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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

June 1, 2010

The Honorable Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

On behalf of the students, families, educators, and other citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I am writing to respectfully submit our Phase 2 application for the Race to the Top Fund.

Based on personal experience, I know that high-quality educational experiences can transform a person's life. As the governor of Massachusetts, I will do everything in my power to ensure that all students in our state have access to learning opportunities that inspire their imagination and creativity, promote achievement and excellence, and lead to lifelong success. I will also ensure that all students are taught by passionate and highly qualified educators who are committed to supporting students to their full potential, and that all schools and districts are led by exceptional leaders.

Massachusetts is well on its way to achieving these goals because we have a long-standing history of implementing bold and innovative reform strategies. In 1993, the enactment of the Education Reform Act established the foundation for standards-based reform in our state. One of my first initiatives as governor was to launch the Commonwealth Readiness Project, and I worked with education, business, and community leaders to develop an ambitious and long-term agenda for reducing persistent achievement gaps, enhancing the quality of our educator

workforce, increasing college and career readiness, and unleashing innovation and systemic change throughout the public education system.

I also established the Executive Office of Education and appointed a Secretary of Education to implement statewide policies and develop a truly seamless education system from birth through higher education. Most recently, in January 2010, I signed a groundbreaking education bill, *An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap*, that includes powerful strategies to intervene in our lowest-performing schools; establish new Innovation Schools, in-district schools that operate with increased autonomy and flexibility while keeping school funding within districts; and lift charter caps in our lowest-performing districts.

As a result of these efforts and the hard work and dedication of our educators, we are consistently recognized for our leadership with regard to student achievement as demonstrated by our students' performance on both national and international assessments. We are also recognized as having the most rigorous standards and assessments in the country, and have significantly contributed to the development of the Common Core Standards.

We have accomplished this work by adhering to several core principles: steadfast commitment to high standards and expectations; collaboration with educators and unions to implement reform with – not to – the field; learning from the past to inform the work of the future; and collaboration with an impressive network of education, community, business, and civic partners to build ownership and capacity to sustain our reform efforts over time. These principles, coupled with a stronger legislative framework for bold reform efforts and a more coherent public education system, are guiding the next phase of education reform in Massachusetts.

Our Race to the Top proposal is the roadmap for this second phase of reform, and reflects challenges that we must still address. We have unacceptable achievement and attainment gaps that disproportionately affect lower-income students, students of color, and students with disabilities. Some of our educators do not have access to professional development opportunities that they need to continually improve instruction,

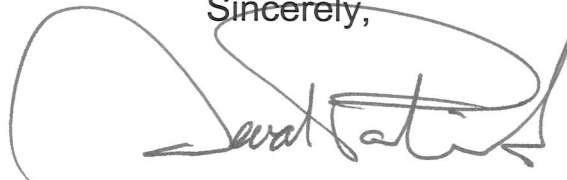
and we do not have a sufficient number of highly skilled educators who can teach English language learners and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses.

We will address these issues by implementing initiatives that address the following priorities: 1) developing an effective, academically capable, diverse, and culturally competent educator workforce; 2) providing curricular and instructional resources that support educator effectiveness and student achievement; 3) targeting instructional and other resources to students, their families, and educators in our lowest performing schools; and 4) increasing college and career readiness for all students. These priorities are directly aligned with my long-term agenda for education reform in Massachusetts, and implementation of our comprehensive array of strategies will enable us to finish the work that we started nearly twenty years ago.

Massachusetts is able and ready to achieve the goals of the Race to the Top Fund and the Obama administration. We have a demonstrated record of success and a long-standing history of productive collaboration with educators, teachers' unions, and business and community partners. We have an outstanding leadership team and have built capacity at different levels to ensure that we will sustain our initiatives over time. We also have renewed commitment to doing what is right so that each and every one of our students – no matter his/her ZIP code, age, or socioeconomic status – has the opportunity to excel.

I appreciate your leadership, and look forward to continuing our strong partnership to achieve common goals. Thank you in advance for your consideration of our proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arne Duncan", written over a large, stylized, looping flourish that extends to the left and right.

Background

Since Horace Mann launched the vision of a free school system for all, Massachusetts has led the nation as a pioneer in public education. We have worked tirelessly to build a system of high expectations, rigorous curricula, challenging assessments, and meaningful accountability that allows our teachers to shine and our students to compete with their peers around the world.

In 1993 Massachusetts embarked on an ambitious course for change with the enactment of the Education Reform Act, which initiated standards-based reform in our state. This legislation established the key elements undergirding education reform in Massachusetts: a set of curriculum frameworks that set standards in all core curriculum areas, a rigorous system for assessing student progress toward meeting those standards, and a foundation budget that ensures each district has sufficient resources available to support this work.

The results are evident. Massachusetts students used to perform at the middle of the pack, but now they rank first among their national peers on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading and mathematics assessments, and high against their international peers on the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). We achieved these noteworthy results by setting ambitious standards, administering rigorous assessments, and holding districts and schools accountable for the results; providing more than \$21 billion in new state education funding since 1993; and distributing it more equitably, to ensure that the poorest school districts receive relatively more funding.

But while we remain proud of the achievements our students have made, persistent and unacceptable achievement gaps among our English language learners, minority, special education and low income students illustrate that the job that began with the passage of the Education Reform Act remains unfinished. Too many of our students still do not receive a world-class education, and too many of our educators still do not receive the support they need to help every student excel.

The next chapter of reform

These are the challenges that drive our second phase of reform, which was launched in 2008 with the development of Governor Patrick's Education Action Agenda. This robust and comprehensive blueprint for education reform was the final product of the Commonwealth Readiness Project, a nine-month effort by a diverse group of education, business, and civic leaders charged with assessing the public education system in Massachusetts. They created goals to individualize learning, develop and retain effective teachers, increase college and career readiness, and unleash innovation and systemic change throughout the public education system. These goals and the specific recommendations included in the Education Action Agenda are the foundation for Massachusetts's Race to the Top proposal.

The initiatives in our application are driven by our core belief that the persistent variation in student outcomes stems from both discrepancies in the quality of curriculum and instruction, and unrelated out-of-school circumstances that can affect a student's ability to learn. Each element in our proposal is designed to reduce this variation by focusing on improving the quality of teaching and learning each student receives and on providing students and families with the health and human service supports they require. Overall, we aim to achieve four objectives:

1. Attract, develop, and retain an effective, academically capable, diverse, and culturally competent educator workforce to ensure every student is taught by a great teacher and every school and district is led by a great leader

2. Provide curricular and instructional resources to provide every educator with the tools necessary to promote and support student achievement
3. Concentrate great instruction and supports for educators, students, and families in our lowest performing schools to create the conditions needed for improved student achievement
4. Increase dramatically the number of students who graduate from high school ready for college and career

These objectives have garnered widespread support: 276 LEAs signed on to Massachusetts' Race to the Top proposal (70 percent of the 393 LEAs eligible to sign). These LEAs represent 1,375 schools, 74 percent of K–12 public school enrollment, and 88 percent of students in poverty.

Our initiatives

1. **Attract, develop, and retain an effective, academically capable, diverse and culturally proficient educator workforce to ensure every student is taught by a great teacher and every school and district is led by a great leader**

By employing student performance as the key barometer of impact and progress, we will transform the entire career continuum for both teachers and principals. Reaching this goal will require identifying and rewarding practices that work, changing and, when necessary, eliminating practices that do not, and connecting consistent, high quality feedback on performance to professional supports and opportunities for continual improvement and advancement. To that end, we will:

- **Develop a new statewide framework for teacher and principal evaluation and provide educators, schools, and districts with the tools, resources, and support needed to successfully implement more robust evaluation strategies.** Massachusetts will work with a task force of stakeholders to develop a new statewide framework for teacher and principal evaluation in which student performance will be a significant factor. Our existing student growth model, along with pre- and post-assessments in non-MCAS subjects and grades, will be a cornerstone of evaluation protocols to be implemented statewide over the next four years. We will provide training and support to ensure that teachers understand the new evaluation framework, and to ensure that administrators, principals, and other evaluators have the tools and supports they need to conduct comprehensive annual evaluations, provide meaningful feedback to both teachers and principals, and use evaluation results to inform critical personnel decisions.
- **Ensure students in high poverty and high minority schools have equitable access to highly effective educators, and expand the pool and pipeline of effective educators in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas.** We will employ a variety of monetary and non-monetary incentives to increase the number of effective educators in the state and deploy them in high need schools and hard-to-staff subjects. These will include recruitment incentives, improvements to school climate and conditions, and expansion grants for effective preparation programs. We will make preparation programs and training opportunities easier to access and more affordable to encourage seasoned educators to obtain additional licenses in high need areas, such as special education and English language development.

2. **Provide curricular and instructional resources to provide every educator with the tools necessary to promote and support student achievement.**

Our experience over the last 17 years has shown that establishing standards and assessments without providing the appropriate training and support is not good enough. Few schools or districts have the capacity to develop curriculum resources or instructional approaches to sufficiently meet the learning

needs of every student. To help all students succeed, we must provide more assistance to fill the gap between standards and assessments. To do this, we will:

- **Build a statewide teaching and learning system aligned with the Common Core Standards.**

Massachusetts will establish a comprehensive system that will include:

- More than 100 coherent, engaging, and rigorous curriculum maps and units in English language arts, mathematics, science and technology/engineering, history and social science, English language development, and vocational areas;
- Curriculum-embedded performance tasks aligned with standards;
- A digital library of curriculum resources developed by educators and external partners;
- A test builder engine to deliver interim and formative assessments statewide and return student results to educators within 24 to 72 hours; and
- 24-hour access to student achievement and growth data and associated reports for all 80,000 educators statewide.

