that state educational agencies (i.e., the Minnesota Department of Education) conduct an evaluation that examines both program implementation and program results. In evaluating program implementation, the Minnesota Migrant Education Program MPOs address the following questions:

- Was the program implemented as described in the approved project application? If not, what changes were made?
- What worked in the implementation of Minnesota Migrant Education Program projects and programs?
- What problems did the projects encounter?
- What improvements should be made?
- How did local projects tailor reading and math instruction to meet the needs of individual students?
- How many students received standards-based reading and mathematics instruction during the summer at each site?
- What types of parent activities were provided by local sites during the summer?
- What types of non-instructional support services were provided to students?

- With which agencies did the Migrant Education Program collaborate for preschool programming?
- What types of professional development were provided to Migrant Education Program staff?
- What courses did secondary migrant students complete?
- What strategies were used to help out-of-school youth improve their knowledge and skills?

In evaluating program results, the evaluation of the Minnesota Migrant Education Program addresses questions such as the following, which are aligned with the MPOs:

- What percentage of summer sites implemented standards-based reading and mathematics curriculum and instructional strategies at the "succeeding" or "exceeding" levels?
- What percentage of students (priority for service and non-priority for service) in grades K-8 who participated in summer reading and mathematics instruction had a 5 percent gain?
- What percentage of migrant parents/family members reported increasing knowledge after participating in parent activities?
- What percentage of migrant students/out-of-school youth reported satisfaction with the non-instructional support services they received?
- What percentage of migrant preschool children were placed in early childhood programs?
- What percentage of Migrant Education Program staff reported growth in their ability to support migrant students?
- What percentage of students in grades 7-12 (priority for service and non-priority for service) obtained hours or credits that count toward high school graduation requirements?
- What percentage of out-of-school youth (priority for service and non-priority for service) who received instructional services improved by 20 percent on out-of-school youth lesson assessments or earned credits/hours?

2. Promote Coordination of Services (ESEA section 1304(b)(3)): Describe how the State will use Title I, Part C funds received under this part 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.

The Minnesota Migrant Education Program (MEP) actively develops and maintains strong intrastate and interstate coordination with sending states in order to facilitate seamless transfer of education, health, nutrition and social services records. The local migrant education programs submit these data elements to MDE through completion of the Summer Program Services Report (SPSR) and Migrant Student Information Form (MSIF). MDE receives this data and enters it into MIS2000, which shares the information with other states through MSIF.

The Minnesota Migrant Education Program also has a strong working relationship with its Head Start counterpart to provide services to preschool-aged children through the alignment of program operating times and sharing of recruitment staff between the Head Start and Title I, Part C. Additionally, the state's Migrant Secondary Education—Resource Center Program Director annually attends the Texas Migrant Interstate Program (TMIP) Interstate Secondary Credit Accrual Workshop to keep abreast of changing state requirements. Through TMIP, Minnesota also ensures students are able to fulfill graduation pathway requirements in their home state through a memorandum of understanding to proctor necessary out-of-state tests.

3. Use of Funds (ESEA section 1304(b)(4)): Describe the State's priorities for the use of Title I, Part C funds, and how such priorities relate to the State's assessment of needs for services in the State.

The mission of the Minnesota's Migrant Education Program (MEP) is to ensure equity and access to high-quality educational programs and services to meet the unique educational needs of migratory children and families. The Migrant Education Program provides leadership, technical assistance and resources to remove barriers to migrant students which are a result of educational interruption and other aspects of the migrant lifestyle. The MEP identifies three major state priorities: academic excellence, accountability and administration. These priorities guide the use of funds.

Academic Excellence: MDE promotes research-based education programs that capitalize on migrant students' cultural and linguistic assets to acquire English and achieve academic excellence.

Objectives:

- Ensure high-quality, standards-based and culturally responsive educational programming for migrant students and families.
- Provide professional development for all educators working with migrant students.
- Ensure migrant students have access to resources and educational programs.

Accountability: MDE provides data and support to effectively evaluate and continuously improve educational outcomes for migrant students.

Objectives:

- Collect and analyze data relevant to migrant children and families to drive decision-making and programming.
- Implement comprehensive needs assessment, service delivery, and evaluation process to support continuous improvement of programs and services.
- Monitor implementation of migrant education programs.

Administration: MDE provides technical assistance and resources to ensure effective administration of migrant education programs which adhere to state and federal requirements.

Objectives:

- Ensure that all eligible migrant students are accurately identified and served.
- Provide guidance and support to meet state and federal program requirements.
- Ensure access to federal funding and that funds are maximized to provide equitable education for migrant students.
- Maintain intrastate and interstate collaboration to promote academic success.

Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk

A. Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk

1. Transitions Between Correctional Facilities and Local Programs (ESEA section 1414(a)(1)(B)): Provide a plan for assisting in the transition of children and youth between correctional facilities and locally operated programs.

The Minnesota Department of Education will continue to collaborate with and support the Minnesota Department of Corrections and locally operated programs to ensure successful and seamless transitions for students between correctional facilities and local programs within their respective communities. The following plans, assessments and programs are utilized to assist with these transitions:

- Personal Education Plan: Each student will be assisted by staff in developing a Personal Education Plan (PEP) to lay out the student education and career goals. The PEP will be reviewed at least quarterly by the student and staff to assess the student's progress towards his goals and update the plan as needed.
    - Credit Accrual – Credit Recovery: All students who are credit deficient will have a recovery plan embedded into their Personal Education Plan to ensure they will be back on track for graduation prior to leaving the facility.
- College and Career Readiness/Job Training: Each student will be administered the CareerScope Computerized Aptitude and Interest Test to assist. In addition, students with senior status will complete the Southeast Technical College Career Exploration course during spring quarter.
- Assistance with Locating Transition Program/Services: Students unable or unwilling to return to their home school upon exiting the facility will receive assistance from staff, in collaboration with the student's resident district, family and the student, to find an appropriate program elsewhere and continue to work with the student and others to ensure that an appropriate educational placement is maintained.
- Check & Connect: The Department of Corrections partners with local organizations to facilitate a Check & Connect program. The program pairs each student with a mentor in their community prior to transitioning back into their communities, allowing a positive relationship between mentor/mentee to be developed before the student reintegrates. Mentors focus on increasing a student's attendance, persistence in academic pursuits, accrual of credits, and school completion, as well as decreasing truancy, tardiness, behavioral referrals and dropouts.

2. Program Objectives and Outcomes (ESEA section 1414(a)(2)(A)): Describe the program objectives and outcomes established by the State that will be used to assess the effectiveness of the Title I, Part D program in improving the academic, career, and technical skills of children in the program.

Program objectives and outcomes of Minnesota's Title I, Part D program describe how students in the program will: 1) improve achievement in reading and mathematics; 2) accrue course credits and are on track to graduate; 3) make successful transition to a regular program or other educational program; and, 4) participate in postsecondary education, career and technical education, or employment. Minnesota utilizes a variety of methods to assess the effectiveness of the program objectives and outcomes.

Reading and math achievement. In order to assure that students are on grade level, students will increase their reading and math skills in order to be at a similar skill level to their peers when returning another locally operated program such as a school or other local facility. Pre-tests are administered to students upon enrollment. Post-tests are administered to students that have been enrolled in the program for at least one quarter prior to exiting the program. Outcomes are established based on the local formative or summative assessment.

Credit accrual. Minnesota's monitors credit accrual through data submission by each program. Neglected or Delinquent students are included in expected graduation outcomes at the state and district level.

Transitional/Career counseling services. Minnesota uses a variety of methods to ensure appropriate transitional services. For example, students take the CareerScope Computerized Aptitude and Interest Test and/or a Minnesota Career Information System career assessment and complete state-required career exploration activities. Students are provided supports and offered learning options through collaborative and alternative methods, such as a manufacturing credential program which is offered with options for carpentry and machine tool technology credentialing. Data are collected regarding participation and outcomes.

Postsecondary education, career and technical education, or employment. Minnesota utilizes the number of students employed or entering postsecondary education after receiving their GED or diploma. MDE uses the information provided in annually submitted program reports to assess the effectiveness of the programs in improving students' vocational and technical skills and postsecondary or career outcomes.

MDE utilizes assessment data to pinpoint areas of program improvement to provide technical assistance.

Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction

A. Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction

1. Use of Funds *(ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(A) and (D))*: Describe how the State educational agency will use Title II, Part A funds received under Title II, Part A for State-level activities described in section 2101(c), including how the activities are expected to improve student achievement.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) will use Title II, Part A funds for administration (not more than 1 percent of the amount allotted to the state) and for specific state activities designed to support improvements in teaching and learning.

Research has regularly shown that the number one school-based factor impacting student achievement is the overall quality of the teacher in the classroom, followed closely by the quality of the school principal.

Consequently, Minnesota will pursue state activities designed to support local educational agencies (LEAs) to develop, support and improve our teacher and principal educator workforce. State activity funds will be used to provide professional development, technical assistance, guidance, examples, and other forms of support for local educational agencies (LEAs) in a variety of areas.

- Assistance to LEAs to improve the design and implementation of principal and teacher development and evaluation systems.
- Assistance to LEAs to improve the design and implementation of career advancement or teacher leadership opportunities that include but would not be limited to instructional coaching, mentoring and program leadership.
- Assistance to LEAs to improve the design and implementation of performance-based alternative compensation models, and teacher recruitment and retention strategies.
- Assistance to LEAs to improve the design and implementation of induction and mentoring programs and high-quality professional development programs through Minnesota's staff development requirements.
- Overall, providing training, technical assistance, and capacity building to local education agencies that receive Title II, Part A funds.

The state activities listed above align well with Minnesota's Alternative Teacher Professional Pay System (ATPPS, commonly known as Q Comp), and Title II state activity dollars are used primarily to support ATPPS programming and staff. ATPPS is an optional teacher effectiveness program in which over half of LEAs in the state participate. ATPPS requires LEAs to establish formal teacher leadership structures, job-embedded professional learning opportunities, teacher evaluation systems based on classroom observations and student outcomes, and performance-based compensation systems.

Minnesota will also reserve 3 percent of the amount reserved for sub-grants to local education agencies to provide principal networks, communities of practice and other professional development and technical

assistance activities focusing on instructional leadership and equity. Assistance may include support for LEAs to develop and implement a high-quality professional development programs for principals that enable principals to be effective and prepare all students meet challenging state academic standards.

The nature of Minnesota's educator effectiveness work is to create professional learning systems where teachers and principals continuously improve their practices which, in turn, leads to improved student outcomes. LEAs with strong professional learning systems that utilize high-quality performance evaluations that include student outcome measures will be better able to meet student needs. Consequently, Minnesota's use of Title II funds will focus on supporting LEAs to improve professional learning conditions in their system.

2. Use of Funds to Improve Equitable Access to Teachers in Title I, Part A Schools (ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(E)): If an SEA plans to use Title II, Part A funds to improve equitable access to effective teachers, consistent with ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(B), describe how such funds will be used for this purpose.

An option under Minnesota's Alternative Teacher Professional Pay System (ATPPS, commonly known as Q Comp) is to use ATPPS revenue to establish hiring bonuses, to incentivize teachers to gain additional certification, or to fund grow your own programs in order to address teacher shortage issues. These state funds could be leveraged to improve equitable access to effective and diverse teachers. MDE staff supporting the ATPPS program with state Title II, part A dollars will support participating LEAs to make use of this option under that program.

3. System of Certification and Licensing (ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(B)): Describe the State's system of certification and licensing of teachers, principals, or other school leaders.

Minnesota's system of licensing of teachers, principals, or other school leaders is outlined in Minnesota Statute and Administrative Rule. The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) is responsible for licensing teachers and the Board of School Administrators (BOSA) is responsible for licensing principals and other school leaders. The statutes relating to teacher and other educators is found in Chapter 122A. The administrative rules for teachers are found in Administrative Rule Chapter 8710 and the rules for principals and other school leaders are found in Chapter 3512.

Legislation passed in May 2017 created the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) to oversee and implement teacher licensing for the state of Minnesota. This legislation consolidates the current responsibilities carried out by two state agencies, the Minnesota Department of Education and the Minnesota Board of Teaching. Consolidation is effective January 1, 2018. The PELSB will be responsible for: (1) developing the teacher's code of ethics; (2) adopting rules to license public school teachers; (3) adopting rules for and approving teacher preparation programs; (4) issuing or denying license applications; (5) suspending, revoking, or denying a license based on qualifying grounds; and, (6) verifying of district and charter school licensure compliance. Beginning July 1, 2018, PELSB will implement a new tiered licensure system which provides different pathways to licensure.

The legislation passed that created PELSB did not change the duties or the licensing structure of the Board of School Administrators (BOSA). BOSA duties include: (1) licensing of Minnesota school administrators; (2) processing requests for licensure variance; (3) reviewing and approving preparation programs for school administrators and alternative programs for administrators; (4) processing requests for issuing continuing

educational units (CEUs or clock hours) for educational administrative professional development; (5) enforcing and advising school administrators in the code of ethics covering standards of professional practice; and, (6) proposing rulemaking. BOSA contracts with PELSB to process and issue licensures and licensure compliance.

Minnesota approved teacher preparation programs have general requirements including: field-specific teaching methods, at least 12 weeks of student teaching, human relations coursework, pedagogy training, reading strategies, technology strategies, supporting English learners and field experience prior to student teaching. In addition to these general requirements, teachers must meet content-specific standards as well as pass related testing requirements including: content tests, pedagogy tests and basic skills exams.

4. Improving Skills of Educators (ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(J)): Describe how the SEA will improve the skills of teachers, principals, or other school leaders in order to enable them to identify students with specific learning needs, particularly children with disabilities, English learners, students who are gifted and talented, and students with low literacy levels, and provide instruction based on the needs of such students.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) provides a variety of **services** to improve the skills of teachers, principals and other school leaders. The following summaries highlight a few of the many ways in which MDE works with educators. For more information about these and other supports for schools, visit the Minnesota Department of Education website.

Special Education

The Special Education Division and the Early Childhood Special Education Team at the Department of Education provides ongoing robust professional development in special education through multiple activities. Team members support professional development for directors of special education through quarterly directors' forums which provide information on best and emerging practices in supporting students with disabilities. Staff help support emerging leadership among special education directors, to ensure skills in special education best practices are addressed.

The Special Education Division has a federal State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) to support our State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) implementation work. This work includes exploring and selecting an evidence-based practice, training school staff in the practice, and measuring the extent to which the practice is implemented, to systematically include identifying the needs of students related to learning and other factors linked to increased graduation rates for black and American Indian students with disabilities (e.g., attendance and credit accrual). The quality of training and coaching, the fidelity of implementation, and student outcomes are systematically evaluated with tools and metrics from the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), as is fidelity of implementation and student outcomes.

Staff provide support and professional development for educators through multiple activities, including direct face-to-face instruction, webinar series, support for statewide and regional Communities of Practice of special educators, information dissemination through listservs, wikis, and other digital modalities, and a regional comprehensive system of professional development which supports access to professional development in all regions of the state specific to supports students with disabilities.

In addition, staff work to implement and scale-up evidence-based practices in identifying the learning needs of students with disabilities, including person-centered planning, preparation for competitive and integrated

employment, and protocols for reintegration of students with disabilities returning to their school districts from correctional facilities. In addition, staff are working in innovative areas including the identification of students with specific learning needs, and the provision of specialized instruction, accommodations and related services to students with disabilities in online learning programs. Through the federal SPDG, staff are also coordinating professional development in school districts for early identification of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and early identification of developmental learning needs.

Finally, special education staff sponsor a weeklong literacy camp each year which teaches strategies to support literacy access for struggling readers to Minnesota educators who become mentors and coaches in their local education agency. Staff also provides support for Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) instruction for teachers of students who are deaf/hard of hearing, as these students have unique needs in developing literacy and language.

English Learners

English learner (EL) staff at the MDE partner with stakeholders to improve the skills of teachers and principals in identifying and providing instruction based on the strengths and needs of English learners across the continuum of English language proficiency levels. EL staff work with stakeholders to provide technical assistance, education conferences, training sessions, meetings and online content to develop the capacity of school and district staff to use asset-based frameworks to provide instruction and support that acknowledges and builds on the linguistic and cultural strengths of English learners.