3. Concentrate great instruction and additional supports for educators, students, and families in our lowest performing schools and their districts to create the conditions needed for improved student achievement.

To close the achievement gap and dramatically improve dropout and graduation rates, we must transform our lowest performing schools. Over the past several years Massachusetts has developed powerful frameworks and mechanisms for doing this work, and with the passage of An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap, the state has access to new rules, tools and supports to accelerate the implementation of turnaround strategies and decisively address the conditions that contribute to underperformance. We plan to use RTTT funds to enhance this work through investments to achieve the following goals:

- **Develop a specialized corps of educators prepared to tackle the challenges of the lowest performing schools.** Great principals and teachers are critical to rapidly improving low achieving schools. The state will work with LEAs to accelerate the flow of highly effective educators into these schools through incentives for principals and teachers; training, mentoring, and support; and a statewide marketing campaign. At the end of four years, Massachusetts will have a well developed and highly skilled pipeline of principals and teachers whose specialties and preparation will have enabled them to contribute substantially to school turnaround efforts across the state.
- **Build district and state capacity to prevent low achievement and sustain progress.** The success of all four school intervention models developed by the U.S. Department of Education depends on strengthening district systems of support. We will focus first on strengthening four systems critical to districts' ability to intervene effectively in struggling schools: effective governance and leadership; integrated human resource management and development systems; enhanced community support for students' social, emotional, and health needs; and improved dropout prevention and recovery. We will also identify and scale partners with expertise in supporting three interconnected conditions for school effectiveness: social-emotional supports that ensure students enter the classroom ready to learn, an expanded school day and/or year, and effective use of data to support tailored instruction.

4. Increase dramatically the number of students who graduate from high school ready for college and career.

Despite our students' strong academic performance overall, we continue to graduate too many students, especially low income and minority students, who are not adequately prepared for college and careers. We will dramatically increase college and career readiness by strengthening curriculum and instruction in low income, high minority schools, and improving alignment between high school and college.

- **Expose more students to rigorous curricula and college-level work, particularly in STEM fields.** Early exposure to rigorous curricula and college-level work is a proven strategy for increasing college and career readiness, particularly for low income and minority students. We intend to pursue this strategy through pre-AP training for teachers of middle and high school English language arts, mathematics, and science in schools that serve these students and through the establishment of STEM-focused Early College High Schools.
- **Align high school curricula with college entrance requirements.** We will make MassCore, our current recommended high school curriculum for college and career readiness, into the default curriculum: required for high school graduation unless students and parents agree to an alternate program of studies. We will also align MassCore with the public college entrance requirements so that students who successfully complete MassCore will also have met the Massachusetts public four-year college entrance requirements.

Achieving our four ambitious objectives hinges on the development of a robust state data and information infrastructure. Through RTTT we will transform our data systems so that they can efficiently deliver comprehensive, accessible, actionable, and timely data to all Massachusetts K–12 educators; invest in new technology to support the PreK–12 teaching and learning system and a more effective educator workforce; and strengthen and expand training and supports so that educators can use data to inform instructional decisions.

Budget

Massachusetts’ proposed RTTT budget totals \$250 million. Half will be distributed directly to participating LEAs using the Title I formula so they can access resources and services made available through the initiatives identified above. Half will support the state-level work needed to launch and evaluate these initiatives, ultimately benefiting all participating LEAs. The state half includes \$23 million in supplemental funding for participating LEAs to help them implement several of the most critical initiatives.

We’re ready

After the four years of Race to the Top, Massachusetts will have undergone a remarkable transformation. Every student will experience college- and career-ready standards and curricula, and every educator will have access to online curriculum, instruction, assessment, and data tools to support their students’ individual needs. Every educator will receive an annual evaluation that highlights their contribution to student performance and identifies strengths and areas for improvement in helping students grow, and every evaluator will be prepared to give high quality feedback on teacher and principal performance. We will have built a cadre of turnaround teachers and leaders prepared to take on the challenges of our lowest performing schools, and we will have strengthened districts’ capacity to improve their schools, close achievement gaps, and prevent low performance.

We know what we’ve done right, we know what we can do better, and we know the steps we need to take to get there. With or without Race to the Top funding Massachusetts is headed in this direction; RTTT resources will allow us to build the skills, expand the capacity, create the tools and harness the innovation we need to get there faster. We are committed to transforming ourselves into a state where every student’s needs are met, where every teacher and leader is well-trained and supported, and where every district has the tools, guidance, and direction necessary to continue to improve. Through the strategies detailed in this proposal, we expect to see our graduation rates rise, our achievement gaps shrink, and our performance continue to improve.

As Horace Mann once said, “Let us not be content to wait and see what will happen, but give us the determination to make the right things happen.” We are certain that he wouldn’t want the nearly one million children in the Massachusetts public schools to wait any longer.



Massachusetts Department of
**ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION**

**Race to the Top Phase 2
Application for Initial Funding**

Massachusetts

Submitted by:

Governor Deval Patrick

Commissioner Mitchell D. Chester

Maura Banta, Chair

Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

CFDA Number: 84.395A

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

Legal Name of Applicant (Office of the Governor): Office of the Governor Commonwealth of Massachusetts	Applicant's Mailing Address: Massachusetts State House Room 280 Boston, MA 02133
Employer Identification Number: 04-6002284	Organizational DUNS: 799538178
State Race to the Top Contact Name: (Single point of contact for communication) Carrie Conaway	Contact Position and Office: Director of Planning, Research, and Evaluation MA Dept of Elementary & Secondary Education
Contact Telephone: 781-338-3108	Contact E-mail Address: cconaway@doe.mass.edu
<p>Required Applicant Signatures:</p> <p>To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct.</p> <p>I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation:</p>	
Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): Governor Deval Patrick	Telephone: 617-725-4005
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor: [signature]	Date: 5/28/10
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Commissioner Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.	Telephone: 781-338-3100
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: [signature]	Date: 5/28/10
President of the State Board of Education (Printed Name): Maura Banta, Chair, Board of Elementary and Secondary Education	Telephone: 617-513-3392
Signature of the President of the State Board of Education: [signature]	Date: 5/28/10

State Attorney General Certification

I certify that the State’s description of, and statements and conclusions concerning, State law, statute, and regulation in its application are complete, accurate, and constitute a reasonable interpretation of State law, statute, and regulation.

(See especially Eligibility Requirement (b), Selection Criteria (B)(1), (D)(1), (E)(1), (F)(2), (F)(3).)

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

State Attorney General or Authorized Representative (Printed Name):
Rhoda E. Schneider, General Counsel, Massachusetts Department of
Elementary and Secondary Education

Telephone:
781-338-3400

Signature of the State Attorney General or Authorized Representative:

[signature]

Date:
5/28/10

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

Accountability, Transparency and Reporting Assurances

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

- For each year of the program, the State will submit a report to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require, that describes:
 - the uses of funds within the State;
 - how the State distributed the funds it received;
 - the number of jobs that the Governor estimates were saved or created with the funds;
 - the State's progress in reducing inequities in the distribution of highly qualified teachers, implementing a State longitudinal data system, and developing and implementing valid and reliable assessments for limited English proficient students and students with disabilities; and
 - if applicable, a description of each modernization, renovation, or repair project approved in the State application and funded, including the amounts awarded and project costs (ARRA Division A, Section 14008)
- The State will cooperate with any U.S. Comptroller General evaluation of the uses of funds and the impact of funding on the progress made toward closing achievement gaps (ARRA Division A, Section 14009)
- If the State uses funds for any infrastructure investment, the State will certify that the investment received the full review and vetting required by law and that the chief executive accepts responsibility that the investment is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds. This certification will include a description of the investment, the estimated total cost, and the amount of covered funds to be used. The certification will be posted on the State's website and linked to www.Recovery.gov. A State or local agency may not use funds under the ARRA for infrastructure investment funding unless this certification is made and posted. (ARRA Division A, Section 1511)
- The State will submit reports, within 10 days after the end of each calendar quarter, that contain the information required under section 1512(c) of the ARRA in accordance with any guidance issued by the Office of Management and Budget or the Department. (ARRA Division A, Section 1512(c))
- The State will cooperate with any appropriate Federal Inspector General's examination of records under the program. (ARRA Division A, Section 1515)

Other Assurances and Certifications

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

- The State will comply with all applicable assurances in OMB Standard Forms 424B (Assurances for Non-Construction Programs) and to the extent consistent with the State's application, OMB Standard Form 424D (Assurances for Construction Programs), including the assurances relating to the legal authority to apply for assistance; access to records; conflict of interest; merit systems; nondiscrimination; Hatch Act provisions; labor standards; flood hazards; historic preservation; protection of human subjects; animal welfare; lead-based paint; Single Audit Act; and the general agreement to comply with all applicable Federal laws, executive orders and regulations.
- With respect to the certification regarding lobbying in Department Form 80-0013, no Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making or renewal of Federal grants under this program; the State will complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," when required (34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix B); and the State will require the full certification, as set forth in 34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix A, in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers.
- The State will comply with all of the operational and administrative provisions in Title XV and XIV of the ARRA, including Buy American Requirements (ARRA Division A, Section 1605), Wage Rate Requirements (section 1606), and any applicable environmental impact requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 (NEPA), as amended, (42 U.S.C. 4371 et seq.) (ARRA Division A, Section 1609). In using ARRA funds for infrastructure investment, recipients will comply with the requirement regarding Preferences for Quick Start Activities (ARRA Division A, Section 1602).
- Any local educational agency (LEA) receiving funding under this program will have on file with the State a set of assurances that meets the requirements of section 442 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232e).
- Any LEA receiving funding under this program will have on file with the State (through either its Stabilization Fiscal Stabilization Fund application or another U.S. Department of Education Federal grant) a description of how the LEA will comply with the requirements of section 427 of GEPA (20 U.S.C. 1228a). The description must include information on the steps the LEA proposes to take to permit students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers (including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age) that impede access to, or participation in, the program.
- The State and other entities will comply with the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), including the following provisions as applicable: 34 CFR Part 74—Administration of Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations; 34 CFR Part 75—Direct Grant Programs; 34 CFR Part 77—Definitions that Apply to Department Regulations; 34 CFR Part

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

SIGNATURE BLOCK FOR CERTIFYING OFFICIAL

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): Governor Deval Patrick	
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor: [signature]	Date: 5/28/10

V. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A State must meet the following requirements in order to be eligible to receive funds under this program.