Additionally, the Minnesota Learning English for Academic Proficiency and Success Act (LEAPS) is a state law that provides an assurance that all Minnesota teachers and administrators possess the knowledge and skills needed to provide appropriate instruction to ELs to support and accelerate ELs in academic literacy, including oral academic language, and achievement in content areas in a regular classroom setting.

MDE English learner staff partner with a variety of organizations to create support opportunities for teachers and school leaders. Examples are as follows:

- MDE staff partner with Minnesota Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (MinneTESOL) in carrying out the Minnesota English Learner Education Conference attended by over 1,200 educators and administrators each year and featuring nationally known speakers and local experts sharing examples of how to celebrate the strengths and meet the needs of all ELs across the state and the region.
- MDE staff partner with service cooperatives around the state to offer sessions that include a focus on supporting the needs of English learners enrolled in Title I, II and III programs.
- MDE staff partner with the Minnesota Association of Administrators of State and Federal Education Programs (MAASFEP) to offer sessions for educators and administrators in meeting the needs of ELs
- MDE staff partner with institutes of higher education to develop publically available online modules that lift up the linguistic and cultural strengths of students with limited and interrupted formal education (SLIFE), while proving practical strategies for identifying such students and better meeting their instructional needs.
- MDE staff collaborate with school and district leaders to provide continuing education opportunities that focus on recognizing the talents and meeting the needs of all ELs. These sessions are regularly offered at conferences and events sponsored by Minnesota ASCD, the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP), and the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association.

- MDE and WIDA staff offer numerous workshops and archived webinars to teachers and administrators on how they can use the Minnesota/WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards Framework to provide instruction based on the strengths and needs of ELs in pre-K through grade 12.
- MDE staff work with higher education, community partners, the Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA), and Infinitec to produce and publish a series of six two-hour videos to assist superintendents and their staff in meeting the needs of all English learners.
- MDE staff have partnered with the Equity Alliance of Minnesota (formerly EMID), the Minnesota Education Equity Partnership (MNEEP) and district staff to offer the EL Leadership Summit, and education conference designed to support district and school leaders to better identify the strengths and meet the needs of all English learners.

Gifted and Talented

MDE provides numerous professional development opportunities for educators and school leaders that build capacity to recognize and respond to the needs of gifted, talented and highly able learners. In addition to providing technical assistance via technology, MDE offers these opportunities:

- An annual two-day workshop for gifted education coordinators and specialists provides a review of legislation and best practices in the areas of identification of students for services, program models, affective needs and instructional strategies.
- An annual one-day workshop on the identification of traditionally under-represented students for gifted programs.
- Various one-day workshops at the department and at education cooperatives focus on specific areas of interest (e.g. reporting updates, school policy creation, acceleration of instruction, self-regulation, and twice-exceptional learners (gifted and special education).
- An annual four-day summer symposium provides an opportunity for educators, counselors, administrators and parents to gain greater understanding of the unique needs of gifted and high-potential learners. Participants attend in-depth sessions focusing on foundational knowledge, creativity, instructional strategies, affective needs, and specific content areas.
- Quarterly network meetings for providers of full-time programs for gifted learners.

The Minnesota Department of Education is also the recipient of a three-year Javits Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Our grant, Project North Star intends to elevate identification and systems of support for underserved gifted learners by training teachers, school leaders, and families/communities. The project provides free, relevant professional development modules for teachers and administrators created by nationally renowned experts; as well as free educational, family, and community resources of lasting value. Selection criteria for pilot schools includes rural location, high poverty rate, high American Indian populatio and strong school leadership. Materials created by the grant will be housed on the department website and available to all.

Early Learning

The Division of Early Learning services works to support the planning, implementing, and evaluating of a set of interlocking programs and supports across the first eight years of life designed to improve the social/emotional and cognitive outcomes of young, at-risk children living in communities throughout Minnesota. By doing so, district and community leadership/administration will have an expanded knowledge base that includes early childhood development and age-appropriate best practice in curriculum, instruction, assessment and use of data. In addition, authentic partnerships with families and communities will exist that will enhance the delivery of comprehensive services through a linked 0-8 early care and education system.

Our division's focus is to work to build strong leadership, relationships and capacity necessary to engage districts and communities in a cycle of continuous improvement by:

- Enhancing state/regional system of P3 leadership and professional development.
- Expanding access to high-quality education, services and instructional time for ALL children.
- Strengthening and aligning instruction, assessment, and curriculum to pre-K through third grade standards.
- Identifying best practices for family and community engagement and create resources and guidance to support practice.
- Promoting strategies that will ensure the state has a highly skilled workforce to meet the staffing needs of early childhood programs.
- Using data to inform policy, planning, practice and professional development.

Reading

Literacy staff at MDE partner with statewide literacy organizations to provide guidance and professional development to educational leaders and educators to support identification and remediation of students with low literacy levels.

- MDE staff partner with the Minnesota Reading Association and the Minnesota Center for Reading Research to lead the Leadership in Reading Network (LiRN). The network includes schoolwide literacy coaches, district literacy coordinators, administrators and other Minnesota educators who support teachers and administrators in building capacity and developing literacy programs founded on research-based best practices through a series of three daylong workshops and book club.
- MDE works in collaboration with the Minnesota Writing Project to provide professional development on the ELA standards, best practices, and research-based instructional strategies for K-12 teachers, literacy specialists, and administrators. Writing project teachers demonstrate lessons, share resources and provide networking opportunities to participants.
- MDE is a collaborator in Minnesota's Higher Education Literacy Partnership (HELP), a collaborative, multi-organizational effort designed to improve the educational experiences and reading proficiencies of Minnesota's students with dyslexia and other reading difficulties. HELP works to improve the reading performance of struggling readers through professional development that fosters high-quality teacher preparation throughout Minnesota's institutions of higher education through a Distinguished Scholar's Symposium and a summer book club.
- Minnesota districts are required to develop a local literacy plan to ensure that all students have achieved early reading proficiency by no later than the end of third grade. While plan development is left up to local control, MDE staff provide guidance to support districts' plans for student identification, reporting, provision of intervention, and staff development.
- The department is developing the Minnesota Standards Portal, an online resource designed to support districts' development of standards-based educational systems to be implemented in 2018. This guidance and resources develop local capacity to build support structures, utilize processes for continuous improvement, guide curriculum development, and implement evidence-based practices.
- The Regional Centers of Excellence deploy reading specialists to work with the state's Focus and Priority schools. Specialists work with leadership to support continuous improvement processes, data and root cause analysis processes, provide literacy expertise, and address inequities.
- The department offers free e-learning opportunities to assist educators in unpacking Minnesota's English Language Arts standards and benchmarks.
- Department staff offer sessions on literacy at regional and state conferences throughout the year.

- Minnesota provides funding to ServeMinnesota for delivery of the Minnesota Reading Corps, a program that provides full- and part-time tutors to work with struggling readers on development of foundational skills in schools across the state.

Regional Centers of Excellence

As described in multiple responses in the Title I section of Minnesota's consolidated state plan, the Regional Centers of Excellence (RCE) provide on-the-ground support to identified schools and districts as part of our statewide system of support. Each Regional Center employs school advocates who are specialists in reading, math, English learners, special education, implementation, and equity. Each advocate has a colleague at MDE who is responsible for building the specialist capacity of the advocate so that schools receive consistent and aligned messages from both MDE and Region Center personnel. Together, the specialist groups examine best practices in their field, discuss training and implementation, address challenges, and overall work to improve the skills of teachers and school leaders.

5. Data and Consultation (ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(K)): Describe how the State will use data and ongoing consultation as described in ESEA section 2101(d)(3) to continually update and improve the activities supported under Title II, Part A.

Minnesota regularly consults with a variety of stakeholders across a number of initiatives. Specific to teacher and school leader effectiveness, stakeholder workgroups and advisory committees across the birth through grade 12 learning continuum have meaningfully consulted with MDE to:

- Design and pilot the state model for principal development and evaluation.
- Provide direction for the creation of tools supporting principals and principal supervisors.
- Design and pilot the state model for teacher development and evaluation.
- Make recommendations to the legislature to align Minnesota's alternative teacher professional pay system (ATPPS) and teacher development and evaluation requirements.
- Analyze equitable access data and recommend strategies to inform the Minnesota's equitable access plan.

In addition to these formal and intentional consultations with stakeholders, MDE team members regularly solicit input from the schools they serve by collecting program evaluation data, surveying stakeholders, leading and participating in on-site technical assistance.

We are proud of the relationships we have built with professional organizations representing teachers, school and district leaders, with regional service providers and with other stakeholder groups. From time to time, when we are presented with a technical or adaptive challenge in the area of teacher and school leader effectiveness, we are able to pick up the phone and solve problems with our partners in the field and in the communities.

MDE has a variety of cross-agency teams dedicated to supporting teachers and school leaders, pre-K through grade 12. One such team is the cross-agency implementation team (CAIT) whose primary focus is to provide cross-agency program support for our Regional Centers of Excellence. Another team is the academic support team is comprised of the directors of school support, academic standards and instructional effectiveness, early learning, accountability, and college and career success who each report to the chief academic officer. The

academic support team is focused on coordination and alignment of state activities described in this section and several other activities conducted in the state.

6. Teacher Preparation (ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(M)): Describe the actions the State may take to improve preparation programs and strengthen support for teachers, principals, or other school leaders based on the needs of the State, as identified by the SEA.

Currently the Minnesota Board of Teaching—and beginning January 1, 2018, the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board—oversees, reviews and approves teacher preparation providers (referred to as units) and teacher preparation licensure programs (referred to as programs). Minnesota Rule 8705.1000 lists the numerous categories a unit must show evidence of meeting. This process allows the state to provide direct feedback to units to direct them toward continuous improvement.

Minnesota Rule 8710.2000-2200 describes the standards and process for new programs to become state-approved and for current programs to move through the biennial renewal. This process focuses on a continuous improvement model where the programs share internal and external data and describe the process and results of their own analysis and discussions around this data. If any concerns arise in the review of data, a program review panel (made up of 13 stakeholders in teacher education) reviews the renewal application. Feedback from this review and subsequent board action is meant to provide direction to programs in the areas where they should focus their improvement efforts. The process also allows the state to place a Program on an "improvement focus" or "probationary" status when concerns are evident.

State legislation passed in 2015 (Minn. Stat. § 122A.09 subd. 4) requires units to provide a set of data points collected for a public data summary report. The state has built an electronic data collection system meant to assist units in submitting this data. While the public data can have multiple uses for stakeholders, the board continues to advocate for using the data toward continuous improvement efforts within units and programs.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) also provides support for teachers, principals, and other school leaders as described in greater detail in responses to previous questions in this section. MDE staff also support a variety of educator effectiveness work in schools through development and evaluation systems.

Minnesota law requires districts to develop and evaluate teachers and principals based on certain criteria, and MDE staff regularly provide consultation and technical assistance in the creation and implementation of evaluation systems. Understanding the crucial role principals play in directly and indirectly influencing student achievement, MDE provides resources and direction to principals and their supervisors for use in growth-focused principal development and evaluation, and for use in principals' work as instructional leaders. Also, Minnesota law provides funding for the Alternative Teacher Professional Pay System (ATPPS, commonly known as "Q Comp") which is an optional teacher effectiveness program in which over half of LEAs in the state participate. ATPPS requires LEAs to establish formal teacher leadership structures, job-embedded professional learning opportunities, teacher evaluation systems based on classroom observations and student outcomes, and performance pay. LEAs may also use ATPPS revenue to establish hiring bonuses, to incentivize teachers to gain additional certification, or to fund "grow your own" programs in order to address teacher shortage issues. State example models, professional development opportunities, tools, and other resources are available for all of the above educator effectiveness efforts.

Title III, Part A, Subpart 1: English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement

A. Title III, Part A, Subpart 1: English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement

1. Entrance and Exit Procedures (ESEA section 3113(b)(2)): Describe how the SEA will establish and implement, with timely and meaningful consultation with LEAs representing the geographic diversity of the State, standardized, statewide entrance and exit procedures, including an assurance that all students who may be English learners are assessed for such status within 30 days of enrollment in a school in the State.

The English learner population in Minnesota has increased more than 300 percent in the last 20 years. Currently, it is the fastest growing student population in the state. The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is an opportunity for creating additional growth toward proficiency of the Minnesota English learner (EL) as well as creating opportunities to meaningfully include and support English learners.

Previously, the State of Minnesota did not have standardized statewide EL entry and exit criteria or procedures. The proposed shift in ESSA with required statewide criteria and procedures compelled engagement with a wide variety of English learner stakeholders. Local English learner coordinators, teachers and community stakeholders were invited to focus on creating and understanding new statewide procedures and criteria, and perceive and eliminate potential difficulties. In addition, parent and family groups, researchers and administrators were also invited to participate in the EL committee which was formed in fall 2016.

This diverse group of stakeholders, representing the cities, towns and rural areas throughout the state, held a series of five meetings facilitated by the Minnesota Department of Education during the 2016-2017 school year. ESSA stakeholders discussed the potential ramification of required ESSA decisions impacting the Minnesota English learners to offer direction and advice to frame essential decisions. Working together, these stakeholders arrived at some recommendations for the state's ESSA plan, the inclusion of new-to-country English learners (ELs) in accountability and the addition of reclassified ELs for four years in the English learner student group. These recommendations for the ESSA state plan were presented to the commissioner of education, and were adopted into the accountability system. Additional information is located on the Minnesota Department of Education's website (http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/ESSA/meet/eng/).

Minnesota's English language development standards and assessment framework centers around the development of academic language. Minnesota is a part of the WIDA consortium and therefore utilizes the WIDA standards framework and assessments. In school year 2015 -2016, all states in the WIDA consortium, including Minnesota, administered a new version of ACCESS. With the change in the assessment from ACCESS

1.0 to ACCESS 2.0, the EL committee realized that to set specific exit criteria—including a definition of English language development proficiency—the recommended exit score on ACCESS 1.0 needed to be changed.

Also, under Minnesota State Law, 124D.59, additional criteria were permitted to be used to re-evaluate an English learner's proficiency. While the statute lists potential measures for appraising proficiency, prior to ESSA, districts were allowed to develop rubrics and employ the criteria with no statewide standardization. The committee grasped that to ensure standardization, specific guidelines and instructions would need to be created and developed. Furthermore, the committee recognized that to establish standardized entry criteria, the recommended Minnesota *Home Language Survey*, developed shortly after No Child Left Behind, needed to be improved and the identification, entrance and exit procedure manual would need to be updated.

Therefore, the EL committee group and additional volunteers were placed into three working groups: EL proficiency definition, additional standardized English learner criteria, and EL procedures. These groups met throughout the spring of 2017 to analyze distinct features of their charge with a focus on creating, generating and recommending statewide standardized, identification, entrance and exit criteria and procedures. For additional information on the work of the stakeholders, please see the Minnesota Department of Education's website (http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/ESSA/meet/eng/).

With the new standard setting of the ACCESS 2.0, the proficiency group reviewed processes for developing a new definition of English language proficiency based upon students' ACCESS 2.0 scores. Using a decision consistency matrix as well as other measures, the group analyzed several different proficiency scores and the student's ability to successfully access the challenging academic content. Additionally, two districts with large EL populations were able to review potential English proficiency definitions.

After several meetings, the group recommended two different English proficiency definitions to the commissioner of education. Based upon test score evidence and stakeholder feedback, the commissioner determined that English proficiency on the ACCESS 2.0 would be an overall composite score of 4.5 or higher, with three of the four domains above or equal to 3.5. Feedback from both districts and parents felt that this would allow students with individual differences in one domain to be proficient. This definition is used as part of the standardized exit criteria and is incorporated within the new accountability system.

The additional criteria group reviewed and assessed different potential rubrics allowed under Minnesota law (Minn. Stat. § 124D.59) including observation, teacher judgement, parental recommendation and additional assessment evaluations. Acknowledging the diversity of school districts throughout the state, as well as the vast dissimilar number of ELs in districts, the facilitators sought additional feedback from staff in districts outside the Twin Cities Metro Area regarding current EL exit decisions. They led two focus groups and conducted a statewide survey in which 52 percent of the respondents were from outside the seven-county metro area.

The survey and feedback indicated that currently districts use a variety of criteria besides ACCESS scores in exit decisions: statewide assessments, district assessments, teacher and district judgement, and students' grades. Teachers felt that measures such as teacher observations, parent input and additional assessments could allow for more than one data point to be considered when making the exiting decision, but that these measures were often subjective and didn't always rely on a common understanding of academic language and language acquisition. Respondents also suggested that student input, student work samples and grades could be

considered, although they often have the same shortcomings as other subjective measures. Stakeholders recognized that the criteria be understandable, practical and, most importantly, applied with equity to qualified students. After receiving the feedback, the additional criteria group reconvened and incorporated the feedback to develop additional criteria.

All districts in Minnesota must use the same ACCESS proficiency score and follow the same process for using additional criteria, such as teacher judgment and additional assessments, when determining whether or not to exit a student from EL services. When evaluating whether or not a student should be exited from EL services, districts must consider the following:

- Local educational agencies (LEAs)—districts, charters, intermediate districts, education cooperatives—must automatically exit and reclassify students if their composite score is at least 4.5 and all domain scores are at least 3.5.
- If a student does not have an ACCESS overall composite score of at least 4.5 and at least three out of four domain scores (listening, speaking, reading and writing) of at least 3.5, then that student may not be exited from EL services.
- If a student has met the ACCESS proficiency score of at least a 4.5 overall composite score and at least three out of four domain scores of at least 3.5, then schools and districts may consider exiting and reclassifying a student.
- LEAs must use additional criteria to determine if a student should be retained in EL services if a student has met the proficiency score but one domain score is below 3.5.

If a student has met the proficiency score but one domain score is below 3.5, LEAs must take the following the steps to determine if a student should be retained in EL services. These steps are meant to be considered together; no one step takes precedence over the others.

- Determine if there is evidence that the student is able to meet grade-level core content standards. Examples of evidence could include grades, recent examples of student work, and documented observations by classroom teachers focusing on language use in the classroom.
- Use an additional assessment instrument to test the domain with a score below 3.5 to determine if the student has a need for continued EL services. Examples of additional assessments could include the WIDA Model, the TEAE writing assessment, the MN SOLOM speaking assessment, or formative assessments using the WIDA speaking and writing rubrics. MDE strongly encourages schools and districts to consider any formative language assessments they have used throughout the year.
- If a student has a disability, LEAs must consult with the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to determine if dual service is appropriate moving forward.

If an LEA evaluates a student's classroom performance, collects additional assessment data, and—if appropriate—consults with the IEP team, and the evidence collectively suggests that a student would benefit from continued EL services, then that student may be retained in EL services. However, if an LEA decides to retain a student in EL services, then the parents must be consulted and informed about how the decision was made and the data used to retain the student must be documented in the student's cumulative file.

The last group, the EL Procedures Group, was charged with several different tasks. First, the group was asked to review the current recommended Minnesota *Home Language Survey* to identify potential English learners. Using materials published by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and other researchers, the group developed and designed the *Minnesota Language Survey* (MNLS). With the help and support of parent and

student groups who provided feedback at several points in the process, as well as an expert review by the Midwest Comprehensive Center at American Institute of Research (AIR), the language survey was changed to reflect the asset of knowing a second language.

In June 2017, the state of Minnesota began translating the MNLS into its largest language groups: Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Karen, Arabic, Vietnamese, Oromo, Russian, Amharic, Chinese, Khmer, Lao, French, Swahili, Nepali, Telugu, Karenni and Hindi. This newly created *Minnesota Language Survey* will replace any previous language surveys made by the state or the district. Upon completion, each translated MNLS will be placed on Minnesota's TransACT portal which houses 112 ESSA-compliant parent notification letters and forms for free download by any Minnesota school district. All newly enrolling students in the state of Minnesota from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 must have a completed *Minnesota Language Survey*. Based upon guidance from the state of Minnesota, districts will evaluate the statements to identify potential English Learners.

The second undertaking of the group was to review current assessment tools used by districts throughout Minnesota to screen for potential English Learners by evaluating the student's English proficiency. The screening tools being used included the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) and the Measure of Developing English Language (MODEL), both WIDA products, and the Language Assessment Scale (LAS). Moving forward, Minnesota has adopted the WIDA Screener, online and paper, for grades 1-12 and the W-APT or WIDA MODAL for kindergarten. Minnesota Standardized Statewide EL Procedures for screening can be found on the Minnesota Department of Education website (http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/el/).

Similar to the proficiency group, the procedures group also reviewed and recommended new scores for English proficiency on the state-chosen screeners. Using the ACCESS 2.0 definition of English proficiency approved by the commissioner, the group recommended adopting a similar score of 4.5 with no domain below a 3.5. Since the student in the identification process would not have participated in the newly enrolled school district, additional criteria could not be applied to domain scores below 3.5.

The procedures group created a manual to be used by every Minnesota public school district and charter school. *Minnesota Standardized Statewide EL Procedure*s for identification, entrance and exit can be found on the Minnesota Department of Education website (http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/el/). This manual lists step-by-step procedures and criteria needed for standardization of identification, entrance and exit decisions for all Minnesota English learners. In the future, the established English Learner Stakeholder Input Group (ELSIG) will review the manual for required updates. See the Minnesota Department of Education's website for additional information on ELSIG (http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/about/adv/active/ELSIG/).

MDE ensures that all potential ELs are assessed for EL proficiency within 30 days of enrollment. Included within the standardized procedure manual are instructions to test all English Learners with 30 days of enrollment in a district at the beginning of the school year and within 10 days of enrollment during the school year. Moreover, all districts submit an assurance with their Title I and Title III application that any potential English learner is screened for English language proficiency within 30 days. This component of students being screened within 30 days of enrollment is also an element included in Minnesota's monitoring process. All districts are also required to enter student data, including specific English learner and home language of the student, by October 1.

Moving forward, a stakeholder working group will be established to review the material for use with students who qualify for an Individual Education Program. The participants in this group will consist of teachers and coordinators who work with EL students, students receiving special education services and dually identified students as well as parents and non-profit groups.

The Minnesota Department of Education developed a communications plan to roll-out the statewide standardized criteria for entry and exit procedures. During the described process above, all meeting presentations and notes were placed on the MDE website, including the EL manual created by the procedures group. Changes have been communicated through media outlets, the weekly superintendent's email, the ESEA listserv, the EL newsletter, the EL monthly webinar and others. As the statewide criteria and procedures continue to be used, MDE will revise and amend our communications to ensure that all districts are aware of the new criteria and procedures so they may implement them.

See Appendix F: Minnesota Standardized English Learner Procedures: Identification, Entrance and Exit.

2. SEA Support for English Learner Progress (ESEA section 3113(b)(6)): Describe how the SEA will assist eligible entities in meeting:

    i. 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
    ii. The challenging State academic standards.

Minnesota's short and long-term goals towards English language proficiency and the established EL growth model were created with feedback from various stakeholders who came to the meetings and actively participated in their formation. During the 2016-2017, meetings were held across the state, meeting notes were published on the MDE website, and individuals were welcome to the meetings; to understand the transparency of the building blocks. Upon finalization of the ESSA accountability system including EL goals, the Minnesota Department of Education reached out to a variety of stakeholders to share the system; all of the goals and targets are pointless without communication. The department met with a variety of participants including districts, schools, teachers, parents, families and communities to convey how the goals were established and the importance of students attaining them.

Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.63, makes it clear that the SEA must provide technical assistance to districts receiving state aid for English learners—all Minnesota districts who have one English learner qualify. Technical assistance is all districts but with an emphasis to districts who have large number of English learners with limited and/or interrupted schooling, long-term English learners (LTELs), large number of ELs and ELs with low rates of student growth towards English proficiency. Technical assistance varies based upon the district's need but could include telephone calls, visits, emails, webinars and conferences.

Since all English learners (ELs) are required to participate annually in the English language proficiency assessment to assess the growth towards English proficiency as well as beginning in third grade, participating in assessments of challenging academic standards in both reading and math, the SEA is able to track schools' attainment of students' goals and targets. The State of Minnesota, as required by state law, provides individual student growth reports, school reports and district reports during the late spring and early summer upon

completion of assessment. The schools' and districts' assessment results are available to the public on the Minnesota Department of Education's website report card without specific students' individual results. As explained in the accountability section above, schools are ranked in three different stages.

During the first stage, academic achievement and English language proficiency, schools are ranked based upon their student's growth in math, reading and English language proficiency. The lowest quarter percentile in each of the three groups are then moved to Stage 2 and progress to Stage 3. Then, accountability goals established in Title I, the state gives each school a ranking based upon student's progress towards meeting the five components of accountability. English learner's progress towards proficiency is now included as a component.

In the past, Minnesota has conducted numerous trainings and professional development for district and school staff working with the English learner population. Trainings have included direct one-on-one principal leadership training, data training and understanding its use in the district and school level, WIDA trainings both for K-12 EL and content teachers as well as pre-K teachers, and participation trainings during professional organization's conference. The Minnesota Department of Education also has included tools and resources on their website; notes and deliverables from ELSIG have been posted as well.

Schools also have access to the specialists at the six Regional Centers of Excellence. In addition to content expertise, center specialists offer an outside perspective on schools' efforts to increase student achievement. They guide and support staff at identified schools through the process of needs assessment, building and strengthening leadership teams, and developing continuous improvement plans. Despite large numbers of professionals participating in the activities, it continues to be important to measure the influence in affecting the long-term goals for English learners in Minnesota. As required by Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.63, as well as Title III of ESSA, all districts must provide professional development for teachers and other educational staff regarding teaching methods, curriculum development, testing and testing mechanisms, and the development of instructional materials which address the needs of English learners. To assist districts in fulfilling these requirements, MDE has employed a variety of techniques including teaming with WIDA to train three cadres of trainers, one for preschool age and the two for K-12. Additionally, MDE partners with the local TESOL affiliate and others to sponsor conferences and events where focus is on improving the outcomes for ELs.

Therefore, during the summer of 2017, the Minnesota Department of Education's English learner team began conducting a comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) of the local educational agencies including charter schools. During the first step, the team has identified major concerns, established the scope and focus of the assessment and selected preliminary priorities. This fall, the EL team working with a variety of stakeholders will identify the needs of districts in assisting the students in reaching both English language proficiency goals and challenging academic standards. Initial priorities from the CNA will then be used with stakeholder data to set a priority of needs, research potential solutions, select solutions and develop an action plan. As soon as the CNA is completed, the EL team will begin adopting the action plan and employ strategies to meet the recognized needs. Following a year of using the action plan, an evaluation will be conducted to review priorities and goals established in the CNA. Using this data, the action plan will be updated and changed if needed to have additional impact on the English learners in Minnesota. Using the continuous improvement cycle, deliberately assigning priorities and goals, the department will be able to evaluate the action plan, the effect of training, and the improvement of the EL population towards proficiency.

The growth model that was adopted for the English learner's progress towards English language proficiency consists of two different criteria: the content grade and the English language level the student is enrolled in. Using statewide EL data, the SEA examined the average years it took for each EL student in a grade to reach English language proficiency. Unlike national data, the state's actual years to proficiency is longer. Using this data, target rates were established for each grade level and English language level of a student. While most students seem to become proficient in Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) within several years, state data indicated that it takes seven years for most age groups and English levels to reach proficiency.

All Minnesota English language instructional programs must be based upon sound theory. Currently, the state is compiling a list of English language programming that is evidence based. Additionally, all districts are provided with state funds to help ensure that the programming is implemented with fidelity. Furthermore, all districts are asked to evaluate their programming to ensure that the Language Instruction Education Program (LIEP) is successful. Tools and resources are available on the MDE website. SEA staff attend national conferences to ensure that the training that they are providing is the most up-to-date and relevant.

3. Monitoring and Technical Assistance (ESEA section 3113(b)(8)): Describe:

    i. 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
    ii. 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.

The Minnesota Department of Education monitors Title III entities in several different ways. First, all districts applying for Title III funds must submit a comprehensive needs assessment based upon EL data; progress towards proficiency and meeting the recommended growth target. Based upon the CNA, districts design an English language development program which supports their students' needs. The language instruction education program is also based upon sound educational theory and research proven. Before the application is funded, staff at MDE review the planned LIEP, confirm that the district's strategy based upon ELs' needs, and ensure that the implementation will be fiducially funded.

Since all Minnesota English language instructional programs must be based upon sound theory; currently, the state is complying a list of English language programming that is researched- based that districts can review after completing their English Learner CNA. Furthermore, all districts are asked to evaluate their programming to ensure that the LIEP is successful. During the annual application status, districts are asked to review and evaluate the success of their English learner's growth towards proficiency and adjust the upcoming strategy to ensure additional progress towards proficiency. As noted above, tools and resources are on the MDE website, which allow districts to review their programing.

Secondly, annual monitoring reviews of districts are conducted. These reviews are either conducted at the department (desk reviews) or at the district (onsite reviews). Both types of reviews ask the district to provide evidence and support of critical compliance elements that follow the federal requirements of Title III; including nonpublic consultation, teacher qualifications, program data desegregation and equity for all ELs. If the district is unable to meet the criteria required during the monitoring, the district, assisted by MDE staff, establish a corrective action plan with specific goals and timelines for district and student improvement.

Throughout the year, English learner specialists will continue to provide support to pre-K through grade 12 schools and districts. This support includes data gathering and analysis with districts; professional development for both EL and non-EL staff on specific district needs; and delivery and training of specific topics statewide. Additionally, staff will be assisting the Regional Centers of Excellence staff who are working directly with schools which are in the bottom percentiles of English Learner's growth towards English language performance. Using the School Improvement Theory of Action, the specialists will work with specific underperforming districts to improve outcomes for ELs and conditions for teaching and learning.

Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.63, makes it clear that the SEA must provide technical assistance to districts receiving state aid for English learners—all Minnesota districts who have one English learner qualify. Technical assistance is all districts but with an emphasis to districts who have large number of English Learners with limited and/or interrupted schooling, long-term English Learners (LTELs), large number of ELs and ELs with low rates of student growth towards English proficiency.

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

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

1. Use of Funds (ESEA section 4103(c)(2)(A)): Describe how the SEA will use funds received under Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1 for State-level activities.

Minnesota is committed to supporting local educational agencies (LEAs)—districts, charters, intermediate districts, education cooperatives—in their efforts to provide a well-rounded education for all students, improve school conditions for student learning, and strengthen the use of technology for access to effective instruction, improved academic achievement, and digital literacy (Sec. 4101). These purposes are aligned with state requirements under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, referred to as the "World's Best Workforce." As stated previously, under this legislation, the state requires LEAs to develop a plan that addresses the following five goals: all children are ready for school, all third-graders can read at grade level, all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed, all students are ready for college and career, and all students graduate from high school.

Central to providing a well-rounded education is the need to establish and implement a quality standards-based education system. Minnesota undertakes periodic, comprehensive reviews of its academic standards in English language arts, mathematics, science, arts, social studies, and physical education to ensure that all students meeting those standards are career- and college-ready. The review process also ensures that information literacy and technology skills are embedded in the standards for each academic area. Districts have also developed or adopted standards for other areas including health, world languages, and career and technical education (including computer science in many cases). Minnesota has a team of specialists to support the implementation of both state and local standards. In addition to academic standards, many schools have implemented the state's social-emotional learning and cultural competencies which Minnesota stakeholders have indicated are essential for a well-rounded education. Minnesota's School Safety Technical Assistance Center provides support to help schools improve their understanding of social-emotional learning and the school conditions that enhance learning for all students.

Minnesota recognizes the role of technology and digital learning tools in supporting a well-rounded education. In 2015, the department issued a legislative report on one-to-one technology devices. Information in the report was based on findings from a survey completed by 80 percent of Minnesota school districts. Of those who responded, 55 percent of schools indicated that they currently utilize technology for personalized learning and an additional 15 percent indicated that they were planning to implement initiatives that year. Minnesota plans to utilize federal Future Ready guidance and needs assessment tools to support districts in their effective use of technology.