Eligibility Requirement (a)

The State's applications for funding under Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund program must be approved by the Department prior to the State being awarded a Race to the Top grant.

The Department will determine eligibility under this requirement before making a grant award.

Eligibility Requirement (b)

At the time the State submits its application, there are no legal, statutory, or regulatory barriers at the State level to linking data on student achievement (as defined in this notice) or student growth (as defined in this notice) to teachers and principals for the purpose of teacher and principal evaluation.

The certification of the Attorney General addresses this requirement. The applicant may provide explanatory information, if necessary. The Department will determine eligibility under this requirement.

Massachusetts certifies that it does not have any legal, statutory, or regulatory barriers at the state level to linking data on student achievement or student growth to teachers and principals for the purpose of teacher and principal evaluation. Furthermore, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's regulations on evaluation of teachers and administrators include this provision, at 603 CMR 35.04(3) (emphasis added): *School committees are encouraged to establish programs and standards which provide for a rigorous and comprehensive evaluation process for teachers and administrators. **The evaluation process may include consideration of the extent to which students assigned to teachers and administrators satisfy student academic standards or individual education plans, and the successful implementation of professional development plans, as provided in M.G.L. c.69, §1B and c.71, §38.***

The language in bold mirrors the following provision in G.L. c. 71, s. 38, referring to arbitration of teacher performance standards (emphasis added): *In reaching a decision, the arbitrator shall seek to advance the goals of encouraging innovation in teaching and of **holding teachers accountable for improving student performance.***

I. SELECTION CRITERIA: PROGRESS AND PLANS IN THE FOUR EDUCATION REFORM AREAS

(A) State Success Factors (125 total points)

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

The extent to which—

- (i) The State has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that clearly articulates its goals for implementing reforms in the four education areas described in the ARRA and improving student outcomes statewide, establishes a clear and credible path to achieving these goals, and is consistent with the specific reform plans that the State has proposed throughout its application; (5 points)
- (ii) The participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) are strongly committed to the State's plans and to effective implementation of reform in the four education areas, as evidenced by Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) (as set forth in Appendix D) or other binding agreements between the State and its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) that include— (45 points)
 - (a) Terms and conditions that reflect strong commitment by the participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to the State's plans;
 - (b) Scope-of-work descriptions that require participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plans; and
 - (c) Signatures from as many as possible of the LEA superintendent (or equivalent), the president of the local school board (or equivalent, if applicable), and the local teachers' union leader (if applicable) (one signature of which must be from an authorized LEA representative) demonstrating the extent of leadership support within participating LEAs (as defined in this notice); and
- (iii) The LEAs that are participating in the State's Race to the Top plans (including considerations of the numbers and percentages of participating LEAs, schools, K–12 students, and students in poverty) will translate into broad statewide impact, allowing the State to reach its ambitious yet achievable goals, overall and by student subgroup, for—(15 points)
 - (a) Increasing student achievement in (at a minimum) reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;
 - (b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the

assessments required under the ESEA;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recommended maximum response length: Ten pages (excluding tables)

Note: Please see the general appendices for a letter certifying ESE's general counsel as the designee of the Attorney General; a glossary of Massachusetts education terminology; and a comprehensive list of works cited.

(A)(1)(i)

Since Horace Mann launched the vision of a free school system for all, Massachusetts has led the nation as a pioneer in public education. We have worked tirelessly to build a system of high expectations, rigorous curricula, challenging assessments, and meaningful accountability that allows our teachers to shine and our students to compete with their peers around the world.

Today, we stand ready to accelerate our efforts and launch into the next phase of education reform. Our administration, legislature, educators, community leaders, parents, and a wide-reaching set of stakeholders have committed to doing whatever it takes to provide every student in the Commonwealth with the tools, supports, technology and innovation necessary to ensure that each graduate is prepared to succeed in college, careers, and life in the 21st century.

We are already a national leader in student achievement, and Race to the Top funding will give us the resources we need to build on our accomplishments, accelerate ongoing improvement efforts and target new strategies for reform where the greatest needs and performance gaps still exist.

We will know that our work is complete when every student can say with confidence:

“I am challenged and engaged in school, and I see how what I’m learning connects with the real world. I know what I’m good at, I know what I need to work on, and I know where to go for support. I am on track to go to college, get a job that I’m great at, and keep learning.”

And every teacher can say:

“I know how to reach, motivate, support, and engage every student in my classroom. I receive honest, useful feedback from my peers and principal, recognition when I succeed, and support when I do not. All of my students have the ability to go college, and I know that it’s my job to prepare them so they have that choice.”

We have the momentum we need in Massachusetts to achieve this vision for every student and teacher, and a longstanding history of valuable and productive collaboration among education, community, government, and business stakeholders. Over the past several years we have reignited the commitment of these stakeholders to finish the important work we began together nearly two decades ago with the landmark Education Reform Act of 1993. Race to the Top funding will provide us with resources to get there quickly.

Over the next four years we will rebuild our public education system to achieve this vision for every student and teacher through four interconnected objectives designed to fundamentally transform teaching and learning in every classroom across the state, diminish—and ultimately, eliminate—the achievement gap, and ensure all students graduate ready for lifelong success:

- 1) Attract, develop, and retain an effective, academically capable, diverse and culturally proficient educator workforce to ensure every student is taught by a great teacher and every school and district is led by a great leader;
- 2) Provide curricular and instructional resources to provide every educator with the tools necessary to promote and support student achievement;
- 3) Concentrate great instruction and supports for educators, students, and families in our lowest performing schools and districts to create the conditions needed for improved student achievement; and
- 4) Increase dramatically the number of students who graduate from high school ready for college and career.

Massachusetts embarked on an ambitious course for change with the enactment of the 1993 legislation, which initiated standards-based reform in our state. This legislation established the key elements undergirding education reform in Massachusetts: a set of curriculum frameworks that set standards in all core curriculum areas, a rigorous system for assessing student progress toward meeting those standards, and a foundation budget that ensures each district has sufficient resources available to support this work.

The results are evident. Massachusetts students used to perform at the middle of the pack, but now they rank first among their national peers on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading and mathematics assessments, and high against their international peers on the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). We achieved these noteworthy

results by setting ambitious standards, administering rigorous assessments, and holding districts and schools accountable for the results; providing more than \$21 billion in new state education funding since 1993; and distributing it more equitably, to ensure that the poorest school districts receive relatively more funding.

Most importantly, we have stayed the course, withstanding enormous pressure to lower our standards and postpone or eliminate the implementation of graduation exit exam requirements. Through it all we remained steadfast in our belief that when held to high standards and given the tools to succeed, our students could achieve the goals we set for them—and they did.

But while we remain proud of the achievements our students have made, persistent and unacceptable achievement gaps among our English language learners, minority, special education and low income students illustrate that the job that began with the passage of the Education Reform Act remains unfinished. On the 2009 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests, across all grades, only 33% of African American students scored *Proficient* or *Advanced* in mathematics, as compared to 64% of white students. Only 58% of Hispanic and 68% of African American students graduate from high school in 4 years, versus 87% of white students. Among students entering high school as ninth graders, an average of 10% drop out during high school, including 20% of low income students and 25% of English language learners. And more than one-third of public high school graduates entering Massachusetts public colleges are required to take at least one remedial course in their first semester (DOE 2008). Clearly, too many of our students still do not receive a world-class education, and too many of our educators still do not receive the support they need to help every student excel.

These are the challenges that drive our second phase of reform, which was launched in 2008 with the development of Governor Patrick's Education Action Agenda. This robust and comprehensive blueprint for education reform was the final product of the Commonwealth Readiness Project, a nine-month effort by a diverse group of education, business, and civic leaders charged with assessing the public education system in Massachusetts. They created goals to individualize learning, develop and retain effective teachers, increase college and career readiness, and unleash innovation and systemic change throughout the public education system

(see Appendix A1). These goals and the specific recommendations included in the Education Action Agenda are the foundation for Massachusetts's Race to the Top proposal.

The initiatives in our application are driven by our core belief that the persistent variation in student outcomes stems from both discrepancies in the quality of curriculum and instruction, and unrelated out-of-school circumstances that can affect a student's ability to learn. Each element in our proposal is designed to reduce this variation by focusing on improving the quality of teaching and learning each student receives and on providing students and families with the health and human service supports they require.