Minnesota plans to leverage current personnel and existing programs to support LEAs. The current Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education specialist position, previously funded through the Mathematics and Science Partnership program, Title II, Part B in No Child Left Behind, will coordinate the technical assistance for supporting well-rounded experiences identified in section 4107, supporting safe and healthy students identified in section 4108, and increasing the access and effective use of technology identified in section 4109. Minnesota also will use funding under these sections for a specialist who will help districts align their SSAE activities with the World's Best Workforce requirements.

Minnesota will establish a team of grant reviewers staffed by specialists in the agency. Training will be provided to ensure consistency among the reviewers. Up to 1 percent of Minnesota's allotment will support the process for awarding the funds to LEAs, public reporting on how funds are being expended by LEAs, and monitoring the progress of LEAs toward meeting the grant objectives.

2. 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).

Minnesota will award subgrants for Title IV, part A Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) Grants consistent with section 4105(a)(2). The subgrants will focus on innovative programs that promote equitable opportunities and outcomes for all students. Funding priority will be given to programs designed to achieve the following: improved access to academic standards for all students; a collaborative professional culture that supports implementation of standards; and rigorous, relevant multi-disciplinary learning experiences.
The LEA application will include the following requirements:

- Evidence of consultation with stakeholders included in section 4106 (c).
- Completion of a comprehensive needs assessment included in section 4106 (d).
- Description of activities and programs that the LEA will carry out included in section 4106 (e)(1).
- Assurances included in section 4106 (e)(2).

The funding for an individual LEA will not be less than $10,000 as indicated in ESEA section 4105 (a)(2). LEAs will be informed of the opportunity to form consortia to more efficiently carry out the activities. Any LEA allocated $30,000 or greater will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment. The state will monitor the grant award process to ensure that at least 20 percent of the allocation is used to support a well-rounded education, at least 20 percent is used to support safe and healthy students, and a portion of the allocation is used for technology to support personalized learning. No more than 15 percent of the technology awards will be used to purchase devices, equipment, or software applications.

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

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

1. Use of Funds (ESEA section 4203(a)(2)): Describe how the SEA will use funds received under the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, including funds reserved for State-level activities.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) will use at least 93 percent of funds allocated for Title IV, Part B of ESSA to award competitive grants that support the creation of 21st Century Community Learning Centers. These centers will provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. Funded 21CCLC programs will help students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; offer students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs; and offer literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children.

Two percent of the funds will be used for state administration. This includes using funds to pay for administration and peer reviewers of the sub-grant applications. These activities will be completed in consultation with the governor's office and other state agencies responsible for administering youth development programs and adult learning activities. These agencies include, but are not limited to, the Minnesota Departments of Employment and Economic Development, Health, Human Services, Public Safety and the Office of Higher Education.

Five percent of the funds will be used for state activities. The funds will be used to pay for the following as outlined in ESSA, Title IV, Part B, Section 4202 (c)(3):

- Monitoring and evaluating programs and activities.
- Providing capacity building, training, and technical assistance.
- Conducting a comprehensive evaluation (directly, or through a grant or contract) of the effectiveness of programs and activities assisted.
- Providing training and technical assistance to eligible entities that are applicants for or recipients of awards.
- Ensuring that any eligible entity that receives an award under this part from the state aligns the activities provided by the program with the challenging state academic standards.
- Ensuring that any such eligible entity identifies and partners with external organizations, if available, in the community.
- Working with teachers, principals, parents, the local workforce, the local community, and other stakeholders to review and improve state policies and practices to support the implementation of effective programs.

- Coordinating funds received with other federal and state funds to implement high-quality programs.
- Providing a list of prescreened external organizations, as described under section 4203(a)(11).

2. Awarding Subgrants (ESEA section 4203(a)(4)): Describe the procedures and criteria the SEA will use for reviewing applications and awarding 21st Century Community Learning Centers funds to eligible entities on a competitive basis, which shall include procedures and criteria that take into consideration the likelihood that a proposed community learning center will help participating students meet the challenging State academic standards and any local academic standards.

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grants are awarded through a competitive application and rigorous peer review process that reflects the requirements of the authorizing statute. Eligible applicants include city or county governments, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, institutions of higher education, local educational agencies (LEA), nonprofit agencies and for-profit corporations, tribal agencies, and other public or private entities.

Priority for funding is given to applicants meeting the following criteria:

- Propose to primarily serve students attending schools that are eligible for Title I school-wide funding; are implementing comprehensive support and improvement activities or targeted support and improvement activities (as determined by MDE's accountability system); enroll students at risk for academic failure dropping out of school, involvement in criminal or delinquent activities, or who lack strong positive role models; and provide services to their families.
- Is submitted jointly by an LEA receiving Title I funds and another eligible entity.
- Demonstrate that the activities proposed in the application are, as of the date of the submission of the application, not accessible to students who would be served OR would expand accessibility to high-quality services that may be available in the community.

Additional competitive priorities are determined at the time of competitions to ensure alignment with state-level priorities and initiatives, as well as the advancement of student achievement in meeting state academic standards.

MDE recruits and trains a peer review team to recommend applications for funding. MDE staff review applications to ensure compliance with all grant requirements, including eligibility criteria. Grants are awarded for an initial three-year period. Continuation awards of up to two additional years may be offered to grantees in the final year of the initial award period. The continuation award is contingent upon progress made during the initial grant period, continued funding and priorities of the department, and it may be renewed for one additional two-year grant period.

MDE has established strategic partnerships with professional development and technical assistance providers as well as Minnesota's statewide afterschool alliance to provide capacity building, training, and technical assistance to grantees as well as those eligible to apply for a grant.

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

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

1. Outcomes and Objectives (ESEA section 5223(b)(1)): Provide information on program objectives and outcomes for activities under Title V, Part B, Subpart 2, including how the SEA will use funds to help all students meet the challenging State academic standards.

CFDA Number: 84.358B **Program Type:** Formula Grants

Title V, Part B of the ESEA, as amended in ESSA, authorizes The Rural Education Achievement Program's (REAP) formula grant program for the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) program. The purpose of the RLIS program is to provide technical and financial assistance to eligible rural districts, assisting them so that their students meet the state's challenging academic standards. The RLIS program targets rural local educational agencies (LEAs)—districts, charters, intermediate districts, education cooperatives—that serve large numbers of rural low-income students to promote effective implementation of the challenging state academic standards through state and local innovations. Awards are issued annually via formula to eligible LEAs that meet all statutory eligibility requirements.

An LEA is eligible to receive an award under the RLIS program if the following criteria are met: **Low-Income criterion:** 20 percent or more of the children aged 5 to 17 served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the federal poverty line; **Rural criterion:** All schools served by the LEA have a locale code of 32, 33, 41, 42 or 43 as assigned by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES); or the secretary of education has determined, based on a demonstration by the LEA and concurrence of the SEA, that the LEA is located in an area defined as rural by the state. Minnesota Statutes, section 126C.10 subdivision 28 Equity Region defines a rural district as "District whose administrative offices on July 1, 1999, not located in Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, or Washington County are part of the rural equity region. LEAs outside of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott or Washington County that have a (NCES) locale code of 32 or 33 and any other locale code and LEAs with a local code of 41, 42, or 43 alone are excluded from the definition of rural for the purposes of this federal program."

Types of Projects – RLIS funding is intended to provide flexibility in using funds under authorized Titles - Title I, Part A (Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged), Title II, Part A, (Teacher and Principal Training and Recruitment), Title III (English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement), Title IV, Part A (Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants), and Parent, Family and Community Engagement activities. Additionally, the funding is intended to meet the unique needs of rural LEAs that frequently lack the personnel and resources needed to compete effectively for federal competitive grants and receive formula grant allocations in amounts too small to be effective in addressing their intended purpose.

LEAs primarily use the RLIS funds for activities to increase the academic achievement of students. As part of the annual application, LEAs are required to provide a description of how the RLIS funds are linked to student achievement, and the budgeting for funds must reflect the information of those programmatic descriptions. Thus, the program objective for improved performance by students in rural and low-income schools will be to measure the academic achievement of students as described in the accountability system.

2. Technical Assistance (ESEA section 5223(b)(3)): Describe how the SEA will provide technical assistance to eligible LEAs to help such agencies implement the activities described in ESEA section 5222.

MDE will provide technical assistance to LEAs assisting them in implementing approved projects, program activities and tie fiscal decisions to improved student achievement. Ongoing technical assistance may be offered through webinars, conference presentations, email support and telephone conference calls and may include one-on-one assistance to LEA staff by MDE staff.

Title VII, Subtitle B: Education for Homeless Children and Youth

A. Education for Homeless Children and Youth program, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title VII, Subtitle B

1. Student Identification (722(g)(1)(B) of the McKinney-Vento Act): Describe the procedures the SEA will use to identify homeless children and youth in the State and to assess their needs.

MDE has established these identification practices:

- Every school district is required to have a McKinney-Vento liaison that is actively working to identify, work with and advocate for homeless or highly-mobile (H/HM) students.
  - Liaisons are trained by the SEA (i.e., Minnesota Department of Education), and must receive continued training at minimum every three years. Included in this training is information on protocols for the identification of and the needs assessment for H/HM students. Training also includes information on the expectations of consistent and accurate reporting, as well as how to assess the needs of the student.
- Liaisons, if contacted by a family or being privy to information that a family may be H/HM, utilizes a housing questionnaire to assess the night time residence of the student and/or the family. The liaison also conducts an interview, in person or via phone, to confirm that the family meets eligibility requirements.
- Once a student is determined to be McKinney-Vento eligible, the liaison then conducts a needs assessment in order to be able to provide the student and family with the appropriate services as required by law. In many cases the services provided go above and beyond the requirements of the act.

2. Dispute Resolution (722(g)(1)(C) of the McKinney-Vento Act): Describe procedures for the prompt resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youth.

Each school district must create a dispute resolution process. If the dispute is not resolved at the local educational agencies (LEAs)—districts, charters, intermediate districts, education cooperatives—level, the dispute is then under the jurisdiction of the SEA, as described below:

- The McKinney-Vento liaison, the H/HM youth or parent, or a school district representative other than the liaison completes the dispute resolution form, available on the MDE website.
- The form is transmitted to the SEA McKinney-Vento state coordinator.
- SEA coordinator consults with appropriate systems at the SEA to assess the facts of the case and determine if the initial finding in the status of the student is appropriate.
- The SEA notifies the LEA and H/HM youth, parent, and/or liaison of the outcome of the dispute resolution process.

3. Support for School Personnel (722(g)(1)(D) of the McKinney-Vento Act): Describe programs for school personnel (including the LEA liaisons for homeless children and youth, 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 youth, including runaway and homeless children and youth.

In order to ensure that H/HM students are receiving appropriate Title l services, the SEA provides a variety of training and technical assistance to LEA staff and administration, as well as technical assistance on an ongoing basis:

- Presentations and written materials provided at annual association conferences for administrators, teachers, school staff and other personnel, early education programs and more.
- Technical assistance provided to LEA's, and programs such as early childhood as requested as well as at the recommendation of SEA Title l monitors.
- Recommendations from the working group on education access for homeless children ages 0-4 provided to the 2016-2017 Minnesota Legislature encouraging the creation of specific legislation and funding streams for H/HM students and families.
- Wide dissemination of the Minnesota Statewide Homeless Study, conducted every three years (beginning in 2012) by the Wilder Foundation.
- Ensuring that school staff and administration are familiar with Minnesota statutes that pertain to H/HM students, such as Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.15, under which requires H/HM students are categorically eligible for School Readiness programs.
- A portion of the state's Early Leaning Scholarships set aside specifically for H/HM students.
- Specific training for staff and administration in LEA Early Childhood Family Education to identify and work with H/HM families and students to remove barriers to enrollment.

4. Access to Services (722(g)(1)(F) of the McKinney-Vento Act): Describe procedures that ensure that:

    i. Homeless children have access to public preschool programs, administered by the SEA or LEA, as provided to other children in the State;

Coordination of services is a requirement for voluntary prekindergarten programs, per Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.15. Coordination of services efforts ensure that H/HM students and their families have access to comprehensive services. These services include all relevant school district programs, including early childhood special education services and programs serving homeless and English Learner students.

In addition, the SEA has instituted a variety of strategies to support young H/HM students and their families:

- School Readiness (H/HM students categorically eligible).
- Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE).
- Early Leaning Scholarships set-aside.
- Head Start.
- Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE).
- Early Learning Scholarships.
- Regional administrators of Early Learning Scholarships.
- Approximately 5 percent slots set aside for families who are experiencing homelessness.

- Application revised to include McKinney-Vento definition to more effectively identify families experiencing homelessness.
- Training provided on McKinney-Vento and importance of increasing outreach in communities to find children and offer services.

ii. Homeless youth and youth separated from public schools are identified and accorded equal access to appropriate secondary education and support services, including by identifying and removing barriers that prevent youth described in this clause from receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school, in accordance with State, local, and school policies; and

The alternative education is designed for students who are at-risk of educational failure, and includes state-approved alternative programs, which are classified as Area Learning Centers (ALC), Alternative Learning Programs (ALP), contracted alternatives, and targeted services for students in kindergarten through grade eight. Alternative programs are year-round and may be offered during the day and after school. They are characterized by having smaller class sizes and using a hands-on/experiential approach to learning.

iii. Homeless children and youth who meet the relevant eligibility criteria do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs, if such programs are available at the State and local levels.

McKinney-Vento Liaisons at LEAs are trained to be hypervigilant in assessing all school policies procedures that may pose barriers to McKinney-Vento Act eligible student's participation in academic and extracurricular activities. The McKinney-Vento Act state coordinator provides technical assistance for districts that have barriers in place when determined by the local educational agency homeless liaison. This remains an ongoing process, as liaisons, LEA staff and administration, and SEA staff continue to work to assess school policies and procedures, both existing and newly enacted, to ensure that they do not pose barriers to H/HM students in accessing academic and extracurricular activities.

5. Strategies to Address Other Problems (722(g)(1)(H) of the McKinney-Vento Act): Provide strategies to address other problems with respect to the education of homeless children and youth, including problems resulting from enrollment delays that are caused by—

i. requirements of immunization and other required health records;

H/HM children are allowed to immediately enroll in school even if they are unable to produce health records, such as immunization records, normally required by the LEA.

ii. residency requirements;

The SEA ensures that LEA liaisons are trained to understand and follow policy that requires H/HM students be immediately enrolled based primarily on the best interests of the student. Determining the best interests of the student, in general, presumes the school of origin is the best education setting, unless that finding goes against the wishes of the student, guardian or family.

iii. lack of birth certificates, school records, or other documentation;

The SEA provides training and policy guidance to H/HM liaisons, and other administration and staff at LEAs to ensure that federal law is followed requiring H/HM students be immediately enrolled even if they are unable to provide documentation required for enrollment, including birth certificates, school records or other documentation.

iv. guardianship issues; or

The SEA trains LEA liaisons to focus on the immediate needs of the student, including enrollment, attendance, participation and transportation, even if guardianship cannot be immediately established.

v. uniform or dress code requirements.

H/HM liaisons in LEAs, as well as additional staff as necessary, are trained on the appropriate use of Title l, A set-aside funds and general education funds, which includes expenditures for the purchase of clothing items for a H/HM student to meet the school's requirements.

6. Policies to Remove Barriers (722(g)(1)(I) of the McKinney-Vento Act): Demonstrate that the SEA and LEAs in the State have developed, and shall review and revise, policies to remove barriers to the identification of homeless children and youth, and the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth in schools in the State, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences.

The SEA trains LEA personnel to review policies and procedures to remove barriers to receiving a free and public education on a regular basis, including when new policies/procedures are being developed. A variety of staff receive this training, including pupil accounting secretaries, school district enrollment staff, transportation staff and the H/HM liaison.