The teaching and learning initiatives constitute a coherent set of human resource policies and strategies that provide teachers and principals with honest, robust feedback based in large measure on student performance, along with rich opportunities to implement effective practices and strategies in order to continuously improve outcomes for students. These initiatives link efforts to prepare, recruit, retain, evaluate, develop, reward, promote, and when necessary, dismiss ineffective teachers and principals with efforts to connect the educator workforce with curricular resources and instructional models that work. Both our human resources and curriculum and instruction initiatives place particular focus on areas where Massachusetts districts are collectively challenged, and where the state has a comparative advantage, including recruiting and training educators to work with English language learners and disabled students; recruiting and training educators to teach STEM subjects; and differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students. We have set our target at college and career readiness for all students and will develop new data systems that will provide the data we need to ensure that all students will be provided with high quality academic programs.

The student and family support initiatives reflect a commitment to extending school turnaround initiatives beyond academic concerns by incorporating health and human service resources. It is no accident that 80% of the students enrolled in the 35 schools that the Commonwealth identified in March as underperforming are from families that qualify for free or reduced lunch. Our Race to the Top application builds on Massachusetts statute that requires state agencies responsible for health and human services to participate in the development of turnaround plans for underperforming schools and to participate in the implementation of the plans. Initiatives in our proposal include funding for wraparound initiatives that will pilot comprehensive approaches to involving governmental and non-

governmental community health and human service agencies in school turnarounds in seven low income neighborhoods. We have also included supports and training for guidance counselors so they can better assist students in making smart choices to prepare themselves for life after high school.

Massachusetts is well positioned to move forward on the reforms identified in this proposal. In 2008, incoming Commissioner Mitchell Chester worked with the state's Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to identify four priorities that would guide the Commonwealth's work: effective educator policies; improvement of curriculum and instruction; integration of accountability and assistance efforts; and intentional incorporation of student and family supports. These priorities, which align well with the four Race to the Top assurances, prompted the reallocation of resources and the reorganization of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Commonwealth's commitment to these four priorities bodes well for our capacity to implement this proposal.

Our next step was to pass groundbreaking education legislation. In January 2010, the legislature passed An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap, which established the legal framework for providing targeted support to students most in need of assistance and increasing access to high quality schools across Massachusetts. The new legislation lifts charter school caps in the state's 30 lowest performing districts—those that previously were closest to reaching their charter enrollment cap. It provides substantial new authority for districts and the state to intervene more rapidly and forcefully in the lowest performing schools, with powers to reallocate budgets, revise district policies and practices, alter collective bargaining agreements, require all staff to reapply for their positions, and dismiss teachers with professional teacher status (tenure) under a “good cause” rather than a higher “just cause” standard. Finally, the law enables a wide range of entities, including teachers, school or district leaders and parents, to create Innovation Schools, in-district public schools that retain school funding within the district, but can operate with increased autonomy in the areas of curriculum, budget, school schedule and calendar, staffing (including waivers or modifications to collective bargaining agreements), professional development, and school district policies. In exchange for this increased flexibility, Innovation Schools will be held responsible for meeting annual student and school performance benchmarks. With this new law in place, we are well positioned to take on the challenge of reforming Massachusetts education policy to meet the needs of the 21st century.

Entering this next phase of education reform has also required us to re-envision and restructure relationships within the education sector to promote greater continuity for students and educators. The Patrick administration led this effort two years ago by establishing the Executive Office of Education (EOE) and appointing a Secretary of Education who is responsible for developing a seamless, high quality, comprehensive education system from birth through higher education. EOE works with the Departments of Early Education and Care, Elementary and Secondary Education, and Higher Education, as well as the University of Massachusetts. During its first year of operation, the EOE built the architecture for an integrated P–16 education system, oversaw the appointment of an exceptional team of new leaders for the state’s education departments, and helped them launch coherent policy agendas. EOE has also created a Child and Youth Readiness Cabinet co-chaired by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to build partnerships among all Massachusetts public agencies that serve children and established six regional Readiness Centers to serve as hubs for collaboration among local, regional, and state education stakeholders and to deliver professional development and instructional services.

It is with this network of partners and continued support from the administration and legislature that we have joined forces and worked closely with education stakeholders from across the Commonwealth to develop our Race to the Top objectives, which aim to:

Attract, develop, and retain an effective, academically capable, diverse and culturally proficient educator workforce to ensure every student is taught by a great teacher and every school and district is led by a great leader

Massachusetts has already implemented multiple strategies to improve the educator workforce. We have strengthened the standards for teachers seeking special education or elementary certification, adopted new performance standards for administrators, supported alternate routes to certification, and incubated innovative models of educator preparation. A pillar of our RTTT plan is to enhance these strategies and implement new ones to develop an effective, academically capable, diverse, and culturally proficient workforce. By employing student performance as the key barometer of impact and progress, we will transform the entire career continuum for both teachers and principals. Reaching this goal will require identifying and rewarding practices that work, changing and (when

necessary) eliminating practices that do not, and connecting consistent, high quality feedback on performance to professional supports and opportunities for continual improvement and advancement. To that end, we will implement two primary initiatives:

- **Develop a new statewide framework for teacher and principal evaluation and provide educators, schools, and districts with the tools, resources, and support needed to successfully implement more robust evaluation strategies.**

Massachusetts will develop a new statewide framework for teacher and principal evaluation in which student performance will be a significant factor. We have already implemented a student growth model that provides reliable measures of student learning growth in English language arts and mathematics. This measure, along with pre- and post-assessments in non-MCAS subjects and grades, will be a cornerstone of evaluation protocols to be implemented statewide over the next four years. We will provide training and support to ensure that teachers understand the new evaluation framework, and that administrators, principals, and other evaluators have the tools and supports they need to conduct comprehensive annual evaluations, provide meaningful feedback to both teachers and principals, and use evaluation results to inform critical personnel decisions.

- **Ensure students in high poverty and high minority schools have equitable access to highly effective educators, and expand the pool and pipeline of effective educators in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas.** We will employ a variety of monetary and non-monetary incentives to increase the number of effective educators in the state and deploy them in high need schools and hard-to-staff subjects. These will include recruitment incentives, improvements to school climate and conditions, and expansion grants for effective preparation programs. We will make preparation programs and training opportunities easier to access and more affordable to encourage seasoned educators to obtain additional licenses in high need areas, such as special education and English language development.

Provide curricular and instructional resources to provide every educator with the tools necessary to promote and support student achievement.

Our standards-based education reform strategy has until now involved developing high quality state curriculum frameworks, standards, and associated assessments, and leaving it to districts to determine how best to implement them in schools. Our experience over the last 17 years, however, has shown that simply establishing standards and assessments without providing the appropriate training and support is not good enough. Few schools or districts have the capacity to develop curriculum resources or instructional approaches to sufficiently meet the learning needs of every student. To help all students succeed, we must provide more assistance to fill the gap between standards and assessments. To do this, we will:

- **Build a statewide teaching and learning system aligned with the Common Core Standards.** Massachusetts will establish a comprehensive system that will include:
 - More than 100 coherent, engaging, and rigorous curriculum maps and units in English language arts, mathematics, science and technology/engineering, history and social science, English language development, and vocational areas;
 - Curriculum-embedded performance tasks aligned with standards;
 - A digital library of curriculum resources developed by external partners and Massachusetts educators;
 - A test builder engine to deliver interim and formative assessments statewide and return student results to educators within 24 to 72 hours; and
 - 24-hour access to student achievement and growth data and associated reports for all 80,000 educators statewide.

Concentrate great instruction and additional supports for educators, students, and families in our lowest performing schools and their districts to create the conditions needed for improved student achievement.

To close the achievement gap and dramatically improve dropout and graduation rates, we must transform our lowest performing schools. Over the past several years Massachusetts has developed powerful frameworks and mechanisms for doing this work, and with

the passage of An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap, the state has access to new rules, tools and supports to accelerate the implementation of research-based turnaround strategies and decisively address the conditions that contribute to chronic underperformance. We plan to use RTTT funds to enhance this work through investments to achieve the following goals:

- **Develop a specialized corps of educators prepared to tackle the challenges of the lowest performing schools.** Great principals and teachers are critical to rapidly improving low achieving schools. The state will work with LEAs to accelerate the flow of highly effective educators into these schools through a statewide marketing campaign; incentives for principals and teachers; and training, mentoring, and support. At the end of four years, Massachusetts will have a well developed pipeline that will have produced at least 45 principals and 450 teachers whose specialized skills and preparation have enabled them to contribute substantially to school turnaround efforts across the state.
- **Build district and state capacity to prevent low achievement and sustain progress.** The success of all four school intervention models developed by the U.S. Department of Education depends on strengthening district systems of support. We will focus first on strengthening four systems critical to districts' ability to intervene effectively in struggling schools: effective governance and leadership; integrated human resource management and development systems; enhanced community support for students' social, emotional, and health needs; and improved dropout prevention and recovery. We will also identify and scale partners with expertise in supporting three interconnected conditions for school effectiveness that experience has shown are critical to catalyzing rapid improvement of low performing schools: social-emotional supports that ensure students enter the classroom ready to learn, an expanded school day and/or year, and effective use of data to support tailored instruction.

Increase dramatically the number of students who graduate from high school ready for college and career.