7. Assistance from Counselors (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.

All students in Minnesota, including H/HM students, work with LEA staff to develop a comprehensive plan to prepare for college and/or career after the completion of their secondary education, with the plan development beginning no later than the 9th-grade year. The plan, called a personal learning plan (PLP), provides a comprehensive plan developed to:

- Assist students with meeting all curriculum requirements.
- Emphasizes academic rigor and high expectations.
- Help students identify interests, aptitudes, aspirations and personal learning styles, all which may impact career and/or college choices.
- Set appropriate career and college goals and timelines for meeting the goals.
- Integrate strong academic content and career-focused content.
- Help identify and access appropriate counseling and other supports to ensure students are appropriately prepared for career or college post-graduation.

The PLP must be revised annually at minimum. Additional supports are provided to H/HM students who are unaccompanied to determine if they are eligible to be considered independent for the purposes of

postsecondary education, and assisted with college preparation activities such as completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA) and providing certification of independent status.

Appendix A: Long-Term Goals for Academic Achievement

Reading Goal and Measurements of Interim Progress – Data will be added on August 7, 2017

Minnesota set a goal to reach a reading/language arts achievement index rate of 90 with no student group below 85 by the year 2025. Achievement index rates are fully described in section 4.iv.

Student Group	2016 Baseline	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 Goal
All Students										90
Black										85
Hispanic										85
Asian										85
American Indian										85
Multi-Race										85
White										85
Pacific Islander										85
Free or Reduced-Price Lunch										85
English Learners										85
Special Education										85

Mathematics Goal and Measurements of Interim Progress – Data will be added on August 7, 2017

Minnesota set a goal to reach a math achievement index rate of 90 with no student group below 85 by the year 2025. Achievement index rates are fully described in section 4.iv.

Student Group	2016 Baseline	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 Goal
All Students										90
Pacific Islander										85
Black										85
Hispanic										85
American Indian										85
Multi-Race										85
White										85
Asian										85
Free or Reduced-Price Lunch										85
English Learners										85
Special Education										85

Four-Year Graduation Rate Goal and Measurements of Interim Progress

Minnesota has an existing goal to reach a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate of 90 percent with no student group below 85 percent by the year 2020.

Student Group	2012 Baseline	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 Goal
All Students	78.17%	79.65%	81.13%	82.61%	84.09%	85.56%	87.04%	88.52%	90%
American Indian	45.20%	50.17%	55.15%	60.12%	65.10%	70.07%	75.05%	80.02%	85%
Asian	75.48%	76.67%	77.86%	79.05%	80.24%	81.43%	82.62%	83.81%	85%
Black	51.49%	55.68%	59.87%	64.06%	68.25%	72.43%	76.62%	80.81%	85%
English Learners	52.64%	56.69%	60.73%	64.78%	68.82%	72.87%	76.91%	80.96%	85%
Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	61.70%	64.61%	67.53%	70.44%	73.35%	76.26%	79.18%	82.09%	85%
Hispanic	54.30%	58.14%	61.98%	65.81%	69.65%	73.49%	77.33%	81.16%	85%
Multi-Race	56.39%	59.96%	63.54%	67.12%	70.69%	74.27%	77.85%	81.42%	85%
Pacific Islander	55.00%	58.75%	62.50%	66.25%	70.00%	73.75%	77.50%	81.25%	85%
Special Education	55.95%	59.58%	63.21%	66.84%	70.47%	74.11%	77.74%	81.37%	85%
White	84.58%	84.63%	84.68%	84.74%	84.79%	84.84%	84.89%	84.95%	85%

English Language Proficiency Goal and Measurements of Interim Progress – Goal and Data will be added August 7, 2017

Data available August 7, 2017

Consistent Attendance Goal and Measurements of Interim Progress

Minnesota set a goal to reach a consistent attendance rate of 95 percent with no group below 90 percent by the year 2020.

Student Group	2016 Baseline	2017	2018	2019	2020
All Students	88.61%	90.21%	91.81%	93.40%	95%
Asian	93.62%	90.00%	90.00%	90.00%	90%
Black	81.23%	83.42%	85.62%	87.81%	90%
Hispanic	83.97%	85.48%	86.99%	88.49%	90%
American Indian	63.32%	69.99%	76.66%	83.33%	90%
Multi-Race	82.29%	84.22%	86.15%	88.07%	90%
Pacific Islander	86.96%	87.72%	88.48%	89.24%	90%
White	90.82%	90.00%	90.00%	90.00%	90%
Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	81.66%	83.75%	85.83%	87.92%	90%
English Learners	89.51%	89.63%	89.76%	89.88%	90%
Special Education	80.55%	82.91%	85.28%	87.64%	90%

Appendix B: Every Student Succeeds Act Committees Membership

Minnesota sought to engage a diverse array of stakeholders throughout the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan process. MDE invited all organizations and community members that expressed interest in participating in ESSA committees. MDE also worked with committee members to identify communities and organizations that are often not represented or underrepresented in stakeholder engagement activities. MDE worked with ESSA committee members and organizations to develop recommendations to bring to Commissioner Cassellius for consideration for inclusion in the ESSA state plan. Members were encouraged to build consensus, but not all organizations or communities endorse each and every recommendation forwarded. Below is a list of organizations and communities that participated in ESSA committees.

Academia Cesar Chavez Charter School
African American Leadership Forum
African Immigrant Services
Aitkin School District
Albert Lea Public Schools
Anoka-Hennepin Public Schools
Association of Metropolitan School Districts
Bloomington Public Schools
Board of School Administrators
Board of Teaching
CAREI at University of Minnesota
Center for Learning Disabilities
Center for School Change
Cesar Chavez Charter School
Chicano Latino Affairs Council
Children's Defense Fund
Chisago Lakes Public Schools
Coalition of Asian American Leaders
Coalition of Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers
College of St. Benedict
College Prep Academy
Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage
Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans
Designs for Learning
Eagle Lake Elementary School
East Grand Forks Public Schools
Ed Allies
Education Evolving
Education Minnesota
Educational Research and John Baylor Prep
Educators 4 Excellence
Excell Academy Charter
Faribault Public Schools
Floodwood Public Schools
Fond du Lac Ojibwe School
Generation Next
Greater Twin Cities United Way
Hamline University
Harvest Network of Schools
Hennepin County
High School for Recording Arts
Instructional Designs
ISAIAH
Keewatin Elementary School
Kelliher Public School
Le Sueur-Henderson Schools
Learning Disabilities Association
Learning Law & Democracy
Legal Rights Center
Licensing Collaborative for Educational Administration
Local Assessment and Accountability Advisory Committee
Mahtomedi Public Schools
McKnight Foundation
Mesabi East School District
Metro ECSU
Minneapolis Foundation
Minneapolis Public Schools
Minneapolis Urban League
Minnesota Administrators for Special Education
Minnesota Alliance with Youth
Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs
Minnesota Association of Career and Technical Administrators
Minnesota Association of Charter School Authorizers
Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

Minnesota Association of International Baccalaureate World Schools
Minnesota Association of School Administrators
Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals
Minnesota Black Male Achievement Network
Minnesota Business Partnerships
Minnesota Chamber of Commerce
Minnesota Comeback
Minnesota Council on Disability
Minnesota Council on Economic Education
Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs
Minnesota Department of Corrections
Minnesota Department of Health
Minnesota Elementary School Principal's Association
Minnesota Head Start Association
Minnesota Historical Society
Minnesota Council for Social Studies
Minnesota Indian Affairs Council
Minnesota Parent Teacher Association
Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute
Minnesota Private Colleges Council
Minnesota Rural Education Association
Minnesota School Boards Association
Minnesota School Counselors Association
Minnesota School Social Workers Association
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities
Minnesota Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
Minnesota Transitions Charter Schools
Minnesota Youth Council Student Advisory Board
Moorhead Schools
Mortenson Family Foundation
Moundsview School Board Member
Minnesota Service Cooperatives
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – Minnesota-Dakota
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – St. Paul
Network for Excellence in Teaching
North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale Public Schools
Osseo Public Schools
PACER Center
Perpich Center for Arts Education
Pillsbury United Communities
Planned Parenthood
Red Wing Schools
Region IV Lakes Country Service Cooperative
Regional Centers of Excellence
Resource Training and Solutions
Richfield Public Schools
Robbinsdale Public Schools
Rochester Public Schools
Roseville Area Schools
Schools for Equity in Education
Southeast Service Cooperative
Search Institute
Sejong Academy
Service Cooperatives
Shakopee Public Schools
Somali American Parent Association
St. Paul Public Schools
St. Cloud Public Schools
St. Louis Park Schools
St. Olaf College
Students for Education Reform
Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative
Teach for America
The College Board
The McKnight Foundation
TrekNorth
Tribal Nations Education Committee
University of Minnesota
Voices for Racial Justice
West. St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan School District
White Bear Lake Schools
World Savvy

Appendix C: Every Student Succeeds Act Committees

The Minnesota Department of Education asked students, parents, educators, community members and other interested stakeholders to participate in five committees to delve into specific topics. The five committees covered the following topics: accountability, assessment, English Learners, school improvement, and educator quality. The purpose of the committees were to involve voices of Minnesotans to support the development of Minnesota's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan. All meetings were open to the public and documents were posted to the ESSA committee page.

Members were expected to attend and fully participate in all meetings and to articulate their views and the views of their constituencies. Members were encouraged to strive to bridge gaps in understanding, seek creative resolution of differences which integrate the needs of all stakeholders. Members were encouraged to build consensus on options by integrating the perspectives and needs of all stakeholder groups. Members were encouraged to raise, reflect on, and find equitable solutions throughout the process and consider equity-focused recommendations. They were asked the following questions:

- What groups are impacted by the decision and what is the nature of the impact? Groups may include:
  - Students of color
  - American Indian students
  - Ethnic background
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students
  - Students with disabilities
  - Students in poverty
  - English Learners
- Gender
- What are the potential positive, neutral or harmful impacts on the identified groups?
- Have representatives from these groups been collaboratively engaged on the decision?
- How will the decision advance equity, address structural barriers, and reduce or eliminate disparities?

Recommendations from the committees were forwarded to Commissioner Brenda Cassellius for her consideration for inclusion in the ESSA State Plan.

Accountability Committees

ESSA provides states with an opportunity to strengthen our efforts to build a world-class system of public schools where all children succeed. Part of the new law allows states to design new accountability systems that are meaningful to students, educators and families, and that amplify Minnesota's work to increase overall student achievement and reduce opportunity and achievement gaps. To develop and implement a plan to reach these goals, three committees were created.

The **Technical Committee** was charged with doing the dep technical analysis necessary to identify and define the indicators that are in Minnesota's accountability system, the weights that are attached to those indicators, and the calculations required to determine whether schools meet the criteria for identification for improvement.

The committee consisted of 16 individuals with backgrounds in statistical analysis. View Technical Committee member list. The Technical Committee met 15 times from July 2016 to May 2017.

The **Advisory Committee** provided advice and feedback to the Technical Committee. The purpose of the ESSA Accountability System Advisory Committee was to support the development of Minnesota's accountability system. The advisory committee was charged with ensuring the technical committee's work remained true to the needs of all of Minnesota's students and schools and to offer direction and advice with respect to the concepts and values the accountability system reflects. This includes advising on the choice of indicators and the criteria and categories for identifying schools. The committee consisted of more than 100 educators, parents, civil rights groups, community members and interested stakeholders. View membership of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee met 13 times from August 2016 to June 2017.

The **School Quality and Student Success Committee** identified what indicator(s) of school quality or student success should be included in the ESSA accountability system. The subcommittee was charged with ensuring the indicator(s) meet all applicable federal requirements. The committee consisted of 22 individuals. View membership list. The School Quality and Student Success Committee met four times in the month of September 2016.

Assessment Committee

ESSA calls for states to improve assessment transparency and ensure statewide assessments are of high quality and aligned to state academic standards. To develop a plan to reach these goals, a committee was established to collaboratively meet the requirements related to statewide assessment under ESSA. The Assessment Committee consisted of more than 70 individuals representing school districts, charter schools, higher education, educators, assessment coordinators and community members. See membership information. The Assessment Committee met seven times from September 2016 to December 2016.

Educator Quality Committee

ESSA provides states with an opportunity to strengthen our efforts to build a world-class system of public schools where all children succeed. An Educator Quality Committee was established to support the development of Minnesota's ESSA plan relative to ensuring access to high-quality teachers and ensuring that low-income and minority students are not disproportionately served by ineffective, out-of-field or inexperienced teachers ("equity gap"). Membership of the Educator Quality Committee consisted of more than 50 individuals representing pre-K through grade 12 educators, higher education, civil rights communities, and business and community stakeholders. View membership information. The Educator Quality Committee met four times from September 2016 to May 2017.

English Learner Committees

Over the past 20 years, the number of English Learners (EL) in Minnesota has increased by 300 percent, making them Minnesota's fastest growing student population. ESSA provides opportunities to more meaningfully include and support Minnesota's EL students. The English Learner Committee focused on some of the EL-specific provisions of ESSA, ensuring that broader work around Minnesota's ESSA plan remains true to the needs of

Minnesota's English Learners. The English Learner Committee offered direction and advice with respect to the concepts and values to reflect in Minnesota's state plan. Membership of the English Learner Committee and Working Groups consisted of more than 50 individuals representing school districts and charter schools, educators, higher education, English Learner stakeholders and community stakeholders, see membership information. The English Learner Committee met five times from October 2016 to May 2017.

In addition to the English Learner Committee, three English Learner Working Groups were created to work on procedures.

English Learner Procedures Working Group

The English Learner Procedures Working Group focused on some of the EL-specific provisions of ESSA; establishing standardized procedures, adopting a statewide Home Language Survey, and ensuring that entrance and exit criteria for ELs are systematic and remain true to the needs of Minnesota's ELs. The EL Procedures Working Group worked on recommendations as well as a protocol for entrance and exit of ELs in Minnesota's state plan. This group met four times from February 2017 to April 2017.

English Learner Proficiency Definition Working Group

The English Learner Proficiency Definition Working Group focused on creating a recommendation for a statewide English Language Development (ELD) proficiency level using ACCESS test scores. At the end of January, the working group evaluated different proficiency level definitions and drafted a proposed statewide definition for the commissioner's consideration. The working group met twice in January 2017.

Additional Standardized English Learner Criteria Working Group

The Additional Standardized English Learner Criteria Working Group focused on creating recommended guidelines and procedures for teachers that will provide additional input when determining the English language proficiency of Minnesota's English Learners. The working group discussed potential sources of information in addition to ACCESS scores that could be used in determining English language proficiency. The input from this group was used to create recommendations for the commissioner's consideration. The working group met twice from January 2017 to April 2017.

School Improvement Committees

ESSA requires districts and the state to support schools identified as needing improvement. The law defines activities and types of supports that must be provided. To develop and implement a plan to develop state and local supports and requirements, two committees were established. The committees developed a theory of action to guide school improvement planning, and wrote recommendations in response to eight decision items identified from ESSA changes and requirements. All recommendations were accepted by the commissioner for implementation.

The **Technical Committee** worked with the Minnesota Department of Education to define Minnesota's statewide system of support for identified schools. The group finalized language for the theory of action and

recommendations based on the feedback from the Stakeholder Advisory Committee. The group made final decisions about recommendations based on stakeholder feedback. The committee consisted of stakeholders with a background in school leadership and school improvement. View membership list. The group met three times from October 2016 to January 2017.

The **Stakeholder Advisory Committee** informed the development of Minnesota's statewide system of support for identified schools. The committee was charged with ensuring the Technical Committee's work remained true to the needs of all of Minnesota's students and schools and to offer stakeholder feedback and information to inform recommendations from the Technical Committee and decisions in the state plan. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee consisted of more than 120 individuals representing school districts and charter schools, educators, service cooperatives and education stakeholders. See membership list. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee met five times from October 2016 to May 2017.

Appendix D: Stakeholder Engagement, Public Meetings

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is committed to meaningfully engaging and listening to Minnesotans as we put together a state plan that reflects the values of the people in our state. Beginning January 2016, we hosted a broad array of engagement activities, providing multiple means for Minnesota residents to provide input on the Minnesota state plan. These activities included topic-specific meetings, public listening sessions, focus groups, surveys and community meetings.