Despite our students' overall strong performance, we continue to have too many students, especially low income and minority students, who are not ready for college and careers when they graduate from high school. We will dramatically increase college and

career readiness by strengthening curriculum and instruction in low income, high minority schools, and improving alignment between high school and college.

- **Expose more students to rigorous curricula and college-level work, particularly in STEM fields.** Early exposure to rigorous curricula and college-level work is a proven strategy for increasing college and career readiness, particularly for low income and minority students. We intend to pursue this strategy through pre-AP training for teachers of middle and high school English language arts, mathematics, and science in schools that serve these students and through the establishment of STEM-focused Early College High Schools.
- **Align high school curricula with college entrance requirements.** We will make MassCore, our current recommended high school curriculum for college and career readiness, into the default curriculum: required for high school graduation unless students and parents agree to an alternate program of studies. We will also align MassCore with the public college entrance requirements so that students who successfully complete MassCore will also have met the Massachusetts public four-year college entrance requirements.

Finally, achieving our four ambitious objectives hinges on the development of a robust state data and information infrastructure. Through RTTT we will transform our data systems so that they can efficiently deliver comprehensive, accessible, actionable, and timely data to all Massachusetts K–12 educators; invest in new technology to support the PreK–12 teaching and learning system and a more effective educator workforce; and strengthen and expand training and supports so that educators can use data to inform instructional decisions.

Massachusetts has already embarked on the next generation of reform. In addition to Governor Patrick’s Education Action Agenda and Commissioner Chester’s restructuring of the state education agency, recent legislative and administrative efforts illustrate our commitment to continued reform. The first 35 turnaround schools were identified in March 2010. Turnaround plan development is underway, with an expedited process being utilized in Boston. In six of the 12 Boston turnaround schools, teachers had to reapply for

fall 2010 positions, and newly assigned principals had discretion over faculty selection. On May 25, 2010, the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education directed the Commissioner to convene a task force to develop recommendations to revise the teacher and administrator evaluation regulations in time for the Board to adopt new regulations governing teacher and administrator evaluations in spring 2011. The same day, the state Board adopted new regulations that implement the charter cap lift, thus opening the way for new charter applications in the lowest performing districts.

After the four years of Race to the Top, Massachusetts will have accomplished a remarkable transformation. Every student will experience college- and career-ready standards and curricula, and every educator will have access to online curriculum, instruction, assessment, and data tools to support their students' individual needs. Every educator will receive an annual evaluation that highlights their contribution to student performance and identifies strengths and areas for improvement in helping students grow, and every evaluator will be prepared to give high quality feedback on teacher and principal performance. We will have built a cadre of turnaround teachers and leaders prepared to take on the challenges of our lowest performing schools, and we will have strengthened districts' capacity to improve their schools and prevent low performance.

We have used the RTTT planning process to mobilize stakeholders to agree on and launch these new efforts; funding will enable us to accelerate this work and broaden its statewide impact. With our strong foundation and partnerships, history of successful implementation, and longstanding nonpartisan political commitment to education reform, Massachusetts has what it takes to create a public education system that will prepare all students for success.

(A)(1)(ii-iii)

Conversations that began with the Commonwealth Readiness Project in 2008 have gained renewed vigor as we talked with LEAs, unions, school committees, early education and higher education professionals, business leaders, community groups, and other stakeholders to develop our RTTT proposal. We have been energized by the statewide momentum to identify and develop powerful solutions together and to ensure successful implementation in every classroom, school and district. We realize the magnitude of the

work ahead, but we are confident that we have a solid platform and a clear design for how Massachusetts—with RTTT resources—can reach our goals.

By our side throughout this effort will be the vast majority of our schools and districts. A total of 332 of the state’s 393 LEAs have signed on to our Race to the Top initiatives, and of that group, we are counting 276 as participating.

For most LEAs we required signatures on our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from the LEA leader, school committee or board chair, and union leader (where applicable) in order to qualify as a participating LEA. The American Federation of Teachers—Massachusetts (AFT), the smaller of the two statewide associations of teachers’ unions, unfortunately opted not to support our proposal for Phase 2. In light of that decision, we allowed the 21 LEAs with unions represented by the AFT to participate with only the signatures of the superintendent and school committee chair. A total of 20 of the 21 AFT LEAs are participating. This includes 14 that were allowed to participate without the signature of their union president; the other 6 AFT LEAs retained their union leader’s support. (See Appendix A2 for our MOU.)

The Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA), which represents the vast majority of districts, not only supports the Commonwealth’s application but has explicitly endorsed the use of student growth as a significant factor (along with goals for improving teaching and student performance) in the teacher and principal evaluations that will be required of all districts. All MTA districts were required to submit MOUs with three signatures in order to participate, and 195 did so. We also received, but did not accept, MOUs from an additional 56 LEAs represented by the MTA that obtained only two of the three required signatures. Given the MTA’s continued support and commitment to this work, we are not counting those 56 as participating LEAs.

As a result, we will ultimately be joined in our work by a total of 276 participating LEAs (70.2% of the 393 LEAs eligible to sign). These LEAs represent the full range of districts and charter schools in Massachusetts. In all they cover 1,375 schools, 74% of K–12 student enrollment, and 88% of students in poverty statewide (see summary table for A1iii). Of the 276 participating LEAs, 159 are traditional school districts, 60 are charter schools, 36 are regional school districts, and 21 are vocational schools.

This level of participation represents a major step forward for Massachusetts. In a culture of strong local control and powerful teacher unions, we have secured broad statewide commitment to a common set of strategies for the next phase of education reform. With the participation of these LEAs, we are poised to make strong progress in reducing the achievement gap and to show statewide improvement in student achievement, high school graduation, and college enrollment. We expect that students who are currently furthest behind will make faster, more dramatic improvements and that gains will accelerate over the next six years as the benefits from the state's investments take off. Our goals for each measure, described below, are ambitious yet grounded in the state's historic ability to continuously improve statewide performance (see Appendix A3). They are:

- 1) Increase historic rates of gain in student performance on NAEP and MCAS (our ESEA assessment) by 15% between 2010 and 2014 and another 25% between 2014 and 2016. This will increase the share of students scoring in *Advanced* and *Proficient* and reduce the share scoring in *Warning* or *Failing* (*Below Basic* on NAEP).
- 2) Reduce achievement gaps in student performance on NAEP and MCAS by 25% between 2010 and 2014, and another 25% between 2014 and 2016.
- 3) Maintain our first-in-the-nation standing on all four NAEP assessments in 2010, 2012, and 2014.
- 4) Improve overall high school graduation and college enrollment rates by 5% between 2010 and 2014 and an additional 5% between 2014 and 2016.
- 5) Reduce achievement gaps in high school graduation, college enrollment, and college course completion rates by 15% between 2010 and 2014 and another 15% between 2014 and 2016.

If we attain these goals, by 2014, about 3,000 more students in the class of 2014 will graduate from high school, and 2,000 more will enroll in college. An additional 13% of students will score *Advanced* or *Proficient* on the mathematics MCAS, translating to 70% of students statewide. We will no longer have some of the largest achievement gaps on NAEP, and we will cut our MCAS achievement gap almost in half in just six years.

And we will accomplish all of this without compromising our standards.

RTTT will enable us to reach these goals quickly, but Massachusetts will pursue this agenda with or without RTTT funding. We will support our most critical investments, such as implementing the Common Core Standards; redesigning our accountability, assistance, and educator development systems; and improving our data systems through private or repurposed funding. These investments are part of the governor’s Education Action Agenda, and we have already established significant momentum among all stakeholders to succeed. But without funding, we will have to proceed more slowly and with less support for LEAs. Without RTTT funding, we anticipate that it could take four to six additional years to achieve our goals.

Summary table for (A)(1)(ii)(b)

Elements of State Reform Plans	Number of LEAs Participating (#)	Percentage of Total Participating LEAs (%)
B. Standards and Assessments		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high quality assessments	255	92%
C. Data Systems to Support Instruction		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction:		
(i) Use of local instructional improvement systems	276	100%
(ii) Professional development on use of data	276	100%
(iii) Availability and accessibility of data to researchers	276	100%
D. Great Teachers and Leaders		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance:		
(i) Measure student growth	276	100% (conditional)
(ii) Design and implement evaluation systems	276	100% (conditional)
(iii) Conduct annual evaluations	276	100% (conditional)
(iv)(a) Use evaluations to inform professional development	276	100% (conditional)
(iv)(b) Use evaluations to inform compensation, promotion and retention	276	100% (conditional)

Elements of State Reform Plans	Number of LEAs Participating (#)	Percentage of Total Participating LEAs (%)
(iv)(c) Use evaluations to inform tenure and/or full certification	276	100% (conditional)
(iv)(d) Use evaluations to inform removal	276	100% (conditional)
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals:		
(i) High poverty and/or high minority schools	276	100%
(ii) Hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	276	100%
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals:		
(i) Quality professional development	276	100%
(ii) Measure effectiveness of professional development	276	100%
E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	276	100%

Notes:

1. Massachusetts's MOU includes two optional initiatives in support of criteria B3: rolling out a statewide PreK–12 teaching and learning system and increasing college and career readiness. If an LEA committed to implement either or both of those initiatives, it earned credit for participation in criterion B3.
2. We have marked as conditional any district commitments to our MOU that, by state law, are subject to collective bargaining. These primarily include issues related to teacher evaluation and compensation. Conditional commitments do not apply to principals, whose work conditions are not subject to collective bargaining in Massachusetts. Although these commitments are conditional, when we pass new state regulations on educator evaluation, every participating district will be required to bargain the issue and to align their evaluation system with our state framework. The extent to which an LEA needs to negotiate over other issues depends on the local collective bargaining agreement and past practice in the LEA.