In addition, we asked students, parents, educators, community members and members of the public to participate in five committees to delve into specific topics. The five committees were accountability, assessment, English Learners, school improvement, and educator quality. Over the course of 20 months, MDE held 262 meetings and public events throughout the state to educate, listen and receive invaluable input from Minnesota citizens.

Event/Group/Committee	Date	Location
Legislator Information Meeting	January 27, 2016	Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), Roseville
Stakeholder Information Meeting	February 9, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs Presentation	February 11, 2016	Duluth
Minnesota Senate – Legislative Hearing	February 16, 2016	St. Paul
Minnesota House of Representatives – Legislative Hearing	March 10, 2016	St. Paul
Minnesota Association of Administrators of State and Federal Programs	March 17 - 18, 2016	Plymouth
Minnesota House of Representatives – Legislative Hearing	March 22, 2016	St. Paul
ESSA Topical Meeting – Accountability	April 6, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Topical Meeting – School Improvement	April 12, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota Education Equity Partnership	April 12, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Topical Meeting – English Learners	April 18, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Topical Meeting – Early Learning	April 18, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Topical Meeting – Standards and Assessment	April 25, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Topical Meeting – Data Collection and Reporting	April 25, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Topical Meeting – Foster Care and Homeless Youth	May 2, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Topical Meeting – Guidance Regarding Title 1	May 4, 2016	Roseville
McKnight/Urban Education Initiative Early Learning/English Learner Summit	May 6, 2016	Minneapolis

Event/Group/Committee	Date	Location
Friends of Education	May 9, 2016	Plymouth
ESSA Topical Meeting – Social Emotional Leaning, School Climate, Healthy Learning Environments	May 11, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Topical Meeting – Family Engagement	May 12, 2016	Roseville
Educators for Excellence	May 27, 2016	Minneapolis
Teach for America	June 6, 2016	Minneapolis
Meeting with Education Advocacy Groups	July 20, 2016	Roseville
Public Stakeholder Information Meeting	July 20, 2016	Roseville and webinar
Phillips Indian Educators/MIGIZI Communications	July 22, 2016	Minneapolis
Accountability Technical Committee	July 25, 2016	Roseville
Accountability Advisory Committee	August 2, 2016	Roseville
Assessment Conference Presentation	August 4, 2016	St. Paul
Accountability Technical Committee	August 8, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota School Boards Association Summer Seminar	August 8, 2016	Brooklyn Park
Superintendents Back to School Conference	August 9, 2016	Brooklyn Park
Accountability Technical Committee	August 11, 2016	Roseville
Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota	August 11, 2016	St. Paul
Minnesota Alternative Programs	August 15, 2016	Roseville
School Associations	August 17, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota Shape and Cancer Society	August 18, 2016	Roseville
Accountability Technical Committee	August 19, 2016	Roseville
Special Olympics	August 24, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Training Opportunity for Education Stakeholders	August 24, 2016	Roseville
Accountability Advisory Committee	August 24, 2016	Roseville
Twitter Town Hall	August 25, 2016	Webinar
Minnesota Disability Law Center	August 30, 2016	Roseville
Bemidji Back to School	August 31, 2016	Bemidji
State Fair – Fact Sheets	August 25-September 5, 2016	State Fair Grounds
Phillips Indian Educators/MIGIZI Communications	September 2, 2016	Minneapolis
School Quality/Student Success Sub-Committee	September 8, 2016	Roseville
Accountability Technical Committee	September 8, 2016	Roseville

Event/Group/Committee	Date	Location
ESSA Collaboration Meeting with Coalition of Asian American Leaders and the Minnesota Education Equity Partnership	September 9, 2016	Roseville
Special Education Director's Forum	September 9, 2016	Roseville
African American Leadership Forum	September 10, 2016	Minneapolis
School Quality/Student Success Sub-Committee	September 13, 2016	Roseville
Assessment Committee	September 13, 2016	Roseville
Accountability Advisory Committee	September 15, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota Assessment Group	September 16, 2016	Roseville
Special Education Advisory Panel	September 16, 2016	Roseville
School Quality/Student Success Sub-Committee	September 19, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota Indian Affairs Council	September 21, 2016	St. Paul
Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership	September 22, 2016	Minneapolis
Accountability Technical Committee	September 23, 2016	Roseville
Educator Quality Committee	September 26, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 2	September 26, 2016	St. Paul
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 8	September 26, 2016	Minneapolis
School Quality/Student Success Sub-Committee	September 26, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 7	September 27, 2016	Education Minnesota, St. Paul
Educators for Excellence	September 27, 2016	Minneapolis
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 5	September 27, 2016	St. Paul
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Focus Group 6	September 27, 2016	Minneapolis
Assessment Committee	September 27, 2016	Roseville
ESSAS Focus Group Meeting – Group 3	September 28, 2016	St. Paul
Equity Alliance of Minnesota	September 29, 2016	Woodbury
Minnesota Association of Charter Schools Public Policy Forum	September 29, 2016	Roseville
Accountability Advisory Committee	September 29, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 4	September 29, 2016	St. Paul
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 1	September 29, 2016	Roseville
School Improvement Technical Committee	September 30, 2016	Roseville
English Learners Stakeholder Input Group	October 3, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Regional Meeting	October 5, 2016	Duluth

Event/Group/Committee	Date	Location
Minnesota Association of Administrators of State and Federal Programs	October 5, 2016	Brooklyn Park
Assessment Committee	October 5, 2016	Roseville
Meeting with Tribal Leaders	October 6, 2016	Bemidji
ESSA Regional Meeting	October 6, 2016	Bemidji
Coalition of Asian American Leaders	October 7, 2016	Roseville
African American Leadership Forum	October 8, 2016	St. Paul
Board of School Administrators	October 10, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota Education Equity Partnership and Coalition of Asian American Leaders	October 10, 2016	Roseville
Assessment Committee	October 13, 2016	Roseville
American Association of School Librarians	October 13, 2016	Brooklyn Park
ESSA Regional Meeting	October 13, 2016	Marshall
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Students	October 13, 2016	Minneapolis
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 1	October 13, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota English Learner Education Conference	October 13, 2016	Bloomington
ESSA Regional Meeting	October 14, 2016	Rochester
Minneapolis Public Schools Indian Education Fall Gathering	October 15, 2016	Minneapolis
Education Minnesota	October 15, 2016	St. Paul
Accountability Technical Committee	October 18, 2016	Roseville
School Improvement Advisory Committee	October 19, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota Educator Academy Conference	October 20, 2016	St. Paul
Grad Minnesota	October 25, 2016	St. Paul
Accountability Technical Committee	October 25, 2016	Roseville
Gifted and Talented Education Coordinators	October 26, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Regional Meeting	October 26, 2016	St. Cloud
St. Paul National Association for the Advancement of Colored People	October 27, 2016	St. Paul
Accountability Advisory Committee	October 27, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 4	October 27, 2016	St. Paul
Minnesota Association of School Administrators	October 27, 2016	Virtual
English Learner Committee	October 27, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota Association of Special Education	October 27, 2016	Brainerd

Event/Group/Committee	Date	Location
Minnesota Comeback	October 31, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 5	November 1, 2016	St. Paul
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 3	November 1, 2016	St. Paul
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 7	November 1, 2016	St. Paul
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Groups 2	November 1, 2016	St. Paul
Accountability Technical Committee	November 1, 2016	Roseville
Committee of Practitioners	November 2, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Regional Meeting	November 2, 2016	Virtual
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 8	November 2, 2016	Minneapolis
Assessment Committee	November 3, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education	November 3, 2016	Plymouth
ESSA Regional Meeting	November 3, 2016	Burnsville
Assessment Committee	November 3, 2016	Roseville
MACC Alliance	November 3, 2016	St. Paul
Association of Metropolitan School Districts	November 4, 2016	St. Paul
ISAIAH	November 7, 2016	St. Paul
Educator Quality Committee	November 7, 2016	Roseville
McKinney-Vento Liaison Training	November 7, 2016	St. Paul
African Immigrant Services	November 9, 2016	Minneapolis
Accountability Technical Committee	November 9, 2016	Roseville
Reconciliation Lunch Group (Rondo)	November 10, 2016	St. Paul
Physical Education Teacher Conference	November 10, 2016	Wayzata
Info Technology Education Managers	November 10, 2016	Roseville
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Students	November 10, 2016	Minneapolis
ESSA Focus Group Meeting – Group 6	November 10, 2016	Minneapolis
Audubon Center of the North Woods Leaders Retreat	November 11, 2016	Minneapolis
Accountability Technical Committee	November 14, 2016	Roseville
Accountability Advisory Committee	November 15, 2016	Roseville
English Learner Committee	November 16, 2016	Roseville
School Improvement Technical Committee	November 16, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota Indian Education Conference	November 16, 2016	Welch
Educators for Excellence	November 17, 2016	St. Paul

Event/Group/Committee	Date	Location
Minnesota Education Equity Partnership and Coalition of Asian American Leaders	November 18, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs	November 18, 2016	Roseville
Minnesota Indian Affairs Council	December 2, 2016	Prior Lake
Phillips Indian Educators/MIGIZI Communications	December 2, 2016	Minneapolis
Education Minnesota - Paraprofessionals	December 3, 2016	St. Paul
Accountability Advisory Committee	December 6, 2016	Roseville
Coalition of Asian American Leaders Event	December 7, 2016	St. Paul
School Improvement Advisory Committee	December 8, 2016	Roseville
Youth Affinity Team Minnesota Alliance of Connected Communities	December 8, 2016	Minneapolis
African American Leadership Forum	December 9, 2016	Roseville
School Transportation Coordinators	December 12, 2016	Roseville
Assessment Committee	December 13, 2016	Roseville
Urban Indian Advisory Board	December 14, 2016	Bemidji
Voices in the Community Group	December 15, 2016	Minneapolis
Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership	December 15, 2016	Minneapolis
English Learner Committee	December 19, 2016	Roseville
Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ) Parent Advisory Board	December 19, 2016	Minneapolis
Tribal Consultation – Lower Sioux Indian Community	December 21, 2016	Morton
Tribal Consultation – Upper Sioux Indian Community	December 21, 2016	Granite Falls
Educator Quality Committee	January 4, 2017	Roseville
Accountability Advisory Committee	January 5, 2017	Roseville
Assessment Committee	January 5, 2017	Roseville
Minnesota Non-Public Council	January 6, 2017	Roseville
School Improvement – Dropout and Credit Recovery Focus Group	January 9, 2017	Roseville
Weaver Lake Parents	January 10, 2017	Maplewood
Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage	January 10, 2017	St. Paul
School Improvement Advisory Committee	January 10, 2017	Roseville
School Improvement Advisory Committee	January 10, 2017	Roseville
Minnesota House of Representatives – Legislative Hearing	January 12, 2017	St. Paul
Minnesota School Board Association Conference	January 12, 2017	Minneapolis

Event/Group/Committee	Date	Location
Minnesota PreK-3 Design Team	January 18, 2017	St. Paul
Regional Service Cooperatives	January 19, 2017	Staples
Assessment Committee	January 19, 2017	Roseville
Minnesota Education Equity Partnership and Minneapolis Parent Advisory Board	January 20, 2017	Minneapolis
School Improvement Technical Committee	January 20, 2017	Roseville
Standardized English Learner Criteria Working Group	January 25, 2017	Roseville
English Learner Proficiency Definition Working Group	January 25, 2017	Roseville
English Learner Proficiency Definition Working Group	January 26, 2017	Roseville
Tribal Consultation - Prairie Island Indian Community	January 30, 2017	Welch
Assessment Committee	January 30, 2017	Roseville
Student Support and Title Program Practitioners	February 1, 2017	Roseville
Accountability Advisory Committee	February 2, 2017	Roseville
English Learner Procedures Working Group	February 2, 2017	Roseville
Educators for Excellence	February 6, 2017	Roseville
School Improvement Advisory Committee	February 9, 2017	Roseville
Minnesota Senate - Legislative Hearing	February 9, 2017	St. Paul
Board of Teaching	February 10, 2017	Roseville
United Cambodian Association of Minnesota	February 10, 2017	Mendota Heights
Greenvale Park Community Advisory Council	February 16, 2017	Northfield
Minnesota Music Educators Association	February 21, 2017	Bloomington
Assessment Committee	February 22, 2017	Roseville
Falcon Heights Somali Parents	February 22, 2017	Falcon Heights
Central Minnesota Educational Research and Development Council	February 23, 2017	St. Cloud
Tribal Consultation – Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	February 24, 2017	Cloquet
Tribal Consultation – White Earth Nation	March 1, 2017	White Earth
Tribal Consultation – Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	March 1, 2017	Cass Lake
Tribal Consultation – Red Lake Nation	March 1, 2017	Red Lake
Tribal Consultation – Bois Forte Band of Chippewa	March 2, 2017	Cloquet
Tribal Consultation – Bois Forte Band of Chippewa	March 2, 2017	Nett Lake
Hamline University	March 2, 2017	St. Paul

Event/Group/Committee	Date	Location
English Learners Community Meeting	March 2, 2017	St. Paul
Special Education Directors Forum	March 3, 2017	Roseville
English Learners Community Members	March 4, 2017	Minneapolis
Accountability Advisory Committee	March 6, 2017	Roseville
Lao Advancement Organization of America	March 8, 2017	Minneapolis
English Learner Procedures Working Group	March 9, 2017	Roseville
Promoting Effective Instruction for English Learners	March 15, 2017	Minneapolis
Accountability Technical Committee	March 16, 2017	Roseville
St. Paul Public Schools English Learner Students Focus Group	March 16, 2017	St. Paul
Council for Asian and Pacific Islander Minnesotans	March 16, 2017	St. Paul
Coalition of Asian American Leaders	March 17, 2017	Roseville
Educator for Excellence	March 17, 2017	Roseville
Karen Organization of Minnesota	March 18, 2017	Marshall
Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood	March 20, 2017	St. Paul
Regional Title I, II, III Overview	March 21, 2017	Fergus Falls
Tribal Consultation – Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	March 24, 2017	Grand Portage
Regional Title I, II, III Overview	March 28, 2017	Rochester
College Possible Students Focus Group	March 29, 2017	Roseville
Regional Title I, II, III Overview	March 31, 2017	Roseville
College Possible Students Focus Group	April 4, 2017	Osseo
Accountability Advisory Committee	April 5, 2017	Roseville
Additional Standardized English Learner Criteria Working Group	April 5, 2017	Roseville
English Learner Procedures Working Group	April 6, 2017	Roseville
Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education	April 6, 2017	Plymouth
Association of Metropolitan School Districts Board Meeting	April 7, 2017	St. Paul
Tribal Consultation - Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community	April 7, 2017	Prior Lake
Metropolitan Education for Future Employment	April 11, 2017	Minneapolis
Regional Title I, II, III Overview	April 11, 2017	Marshall
Anoka Hennepin Paraeducators Association	April 11, 2017	Anoka
College Possible Students Focus Group	April 11, 2017	St. Paul
Regional Title I, II, III Overview	April 12, 2017	North Mankato

Event/Group/Committee	Date	Location
Accountability Technical Committee	April 13, 2017	Roseville
MACC Youth Affinity Team	April 13, 2017	St. Paul
Regional Title I, II, III Overview	April 18, 2017	Sartell
ESSA State Plan Public Update Meeting	April 18, 2017	Roseville
English Learner Procedures Working Group	April 19, 2017	Roseville
Tribal Consultation – Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe	April 19, 2017	Onamia
Regional Title I, II, III Overview	April 21, 2017	Roseville
Regional Title I, II, III Overview	April 26, 2017	Mountain Iron
Accountability Technical Committee	April 26, 2017	Roseville
Regional Title I, II, III Overview	April 27, 2017	Staples
Stakeholders Discussion on Cell Size	April 27, 2017	Roseville
Education Associations – Update Meeting	April 28, 2017	Roseville
Minnesota Teachers of English as a Second Language	April 28, 2017	St. Paul
Regional Title I, II, III Overview	May 2, 2017	Thief River Falls
Regional Title I, II, III Overview	May 4, 2017	Roseville
English Learner Committee	May 5, 2017	Roseville
Accountability Advisory Committee	May 9, 2017	Roseville
School Improvement Advisory Committee	May 10, 2017	Roseville
Accountability Technical Committee	May 11, 2017	Roseville
Minnesota Administrators of Special Education Best Practices Conference	May 12, 2017	Brainerd
Special Education Directors' Forum	May 19, 2017	Roseville
ESSA Accountability Advisory Committee	May 23, 2017	Webinar
Minnesota Special Education Advocacy Group	May 23, 2017	Minneapolis
Accountability Advisory Committee	June 1, 2017	Roseville
Guidance to School Districts and Charters on School Years 2017-18 Implementation	June 1, 2017	Webinar
Tribal Consultation – Mille Lacs	June 7, 2017	Roseville
ESSA State Plan Public Update Meeting	June 15, 2017	Roseville
Education Minnesota Summer Seminar	July 31, 2017	St. Joseph
Minnesota School Boards Association Summer Seminar	August 7, 2017	Brooklyn Park
Superintendents' Back-to-School Conference	August 8-9, 2017	Brooklyn Park

Event/Group/Committee	Date	Location
A+: Education Conference	August 10, 2017	St. Paul
Minnesota State Fair	August 24 – September 4, 2017	State Fairgrounds

Appendix E: Tribal Consultation

ESSA requires state education agencies (SEAs) and some individual school districts to consult with tribes on various education plans affecting American Indian students. The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) felt that tribal consultation was important to ensure that input and advice from Minnesota tribes around the needs of American Indian students is thoroughly included in our state plan.