Summary table for (A)(1)(ii)(c)

	Number of Signatures Obtained	Number of Signatures Applicable	Percentage (%) (Obtained/Applicable)
LEA Superintendent (or equivalent)	276	276	100%
President of Local School Board (or equivalent, if applicable)	276	276	100%
Local Teachers' Union Leader (if applicable)	207	221	94%

Summary table for (A)(1)(iii)

	Participating LEAs (#)	Statewide (#)	Percentage of total statewide (%)
LEAs	276	393	70%
Schools	1,375	1,833	75%
K-12 students	686,137	931,391	74%
Students in Poverty	258,046	294,692	88%

Note: Two participating charter schools opened in fall 2009, and one will open in fall 2010. K–12 enrollment and students in poverty data are not available for these schools.

Detailed table available by request

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

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

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

- (a) Providing strong leadership and dedicated teams to implement the statewide education reform plans the State has proposed;
- (b) Supporting participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) in successfully implementing the education reform plans the State has proposed, through such activities as identifying promising practices, evaluating these practices' effectiveness, ceasing ineffective practices, widely disseminating and replicating the effective practices statewide, holding participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) accountable for progress and performance, and intervening where necessary;
- (c) Providing effective and efficient operations and processes for implementing its Race to the Top grant in such areas as grant administration and oversight, budget reporting and monitoring, performance measure tracking and reporting, and fund disbursement;
- (d) Using the funds for this grant, as described in the State's budget and accompanying budget narrative, to accomplish the State's plans and meet its targets, including where feasible, by coordinating, reallocating, or repurposing education funds from other Federal, State, and local sources so that they align with the State's Race to the Top goals; and
- (e) Using the fiscal, political, and human capital resources of the State to continue, after the period of funding has ended, those reforms funded under the grant for which there is evidence of success; and

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

- (a) The State's teachers and principals, which include the State's teachers' unions or statewide teacher associations; and
- (b) Other critical stakeholders, such as the State's legislative leadership; charter school authorizers and State charter school membership associations (if applicable); other State and local leaders (*e.g.*, business, community, civil rights,

and education association leaders); Tribal schools; parent, student, and community organizations (e.g., parent-teacher associations, nonprofit organizations, local education foundations, and community-based organizations); and institutions of higher education.

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

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

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

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

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

Recommended maximum response length: Five pages (excluding budget and budget narrative)

Massachusetts will provide the leadership, program management, and focus on implementation necessary to effectively execute its RTTT proposal. Drawing on its existing operational systems and by making thoughtful investments in tools and resources with sustained impact, Massachusetts will use RTTT as an opportunity to further transform its relationship with LEAs and to strengthen their ability to implement reforms in education. These investments in state and LEA capacity-building will be the primary legacy of RTTT well after grant funding ends.

(A)(2)(i)(a-c)

Too often, policy implementation is an afterthought, but we have already begun to plan for this work. ESE Commissioner Mitchell Chester will be responsible for overall implementation of our RTTT initiatives and results. To support the commissioner, the existing Office of Strategic Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OSPRE) will manage the implementation process and monitor the grant,

reporting directly to the commissioner for this function. OSPRE will integrate RTTT-funded staff and repurpose its existing staff to enhance the unit's emphasis on supporting effective implementation. RTTT will fund an implementation manager who will report to the OSPRE director and be responsible for developing an agency-wide program management, evaluation, and communication strategy, as well as for building systems for LEA accountability and support for grant implementation.

Our implementation strategy will draw from Sir Michael Barber's "deliverology" approach (Barber 2008), which emphasizes the use of real-time data, focused analysis and reports, and strong leadership involvement to drive implementation. The tools, processes, and implementation framework developed by Barber for the national government in England will assist the Commonwealth in setting clear goals; developing a delivery chain by which services reach more than 300 districts, 1,900 schools, and 80,000 educators; identifying trajectories that link planned interventions and expected outcomes over time; data for measuring progress that provide real-time performance information, allow for mid-course corrections, and create meaningful consequences for units that are on or off track; regular routines for providing feedback that help leaders uncover situations that require targeted correction or intervention; and continuous search for best practice lessons from analogous situations, states, and systems that have achieved success.

The ESE senior executives who oversaw the development of our RTTT proposal will continue to lead the work in their areas of expertise and will be accountable for project execution (see Appendix A4 for resumes of key personnel). Each assurance area has a set of projects that will form the core work of existing departments within ESE. Each project has an assigned project manager who will track and ultimately be accountable for results; these staff will receive intensive training on effective project management. Each project will also have an associated evaluation design, conducted by an objective third-party evaluator where feasible, to gather information for program improvement and to measure program outcomes. The OSPRE implementation manager will work with ESE project managers to plan implementation, set goals and benchmarks, develop reporting plans, and define the evaluation process for each project.

To support LEA implementation of our proposal and the identification and dissemination of best practices we uncover through evaluations, we will rely on systems, networks, and tools we have built over the last several years to strengthen our interactions with

the field. Our new District Standards and Indicators define the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of both the district and the state, based on the performance of the district's schools, in six areas: leadership and governance; curriculum and instruction; assessment; human resources and professional development; student support; and financial and asset management (see section A3 and Appendix E8). By design, many of the standards are closely aligned with the outcomes we aim to achieve through our proposal; for instance, they state that "The district's evaluation procedure for teachers' performance is research-based, effectively implemented, and fulfills the requirements of the Education Reform Act. After following due process, the district and schools take action to remove persistently low performing staff" and that "All professional staff members are supported and expected to use aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data regularly to improve performance." Districts are held accountable for their effective implementation of these standards through our district review process (described further in section A3), and we also have developed self-assessment tools for districts to gauge their performance on each standard (see Appendix E4). Through RTTT, we will build a tool for districts to report their progress on grant activities; this will allow OSPRE and district review staff to monitor implementation and intervene when necessary. Our MOU with participating LEAs adds another lever for accountability, allowing us to withhold RTTT funds from LEAs not meeting the commitments defined in their final scopes of work. Taken together, these will serve as powerful mechanisms for ensuring the full execution of our proposal.

We will take advantage of existing channels of communication with LEAs to provide implementation support, convey and replicate promising practices, and troubleshoot implementation challenges. In our Commissioner's Districts (our largest nine urban districts plus Holyoke), we have already established liaisons from ESE's Center for Targeted Assistance who will connect those districts to resources built and lessons learned through RTTT. We also have a long-standing Urban Superintendents Network for 23 urban districts (the Commissioner's Districts plus 13 more), which meets monthly to connect these superintendents to one another, strengthen their knowledge and understanding of key ESE resources, and share best practices. (See Appendix A5 for a list of Commissioner's Districts and Urban Superintendents Network districts.)

The remaining participating districts will be supported through our six regional Readiness Centers and District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs). Readiness Centers have two purposes: to convene stakeholders from across the early education, K–12, higher education, and out-of-school-time sectors to collaboratively address education priorities, leverage resources, and increase integration and coherence, and to provide high quality professional development and instructional services meeting local, regional, and statewide priorities. The DSACs focus specifically on the K–12 sector and aim to help districts and their schools strategically access and use foundational professional development and targeted assistance to improve school performance. Our proposal will add a total of six positions in each of the six DSACs focused on professional development in mathematics and English language arts, effective use of data to improve instruction, and implementation of the new state educator evaluation system. (See Appendices A6, A7, and A8 for a fact sheet on Readiness Centers, a description of the Readiness Center Network, and a map of the District and School Assistance Centers.)

Finally, we have successfully convened two annual Curriculum Summits aimed at connecting curriculum leaders in districts with ESE resources and tools, as well as regional forums; we will continue to use these venues to roll out supports to district staff and will extend the model to other topics of statewide interest. In all this work we will apply the lessons we have learned about providing meaningful implementation support for districts from recent successes such as our launch of the DSACs, our communication strategy for Race to the Top, and our new Level 4 Network conference calls and webinars.

To monitor overall grant progress and identify areas for potential intervention, the implementation manager and OSPRE director will meet with the commissioner and the lead senior managers for each assurance area at least every six to eight weeks. These half-day working sessions will include an in-depth review of progress in one assurance area, highlights of any emerging projects and/or LEA plans at risk, and patterns of problems with implementation across projects and LEAs. The implementation manager will be responsible for following through with agency staff and districts when ineffective practices are discovered to ensure they are modified or ended; results will be reported back in the next progress review meeting. These reviews will also serve as a basis for identifying opportunities for dissemination of best practices. Additional activities will include a kick-off session for participating districts early in

the 90-day planning period to provide technical assistance on implementation and budget development, followed by annual half-day technical assistance sessions; training and tools for ESE staff on effective project management; state and district-level reports for monitoring implementation and outcomes, and an external evaluation of the agency's project and grant management functions to identify opportunities for improvement.

OSPRE is well positioned to take on the overall program management function. The office led the development of the state's Race to the Top proposal and is already responsible for tracking performance measures for the agency's and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's priorities, which are closely aligned with both Governor Patrick's Education Action Agenda and Massachusetts' RTTT proposals. OSPRE also currently administers the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) program; Massachusetts SFSF recipients rated the state among the highest in satisfaction with the guidance they received on the program (USGAO 2009). Additional program management staff will be added to OSPRE to ensure ESE has sufficient capacity to support this important function. These will include a research and evaluation manager and a policy analyst, who will work with OSPRE staff on analytical projects to support effective implementation and identify best practices; an operations and grants manager to oversee administrative functions and manage fund disbursement, along with the LEA grant review and monitoring process; a fiscal officer, who will monitor spending plans and manage contracts; a communication specialist to disseminate best practices and coordinate convening events with participating LEAs; an information technology project manager to coordinate the implementation of all RTTT technology systems projects; a data analyst to support federal reporting and state analytical needs; and an administrative assistant. (See Appendix A9 for an organizational chart and Appendix A10 for brief job descriptions.)

To guide its statewide grant implementation, Massachusetts has created two advisory groups. The State Implementation Advisory Group is composed of stakeholders representing the key constituencies required to ensure successful implementation and follow-through. Its role is to provide overall guidance on strategy and implementation and to develop plans for continuing the work once the grant runs out. This group will meet three times yearly and includes the leadership of the state associations of school committees, superintendents, teacher unions, elementary and secondary principals, charter schools, vocational schools, and parents, as well as

representatives from the Executive Office of Education, Department of Early Education and Care, and Department of Higher Education. The second is an External Advisory Group composed of state, national, and international leaders in education policy, who can provide guidance on the overall direction of Massachusetts' RTTT activities, as well as advice on revising strategies as needed. This group will meet twice per year and will include a mix of practitioners, researchers, business leaders, philanthropists and policymakers, including education ministers from at least one other high performing country to provide an international perspective. Agendas and activities for both groups will be coordinated by OSPRE.

Massachusetts will also be held accountable for achieving its goals by the state's Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, which has legal responsibility for all agency activities. As mentioned in section A1, in 2008 the Board committed to four priorities for ESE efforts over the next several years: strengthening educator development, improving curriculum and instruction, developing accountability and assistance systems, and coordinating resources to provide more effective supports to students and families. By design, these priorities align closely with our proposed activities in this grant.

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

Massachusetts' proposed RTTT budget totals \$250 million (see Appendix A11 for the budget summary and narrative and detailed project budgets). The budget includes \$23 million in supplemental funding for participating LEAs, an allocation from the state's share of funds to support LEAs in implementing critical initiatives. We have focused our resources on investments that will continue to pay off beyond RTTT, rather than activities that will be difficult to sustain without grant funding. We have also chosen to contract for many services rather than add agency staff, as we can get better value by capitalizing on the expertise of our state's strong nonprofit and technology sectors. Further, we will coordinate, reallocate, or repurpose approximately an additional \$33.8 million (19% of available funds) and 53.0 FTEs (11% of agency staff) from federal and state funding sources to support our proposed activities (see Appendix A12). We have included \$9.2 million (approximately 3.7% of the budget) for independent program evaluation to support our commitment to hold ourselves accountable for results, identify best practices, and make our results available nationally.

OSPRE will be supported in grants and fiscal management by existing agency systems. ESE currently administers more than 11,000 federal and state grants without a single fiscal audit finding in the three previous A-133 Single Audits. The Commonwealth's Massachusetts Management Accounting and Reporting System will control the total award and track information about individual expenditures. ESE's Spending Plan model will translate spending restrictions and set-asides into expense budgets and reconcile budgets against actual spending. KPMG recently audited the agency's ARRA readiness and found that "the Department has controls in place to help prevent fraud, waste, and abuse for all state and federally funded grant programs" (KPMG 2009).

(A)(2)(ii)

Deep and longstanding partnerships among educational, political, business, and community stakeholders and an unequivocal commitment to continuous education improvement are the foundation for our public education successes to date. These factors will continue to be crucial for our RTTT proposal to succeed. Securing letters of support for the Massachusetts proposal was the final stage in a comprehensive process of engaging stakeholders in our RTTT work. For months, stakeholders across the Commonwealth have been deeply engaged in discussions about our proposed strategies and how each will impact students, educators, families, and communities. We gathered input in many ways: two statewide surveys receiving a total of more than 4,000 individual responses; seven face-to-face regional forums and 11 webinars on RTTT; two special meetings of the superintendents, union leaders, and school committee leaders for districts in our Urban Superintendents Network; two statewide meetings of superintendents, union leaders, and school committee leaders for all LEAs; and seven sessions with the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. We also held numerous meetings and focus groups with state association leaders, local and national funders, business leaders, community-based and nonprofit organizations, parents, and individual staff from our largest districts. We offered an opportunity for general public comment on an outline of our proposal and solicited comment on a full draft of the proposal from the state's superintendents, school committees, and teachers' unions.

A total of 165 stakeholders have signed letters of support (see Appendix A13). We are energized by our stakeholders' commitment to contribute to our RTTT efforts going forward. To name just a few, the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education has already launched work to share private sector expertise in performance evaluation and compensation with the field, the Boston Foundation formed the Race to the Top Coalition, a group of education stakeholders convened help build support for our proposal, and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents is developing training for district leaders aligned with our priorities (see section E2). In addition to supporting our state's planning efforts, our local philanthropic community is already investing in innovative projects aligned with our proposal in many of our lowest performing schools. The enthusiasm on the part of these and other stakeholders to embrace our RTTT plan during and after the four-year grant period further strengthens our confidence that we will accomplish our reform agenda.

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

We have carefully selected our investments to take advantage of this one-time infusion of dollars to build knowledge, expertise, systems, tools, and resources that will be sustained long after RTTT grant funding ends. We have redirected resources from other state and federal grants to support our proposal and have begun to seek other sources of private funding for some activities, most notably the school turnaround intermediary described in section E2 (see Appendix E18 for a letter of support from a funder).

Among the most powerful and long-lasting effects of RTTT will be the development of a more collaborative and effective way to work with districts, which will help maintain our momentum for reform long after the RTTT funding has been spent. This work has already begun: To introduce our RTTT proposals, we held the first-ever joint meetings of the superintendents, union leaders, and school committee leaders in our 24 largest urban districts. These were considered so useful and successful by all participants that we now intend to hold them at least once each year. We have also created a strong partnership with district and union leaders from the nine districts with identified Level 4 (underperforming) schools. (See Appendix E14 for a summary of ESE Level 4 District Network activities.)

Receiving RTTT funding will allow us to reach our goal of establishing an educational culture characterized by cross-functional communication within our agency, a shared vision and vocabulary for education reform both within and outside the agency, increased collaboration with stakeholder groups and between school administrators and teachers, and strengthened feedback loops to identify and disseminate practices that work. After four years, we expect this new culture and the new structures will have become the norm and expectation for our working relationships both in and out of the agency, leaving us better positioned to continue our education reform work statewide.

After RTTT, our districts will be far more effective in supporting their low-performing schools. Our teachers and leaders will make effective use of data, tools, resources, and professional development that will help them to improve learning for all Massachusetts students. Our coordination with other education sectors will be more robust. Our relationships with stakeholders will be stronger. Our agency will be more capable of sustaining education reform. Coordinating other funding sources with our RTTT activities will provide a sustainability plan for those areas where additional funding already exists, and our efforts in identifying effective practices will strengthen requests for additional funding. Taken together, we are confident that we have the right strategies in place to ensure that the fiscal, political, and human capital resources we build through Race to the Top will allow us to continue this important work long after funding ends.

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

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

- (i) Make progress over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas, and used its ARRA and other Federal and State funding to pursue such reforms; (5 points)
- (ii) Improve student outcomes overall and by student subgroup since at least 2003, and explain the connections between the data and the actions that have contributed to — (25 points)
 - (a) Increasing student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA;
 - (b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA; and
 - (c) Increasing high school graduation rates.

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

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

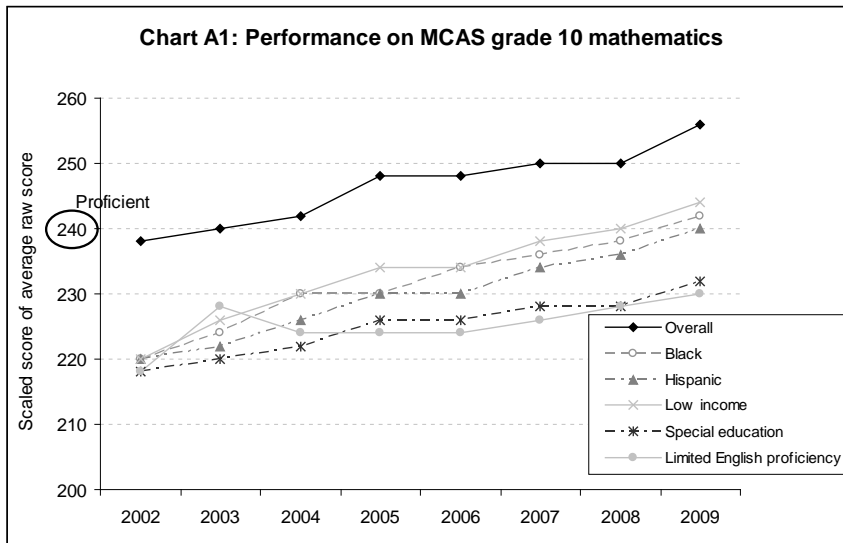
- NAEP and ESEA results since at least 2003. Include in the Appendix all the data requested in the criterion as a resource for peer reviewers for each year in which a test was given or data was collected. Note that this data will be used for reference only and can be in raw format. In the narrative,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

Recommended maximum response length: Six pages

(A)(3)(i-ii)

See Appendix A14 for Massachusetts historical data.