Commissioner Cassellius met with leaders of all of Minnesota's 11 Tribal Nations to discuss the ESSA State Plan. At each meeting, tribal leaders and their guests were provided with information on the Every Student Succeeds Act and opportunities for school districts to work in collaboration with tribal nations. Commissioner Cassellius sought input on what should be considered for inclusion in the state plan and advice on what kind of guidance was needed, what meaningful consultation looks like, and program areas should be part of the consultation process.

Some of the key themes that ran through the conversations Commissioner Cassellius had with tribal leaders across Minnesota included:

- For the consultation process to be meaningful, several tribal leaders, employees, and parent committee members spoke about the importance of providing tribal representatives with clear and complete information before their meetings with district representatives. Without adequate information and the time to review it, tribal representatives may be left at a disadvantage when discussing districts' plans.

- Another aspect of meaningfulness was the frequency of communication. Many of the tribal representatives we spoke to expressed interest in consultation occurring multiple times a year. This is an important part of maintaining the relationships that are important for consultation to be meaningful.

- Additionally, tribal leaders are looking for more than a single, signed document at the end of the process as proof that consultation occurred and was meaningful. The details of what districts will be required to send to MDE are still being developed, but we understand that we must go further than the process currently used with parent committees for districts' Indian Education programs.

- Beyond the process of communication, a frequent topic of conversation with many tribes was the integration of Native culture, language, and history into schools' curriculum, instruction, activities, services, and teacher development. Training and hiring more American Indian teachers is another priority. The ESSA consultation process is one avenue for conversation on these topics. The World's Best Workforce engagement process required by Minnesota state law is another avenue, and those processes should be connected.

Based on these conversations, MDE has created guidance for affected local education agencies and affected schools. The guidance has been created to provide a solid foundation to ensure that parents, families, and Tribal Nations are meaningfully engaged in ongoing implementation of ESSA and American Indian programming for the state's American Indian students.

Minnesota Department of Education

Summary of Public Conversation About Well-Rounded Education

On February 25, 2017, over 50 people gathered at Brooklyn Center High School to discuss what a well-rounded education means to them in the context of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). From a range of perspectives and across three diverse small groups, three themes consistently emerged. Participants defined a well-rounded education as **inclusive**, **many-sided** and **community-based**.

Inclusive

Many participants described the importance of Minnesota's school system being inviting and welcoming to all students. This extends from curriculm and instruction to the approaches schools and districts take to recruiting staff and engaging students and families.

Some participants pointed to the importance of using curriculum and instructional approaches that reflect students' cultures. They spoke to the importance of teaching that is culturally relevant across all disciplines. On a related note, some participants spoke about the importance of making sure students are able to access rigorous courses and learning opportunities; they expressed concerns that, at present, some groups of students based on race or other identity are disproportionately invited to participate in the highest levels of classes. Some expressed support for explicitly anti-bias curriculum, and several emphasized the importance of ensuring English learners and students with disabilities can access opportunities. Some also spoke about the importance of ensuring that both struggling and gifted learners receive attention and access to a well-rounded education.

Many participants also spoke about the use of restorative, rather than punitive, practices to address student behavior and keep students engaged in school. Still others emphasized the importance of reaching out to families and respected people in the community to enlist them as role models and supports for students, while also recognizing that some schools did not do enough to be welcoming and supportive of today's parents and family leaders when they were students.

The importance of equity was emphasized when looking at course assignment, access to support services (including libraries, counselors, etc.), discipline policies, and other areas. Since many decisions about these areas in Minnesota are made at the local level, this means ensuring that local decision-making is equitable in who is represented and listened to. Measuring this will include attention to student outcomes and implementation data, all disaggregated by student group.

Many-Sided

The minimum definition of "well-rounded education" provided in ESSA is primarily concerned with the subjects that are taught in schools. The law lists a wide range of courses, including those conventionally considered part of the "core" curriculum as well as other disciplines including art, music, health, physical education, career and technical education, world languages, engineering, computer science, and other areas. Each of these additional disciplines received significant attention and support from participants.

In addition to the multi-disciplinary focus in the ESSA law, participants on February 25 emphasized a wider range of opportunities and services. These include extracurricular opportunities in many areas, equitable access to libraries and information literacy, and real-world skills such as personal finance.

Additionally, some members spoke about how useful it can be for learning to take many forms, including experiential and hands-on learning as well as service learning.

Others spoke about the importance of social-emotional learning, which can be supported in classroom learning across disciplines as well as by school support staff. For example, physical education offers opportunities for students to build critical social-emotional skills, while some students will also benefit from access to school social workers, school psychologists, and/or guidance counselors.

The desire for a many-sided approach was also expressed in participants' thoughts about how to measure school success and progress. Participants expressed interest in surveys of engagement and social-emotional learning, as well as measurements of student health, employment, mastery of standards beyond those measured by standardized tests, and knowledge of other countries, languages, and cultures. Beyond the student experience, some also expressed interest in including measures of teacher turnover and effectiveness when evaluating schools and determining what supports to offer.

Community-Based

Several participants expressed interest in making sure each student's experience of school is rooted in their community. This includes connecting students with mentors and role models from similar backgrounds in the community. It also includes building relationships with local businesses who are looking to employ students after they graduate, or even offer work-based learning opportunities for students who are still in school. Others spoke to the importance of service learning and ensuring that students' learning experiences in school were connected with their community context. Some also spoke to the importance of providing wraparound services to students, which generally involves finding and partnering with community-based nonprofits and other service providers.

One mechanism for strengthening the connection between schools and community is the World's Best Workforce (WBWF) process described in state law. The WBWF law requires that each district have an advisory committee that includes families, community members, and businesses who are reflective of the student body. This committee should have a significant role in strategic planning for the district. Additionally, each school should have a site team with family representation that informs the school's specific approach. These processes create an opportunity for district and school decision-making to be truly community-based, although they require local leaders to listen to their advisory committee as well as committee members who have support in analyzing the community's needs and strengths before making recommendations to local school system leadership.

Final Thoughts

Many participants expressed great interest in moving past a school systemt that's governed primarily by concerns about standardized test scores. It was recognized that equity runs much deeper than simple measures of academic outcomes, and that each district and school has a responsibility to its community to create an inviting, relevant, and empowering learning environment for students. Commissioner Cassellius expressed support for the move to a well-rounded education, as opposed to focusing too much on test scores or other accountability measurements, and she recognized that much of the power to do this now rests at the community level.

Minnesota Department of Education

Every Student Succeeds Act Stakeholder Engagement Report: March 2017

Introduction

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is committed to meaningfully engaging and listening to Minnesotans as we put together a state plan that reflects the values of the people in our state. Beginning January 2016, the department has hosted and participated in a broad range of engagement activities, providing multiple means for Minnesota residents to provide input on the Minnesota state plan. These activities included topic specific meetings, public listening sessions, focus groups and community meetings. In addition, we asked the public to participate in five committees to delve into specific topics, including accountability, assessment, English learners, school improvement, and educator provisions identified for submission in Minnesota's state plan application.

In April and May 2016, the department hosted 10 topic specific meetings. The purpose was to share and clarify ESSA, gain input, and better understand stakeholder priorities. The input gathered helped in the formation of the ESSA committees.

Beginning summer 2016, we invited the public to participate in ESSA committees focused on specific topics to provide the commissioner of education with recommendations on what to include in the state plan around a new accountability system, possible assessment changes, values we have for educators, inclusion of English learners in the accountability system, and how to best serve districts and charters in school improvement efforts.

We also convened smaller focus groups with community-identified representatives. Members from Minnesota's major ethnic communities, as well as teachers, parents, youth, and the English learner and special education communities were invited to provide focused feedback on topics such as family engagement, school improvement and well-rounded education.

Public regional meetings throughout the state were held in October and November 2016. The commissioner of education and staff traveled to Duluth, Rochester, Bemidji, Marshall and Burnsville, and offered a virtual option to the public in order to provide an overview of ESSA to answer questions and hear feedback. The commissioner has and will continue to meet and consult directly with American Indian tribal leadership throughout the state. Staff continuously participate in community-hosted meetings, where school districts, community based organizations and advocacy groups have invited the department to share information and listen.

Throughout the process the Minnesota Department of Education website was routinely updated and an emailed newsletter provided approximately 1,300 subscribers with timely information about the process. The department continues to seek input from stakeholders and plans on hosting several more public events throughout summer 2017, and will respond to requests for direct dialogue with the public.

This report reflects an analysis of stakeholder feedback we have heard thus far from diverse stakeholders including, but not limited to, students, families, educators, parents, school boards, librarians, social workers, business associations and groups that identified themselves as representing ethnic and civil rights leadership, with an interest in educational policy. The information contained in this report reflects feedback the department has heard and received through stakeholder meetings, community events, focus groups, letters, emails and phone calls from January 2016 through January 2017. A separate report has been prepared to share recommendations from the five ESSA committees.

Minnesota Department of Education staff gathered and aggregated feedback and several themes emerged. In the accountability and assessment system, stakeholders had clear consensus that the tone for accountability had to be productive and positive to maximize the value of statewide influence. Advocates had concerns about the validity and frequency of existing test administration, and broad confusion was reported by families and community members on what was required by the department as opposed to school districts and charter schools.

Educator quality themes focused strongly on the need to improve the quality of training and leadership pipelines. Stakeholders recommended cultural and intercultural competence be included in the statewide definition of effective teacher. Stakeholders emphasized the need to enhance the professionalization of educators including paraprofessionals and education assistants. Community members emphasized that continuity of those paraprofessionals often supported school diversity and students from marginal communities. Members encouraged the department to increase incentives, such as loan forgiveness, to encourage experienced teachers and leaders to serve high-risk schools.

Civil rights advocates were joined by community members and stakeholders to emphasize the role that systemic bias plays in perpetuating racially predictable disproportionalities. In response, the department was encouraged to actively create unbiased systems, examine root causes of disparities, and drive for equitable outcomes.

School improvement stakeholders revealed concerns with adequacy of resources, and resource allocation. This included distribution of funds and educators and other professionals within districts. The department was also encouraged to actively involve community members and support districts and charter schools in engaging communities.

Student groups, community members and stakeholders working with students clearly reported concerns with school discipline practices and improving school climate. Specifically, exclusionary disciplinary practices compounded academic performance concerns. Many community members also cautioned the department to consider the historical impact of the education system on ethnic communities and American Indians. More broadly, many underserved students reported feeling that schools were not a welcoming place.

Community members provided a wide variety of dimensions to consider for equitable access to a well-rounded education. Many stakeholders defined access to enrichment activities as critical. Others added trauma-informed practice, including acknowledging student mental health needs, as necessary. Finally, advocates recommended considering home culture, access to college-

credit bearing courses, and access to resources outside the classroom as key to providing both a welcoming climate and well-rounded education.

Stakeholder and Community Themes

Accountability and Assessment

Stakeholders had the most to say about the accountability and assessment provisions. By far the most common theme was a general concern about existing test validity. The second most common piece of advice was that the department and others communicate clearly about test results, and roles and responsibilities in the accountability system. Other themes included feedback that there are simply too many tests, the need to set a positive tone, and a focus on equity.

Some stakeholders encouraged the department to weigh the time spent testing against the value of encouraging and ensuring students reach proficiency. Many of these themes suggested the department hold on to systems that measure individual proficiency or growth towards proficiency, and avoid normative models that compare student performance relative to other students.

Make sure tests add value

There was concern that the existing Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) provide little value to teachers in the classroom, and that performance on the MCAs did not predict future performance. In addition to test scores, many stakeholders strongly encouraged the department to include a measure of school climate as the school quality/student success indicator in the accountability system. Stakeholders noted chronic absenteeism alongside other measurements such as participation in enrichment, or student survey results, provided a reliable climate measure.

Stakeholders working with English learners expressed concern with the accuracy of ACCESS tests, and noted that student groups within the broad category such as students who are new to the country and students with limited formal education skew results for a larger school building. School discipline rates were also suggested as a valuable indicator.

Advocates working within the early learning community suggested the department consider adding kindergarten readiness as a potential indicator and that the Kindergarten Entry Profile could be a tool. They note early indicators of success allow for more effective intervention. Others suggested instead of including kindergarten readiness as an indicator in the accountability system, to report the information on the Minnesota Report Card.

Tests need to be communicated clearly

Many committee and community members reported that the roles of districts and building leaders were unclear in requiring tests and communicating results. Stakeholders shared that parents and families were not educated on what value the tests provide. Protocols and policies were not consistently shared or explained for community members.

Stakeholders requested a narrative or executive summary of results so that information could be digested in a quick and easy way for parents and community members unfamiliar with the

testing systems. Others added that dashboards and summaries both played a role, depending on why a given consumer sought the data.

Participants report that although districts may have access to data, educators did not always have timely access to test results. This was particularly true for screening English learners, but also was reported as true for proficiency results.

Focus on equity

Stakeholders concerned with improving systemic equity recommended aggressive targets be set to close Minnesota's racially predictable outcome disproportionalities. The department was encouraged to set ambitious statewide targets and "best-in-class" school targets for growth. Parents expressed deep concerns for proficiency disproportionalities for students participating in English learner services.

The department was encouraged to also look at students outside the mainstream when reporting graduation rates. Students with disabilities in multi-year individual education programs may graduate at a disproportionate rate. In consideration of Minnesota's wide geographic and demographic diversity, the department was encouraged to count student populations with small numbers of mandatory reporting groups. Some participants suggested cell sizes of 20, or even 10, were necessary for ethically reporting proportionality.

Too many tests

Stakeholders told the department that students spend too much time taking tests. English learners spend extra time in ACCESS testing, which not only occupies their time but may also occupy computer labs and library media centers in their schools. This is compounded for highly mobile students, who may end up repeating tests because results are not shared.

At the same time, stakeholders advised we improve the existing system before investing time, money, and credibility pursuing innovation. If new systems are created, participants asked the department to strive for stakeholder consensus.

Set a positive tone for accountability

Finally, community members encouraged the department to set a supportive growth tone when describing performance for schools. The department has the opportunity to help the system self-define accountability as more than a test score.

Absenteeism should be described as attendance. The complex nature of climate indicators can best be described by specialized support professionals, for example school social workers.

Educator Quality

Community members frequently cited enhancing the quality of training and leadership as the biggest opportunity for improving educator quality. Stakeholders suggested improving connections between the programs that train educators and educators in their first years of service. Once educators were in service, members advised a focus on quality of continuing education and improving pipelines from educator to building leader.

The need for cultural and intercultural competence emerged as another strong theme, along with setting appropriate statewide qualifications. Members encouraged the department to look at supporting educators being responsive to student needs, consistent distribution, and improving understanding of social and emotional learning.

Finally, community members described an urgent need to increase the number of teachers of color. A lack of teachers of color begins in pre-service training. The number of people of color choosing teaching as a profession is influenced by the people of color they see in academia.

Quality of training and leadership

Community members described the need for high-quality ongoing training. Tasks such as curriculum development require current skill and knowledge. Educators need support using assessment to inform instruction. Educators and school leaders could also use support embedding state academic standards in instruction.

We heard a need to focus on building leadership, incentives and support for educators in high-needs schools. Members advised the department to create incentives for educator and principal development.

Cultural competence

Stakeholders observed that educators show a wide range of awareness in valuing diverse cultural backgrounds. Multiracial, multilingual, and teachers from non-majority culture are helpful in creating rapport with students. Grounding the teacher-student relationship allows students to listen, learn and feel safe.

Qualifications

We heard that teachers should be evaluated by more than the score their students achieve. Meaningful family engagement should be considered in credentialing.

Paraprofessional experience should be considered when considering the definition of an experienced teacher. Allow teachers out of their academic field to demonstrate proficiency in their teaching area.

Social Emotional Learning, responsiveness, and consistency

Educators should have incentives to engage communities most impacted by inequitable access. Student outcomes should impact rating of teacher effectiveness.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) needs to be defined at a leadership level. Consider incorporating it into educator training. SEL and school climate affect educator morale, in addition to directly affecting academic outcomes.

Equitable distribution of teachers is a very high priority to stakeholders. Statewide definitions of effectiveness should be coherent across programs and teachers. Similarly a rigorous statewide definition of teacher leadership is necessary.

Equity

Stakeholders spoke on the need for systems to be unbiased, the need to make marginal groups more visible, and the need to drive for equitable outcomes. Community members encouraged the department to examine the root causes of racially predictable outcome disproportionalities.

Create unbiased systems

We heard the need to broaden outreach in Greater Minnesota. Marginal groups, including students who identify as LGBTQ may experience unreported bullying. Stakeholders encouraged the department, districts and charter schools to actively seek and include representatives of Minnesota's vast diversity. Community members should see themselves reflected in the plan, and many community members report they do not feel valued and respected.

New to country and students with limited exposure to formal education may not have families with the same capacity to advocate on their behalf. The existing system treats students inconsistently. For example, graduation standards and English language screening can vary within districts.

Work more closely with communities that are commonly underrepresented

Many stakeholders noted that the state and local school districts and charter schools must engage communities that have been underrepresented in previous engagement processes. Greater Minnesota holds communities that should be engaged. Tribal consultation, engagement with migratory and seasonal communities, are crucial. New to country and highly mobile communities can be especially vulnerable.

Community members recommend the department be intentional reaching out to media that serves ethnic communities, including radio stations and newspapers. The department's process needs to bring community voices into the agency, just as agency staff need to get into community settings.

Reveal root causes and drive for equitable outcomes

Community members encouraged the department to talk about race and Eurocentric attitudes directly, and to consider the historical role of the educational system in assimilating students from marginalized communities.

Data collected should reveal the root causes of outcome disparities. Support a statewide understanding of the role of historical trauma in perpetuating outcome gaps. Drive for equitable outcomes, starting with today's struggling students. Prioritize intervention for students who are at risk, and include specific goals with timelines. Graduate students from marginal communities, including Latino and black students, and English learners at greater rates and ready for college or career.

Recognize the high turnover of school staff and slow turnover of education leadership in greater Minnesota.

School Improvement

Stakeholders encouraged the department examine resource allocation and to encourage community involvement in school improvement plans and systems. The department has an

opportunity to clarify definitions and roles for stakeholders unfamiliar with the system, including districts and schools that may have no experience with the coaching system.

The department was encouraged to set a balanced tone when describing school improvement. Communities and schools should not be “bad” or “good.”

Allocate adequate resources

Many stakeholders described how different programs appear to compete for resources currently. When allocating dollars or staff, special education, English learner services, and other services should not compete with one another. The system should include wraparound service structures for high-needs schools.

Class size is critical for services such as elementary English learner services. Consider also the ratio of educational assistants to population served when allocating resources. All schools should conduct a comprehensive needs analysis.

Involve the community

Families and children need to feel safe, nurtured and welcomed in schools. There is a special need if parents do not speak English. Consider other barriers to access, such as access to transportation or childcare.

Parent involvement creates student success. Consider parent involvement offices and parent academies. Be transparent and fair in engaging parents. Protect advocates from exclusion or retaliation, for example from participation in individualized education program (IEP) meetings or hearings.

Clarify roles and definitions

The definition of a great school should describe shared goals that all Minnesota schools can and should work towards. In conducting the comprehensive need analysis, focus on more than the indicators highlighted in the accountability system. Recognize that there may be tension between district and building leadership and staff.

Set a balanced tone

Stakeholders describe the current system as feeling punitive and one-size-fits-all. Consider the secondary value of highlighting effective practices. Reinforce where the accountability system aligns with state laws such as World’s Best Workforce.

Consider the schools in the middle of performance, in addition to those at the top and bottom. The department should be aware if the tone of interactions with districts and charter schools is authoritarian and intimidating.

Meet the unique needs of each local education agency

Small districts have different student issues and reactions to assessment than large districts. Comprehensive needs assessment should include parent, teacher, and student climate surveys, observation, analysis of staff bias, and a review of current programs and support.

Full service community schools can address wide variety of needs.

Student Focus

Community members encouraged the department to consider school climate and restorative justice practices when considering the student experience. Complex phenomena observed in the accountability system have multiple, situation-dependent causes. All students should feel safe and like they belong in their schools.

School discipline

Positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) should be used in both general and special education. Exclusionary disciplinary practices should be minimized. Community members encourage the department to support systems that ensure the timely re-enrollment of students placed in the juvenile justice system, including the transfer of credits.

School climate and student and community involvement

English learner services are often stigmatizing, and students report bullying. This and other phenomena may offer insight into voluntary chronic absenteeism. Nonwhite students may experience school culture or climate in a different way than majority peers. Social and emotional learning is different for diverse learners.

All students should feel safe and like they belong. Consider a student bill of rights.

Well-rounded Education

Well-rounded education was a topic of high interest for stakeholders. Access to what can be described as enrichment is closely related to academic outcomes. For example, equitable access to library and media services, physical education curriculum, music and other arts, contributes to student sense of accomplishment and keeps students in school. Access to resources outside the classroom is important.

Community members also described how trauma-informed approaches, and an understanding of social and emotional learning, were necessary for student success. In addition, community members encourage districts, charter schools and the department to affirm student and family home culture.

Finally, stakeholders note that dual-credit programs increase chances that students will go into teaching. Equitable access can address upstream teacher of color shortages.

Access

Access to advanced coursework, enrichment coursework, and extracurricular activities may be impeded by exclusionary discipline, special education, or English learner services. Transportation is an issue for districts with limited staff or resources. Finally, consider access to summer and other extended programming for students who receive English learner services.

Trauma-informed practice

The department was encouraged by stakeholders to explicitly specify the need for trauma-informed schools in the definition of a well-rounded school. Trauma impacts overall well-being, including academic achievement and emotional and social functioning. Strategies to address trauma should be part of educator training, licensure and re-licensure.

Affirm home culture

Schools need to be aware of and reflect who students are. In working with American Indian and other students, actively affirm culture and identity. For many communities, the traditional system has been used to erase cultural identity. Consider this when developing career and college readiness programs.

Social and emotional learning and school climate

Racial equity, social emotional learning, and trauma-informed approaches should not compete for resources or attention in training. Consider representation from school mental health professionals and social workers in establishing strategies.

Other themes

Advocates for English learners, educators and community members relayed several themes related to inconsistent treatment between and within districts. Several stakeholders referenced failure to “graduate” from English learner services, while others presented evidence that English learner graduates failed to be academically ready. The home language survey as a screening tool was identified as problematic.

Deeper discussions suggest opportunities to value bilingualism and reframe English learner services as supporting academic achievement, and not remedial, in alignment with legislation such as the Minnesota LEAPS act. In outreach, and in setting the climate and tone of English learner services, building leadership including principals with lived experience, are key to good outcomes.

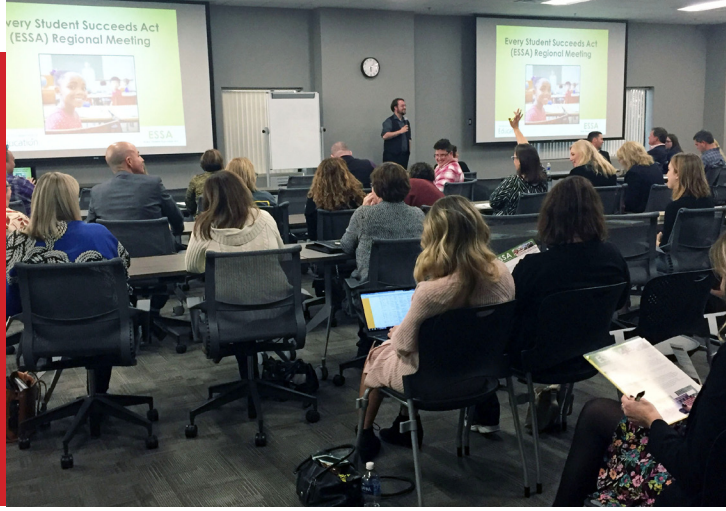
Multiple stakeholders referenced early childhood education, and opportunities to improve English learner growth as well as broader racially predictable disparities. Early learning advocates note the need to implement indicators earlier in a student’s career. Implementation of the Kindergarten Entry Profile can allow effective earlier interventions.

Finally, nonpublic school communities were particularly attuned to provisions in ESSA that provide for more transparent allocation of special education support funds.

Every Student Succeeds Act

Stakeholder Engagement

Regional Meetings Report



In our commitment to obtain feedback from diverse communities and stakeholders for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) hosted a series of regional meetings in Duluth, Bemidji, Marshall, Rochester, St. Cloud and Burnsville. The purpose of these meetings was to give the opportunity for stakeholders to learn about ESSA, share feedback and ask questions. Below are themes that came up throughout these meetings.

Equity

- Defining the cause of gaps in access to high-quality teachers is important. What are we doing to address the gaps?
- Higher education institutes need to be in on the conversation, so that teachers are well prepared and when they leave the institution, they know what tools are available to help them give all students the best education possible.
- Equity is lost when programs aren't accessible to everyone. In early childhood, early learning scholarships and the state's new small voluntary pre-K program only give access to high-quality early childhood programming to some students, and some who need them the most fall through the cracks. All 4-year-olds deserve this.
- Transportation creates an equity barrier, especially in Greater Minnesota, when students can't access programming. A good example is limited access to summer targeted services.

School Improvement

- Family engagement is a critical element of a high-quality school.
- Communities have to decide what they value and what they want to focus on. In terms of an accountability system, ask "what measures do we want to focus on as a community?"
- Professional development is important.
- We need to find a balance between successfully measuring schools and remaining transparent about results, while not shaming schools that are low-performing.
- Sustaining school improvement gains after the school improvement funding is gone is an important part of the whole process.
- Desire to have networks for communication between districts to share what is working well.

> *"There seems to be more flexibility in ESSA and flexibility is a new term to our system, and it's a term that can't be bought. What is going to get us results is adults all working together around a shared vision. Putting limited resources towards what is going to get the most bang for the buck.* ***This is a paradigm shift.****"* –Marshall participant

Student Success

- English Learners need additional support and especially with growing populations in Greater Minnesota, we have to think differently about how we do this. Being bilingual is a huge asset!
- We must build on the strengths of students with disabilities.
- When students need additional help in math and reading, it shouldn't come at the expense of other subjects and activities.
- Culturally relevant curriculum benefits all students.
- Pre-K needs to be included in how we think about providing a high-quality education.

> *"There are so many other aspects to a child's life before they even get to the door. We have to think about all of that. We are trying to get test scores up when* ***some of these kids are just trying to make it through the day****."* –Bemidji participant

Testing

- Kids are taking too many tests. How can we make sure tests are being used for the right purposes?
- The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) are not an effective means for measuring student growth.
- Concerns about meeting the requirement for 95% of students to participate in testing, when parents are allowed to opt their students out of testing.

> *"Testing has been around forever. But now, tests are causing anxiety for teachers like never before, and the teachers are passing that stress on to students."* –Burnsville participant

Well Rounded Education

- Excited about the opportunity to focus on a variety of subjects, but there is no new funding, which is a major concern. Districts will have to get creative with funding.
- How can we find teachers to support a well-rounded education when we already struggle to find elementary teachers?
- Librarians are a critical piece to a well-rounded education. Literacy and digital literacy are so important to college and career success.
- Physical education and health are components of a well-rounded education that can be weaved into the whole school day.
- The push for testing in English, math and science has pushed other subjects, like social studies, to "the back of the line." How do we balance a well-rounded education with testing?
- Qualitative and quantitative measures should be considered. For quantitative, there is interest in expanding the Common Course catalog to track what programming students are accessing.
- It needs to be easier for high school teachers to offer college level courses. It is getting harder.

Every Student Succeeds Act
Stakeholder Engagement
Focus Groups Report

In our commitment to obtain feedback from diverse communities and stakeholders for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) invited students, parents, educators and community members to participate in a series of focus group meetings. Throughout the fall there were a total of 18 of these meetings.

The purpose of the focus group meetings was to ask community members to share their knowledge and experiences as a student, parent, community leader or educator around the areas of family engagement, school improvement and what it means to have a well-rounded education. Information gathered from these focus groups will be used to help inform the work of ESSA committees. The ESSA committees have been established to look at a new statewide accountability system, school improvement strategies, testing, and educator quality, to inform the commissioner of education of stakeholder priorities as she finalizes the state plan and also help implement the new law.

Below is a summary of what we learned from the focus groups.

Well Rounded Education

What does "well-rounded education" mean to you and people in your school building?

- Multiple ethnic and cultural backgrounds are reflected in curriculum and extracurriculars.
- Individual student needs are understood.
- Balance between meeting students' specific needs (such as English Learners and youth with disabilities) and still allowing them to access enrichment activities such as performing arts.
- Need for school flexibility in providing a well-rounded education.
- Focus on student strengths.

What is missing from the content areas listed in the law?

- Social emotional learning. People, social, and teamwork skills are critical to success.
- Trauma-informed approaches.
- Restore basic math, cooking, sewing, shop classes and university transition to curriculum.
- Opportunities to learn in multiple ways.
- Focus on the individual child. One size does not fit all.
- Individualized Education Programs should be person-centered and self-directed.
- Support multiple ethnic and cultural backgrounds in the curriculum.

Family Engagement

What does meaningful family engagement look like in schools and is it happening right now? What would help schools in our community improve family engagement?

- Schools should work with community-based organizations and get out into the community Meet families where they are at. Specifically working with families in poverty.
- Need more resources and staff to be able to fully support family engagement.
- Measure the quality of engagement, not just the number of events or attendees.
- Increase diversity and cultural competence of engagement activities. Understand needs of parents of color and be aware of cultural norms; use translators.
- Family engagement has great potential to empower parents and build relationships with communities. In order to do so, parents need to understand the school system and process. Schools need to be proactive and ask parents what they need and want and how they can help.

What will help schools in your community improve in this area?

- School staff may need cultural competency training.
- Cultural expectations in educational standards.
- MDE should identify best practices and share resources with districts.

School Improvement

What does school improvement look like to you? What you would want to see to know a school is improving?

- Community and staff are engaged in school improvement.
- School is a positive and inviting place; there is a sense of fairness.
- Improvement plans should fit the building and its needs.
- Schools aren't really improving until they address cultural sensitivity and equity.

How can the state best support districts so they build capacity to support their schools?

- Provide a variety of strategies and good data.
- Respect the child and child-centered teaching.
- Share ideas that work - help build positive relationships and emphasize commonalities.

What would be evidence of success in schools?

- Additional indicators: climate (attendance, participation, parent/teacher satisfaction).
- Equity indicators: disparities in discipline, placement of students in special education, integrated student bodies and diversity in school leadership.

What would be evidence of success in schools?

- Change narrative from highlighting failure to highlighting success.
- Recognize community contribution to success of the school.

Minnesota Department of Education