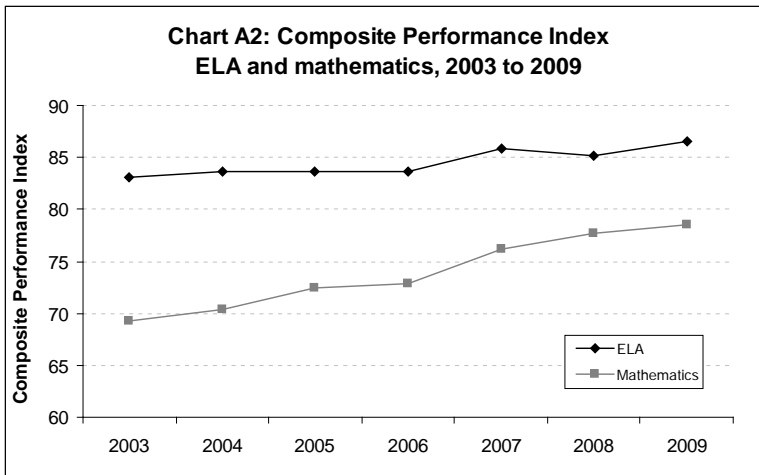
One chart summarizes Massachusetts' remarkable progress in education reform and the substantial work left to be done. As chart A1 shows, from 2002 to 2009, Massachusetts' tenth graders improved their performance on our grade 10 mathematics assessment by 18 scaled score points, moving the average student from just barely *Proficient* to nearly *Advanced*. Performance improved even faster



among our lowest performing subgroups. The average scaled score for low income students increased 24 points, from 220, the borderline between *Failing* and *Needs Improvement*, to 244, squarely in the *Proficient* category. Statewide, this improvement translated into a gain of 31 percentage points in students performing at *Proficient* or higher—a remarkable increase over just eight years. The state's tenth graders also made substantial progress on the English language arts (ELA) assessment, with an average scaled score increase of six points statewide, and nearly three times that in some subgroups. At the start of the decade the

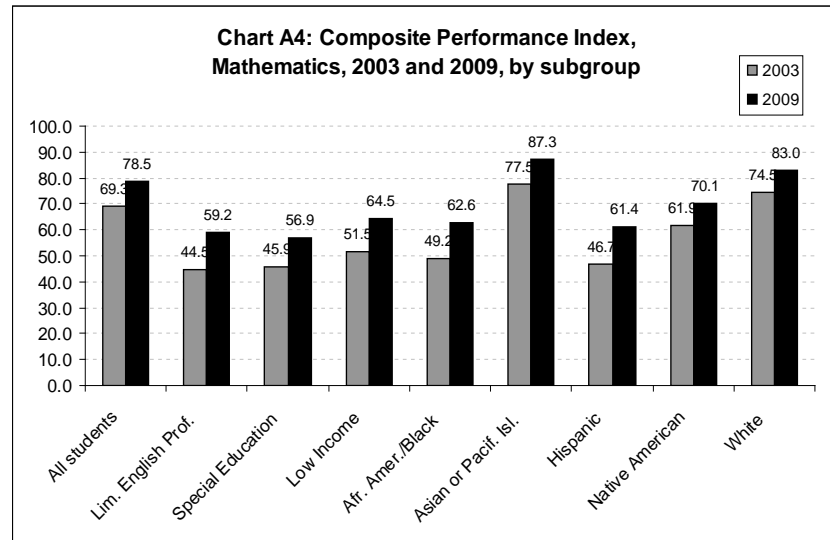
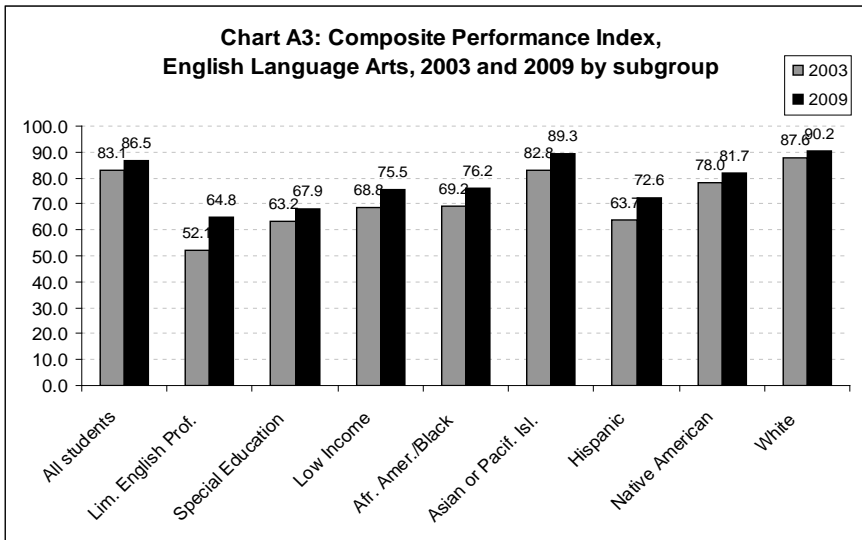
typical black, Hispanic, and low income student performed at the *Needs Improvement* level, but by 2009 these students performed at about *Proficient*; the typical white student now scores well into the *Proficient* range. We achieved these results without lowering our standards, and without increasing the high school dropout rate. In fact, our standards are often judged the strongest in the nation, and our dropout rate held steady over the period while cohort graduation rates steadily improved.

1 Measured as the scaled score of the average raw score. For technical reasons, only raw scores, not scaled scores, can be averaged across students.



This pattern of improvement extends beyond tenth grade. Our Composite Performance Index (CPI)—a measure of progress to proficiency on our state assessments that we use as part of our Adequate Yearly Progress determinations—shows substantial improvement for all grades in both subjects over this period (see chart A2 for data; see General Appendix 2 for an explanation of how CPI is calculated). Average student performance in ELA as measured by CPI improved by 4% over the seven years; in mathematics, by 14%. We also see faster improvement among the subgroups most likely to show low achievement (see charts A3 and A4). While statewide ELA performance

increased by 4% on CPI, limited English proficient students improved by 24% and poor students by nearly 10%. In mathematics, the gains are even more striking: Every subgroup saw at least a 10% improvement, and English language learner, special education, and low income students all improved by at least 25% over the seven-year period, much faster than the overall average. Similarly, nearly



all traditionally low performing subgroups have shown significant increases in performance on NAEP from 2000 to 2009 and typically outperform their peers nationally. In many cases achievement gaps have also narrowed significantly. Without question, every student in Massachusetts has benefited from the last 15 years of education reform.

This strong improvement has helped us maintain “first in the nation” status on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for the last three test administrations. Massachusetts is the only state ever to have ranked first on all four NAEP assessments (English language arts and mathematics for grades 4 and 8), and we have done it three times: in 2005, 2007, and 2009. Further, according to the 2007 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, in which Massachusetts was one of only two states to participate as a “country,” the state’s fourth graders ranked second worldwide in science achievement and tied for third in mathematics. Our eighth graders tied for first in science and ranked sixth in mathematics.

We have also seen improvement in cohort high school graduation rates, overall and for many subgroups. Statewide, 81.2% of the 2008 cohort graduated within four years of their first enrollment in ninth grade, one of the highest rates in the nation. While the overall 4-year graduation rate increased by 0.3 percentage points relative to 2007, rates improved by 1.5 to 3 percentage points for limited English proficient, special education, and African American students.

Education reform in Massachusetts has been powerful and effective, but it remains unfinished. Even as our students’ overall performance on our state mathematics assessments has improved across grades, performance on science and reading has held steady rather than accelerating. Even as Massachusetts’ low income fourth graders tied for first place on the NAEP ELA test, our low income achievement gap for that test was the 17th largest in the nation. Even as our achievement gaps for current and former English language learners have held steady, their performance is still relatively low and their share of total student enrollment is growing. And even as our cohort graduation rate has substantially improved, well over 7,000 students in each cohort still drop out during high school—one-third of whom had already met the state requirements for graduation.

We attribute our success to date to a combination of high standards, accountability, and support. The Commonwealth embarked on standards-based education reform in 1993 with the passage of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act, which substantially increased

the state's financial investment in K–12 education while also increasing accountability for results. This legislation established the key elements of education reform in Massachusetts: a set of curriculum frameworks that set standards in all core curriculum areas, a rigorous system for assessing students' progress toward those standards (MCAS), and a foundation budget (see section F1) that ensured each district had sufficient resources available to support implementing the standards. Additional elements of accountability were added over the years, including the competency determination (scoring at least *Needs Improvement* on the state grade 10 English language arts and mathematics tests) as a requirement for high school graduation beginning with the high school class of 2003; rigorous processes to review districts statewide, identify underperforming districts and schools, and target assistance to critical needs; and a major revision of the educator licensure requirements in 2001 that led to higher standards for entry and the recertification of 70,000 educators statewide.

More recently, our policy reforms have paralleled many aspects of USED's four assurance areas. In **Standards and Assessments**, we have added high school science to our competency determination requirement for high school graduation beginning with the class of 2010, and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adopted MassCore, a rigorous recommended high school course of studies. In 2001, Massachusetts became the first state to incorporate standards and assessment for technology and engineering within the science frameworks; we are still the only state to include technology and engineering prominently in our standards at all grade levels. We have built a growth model allowing us for the first time to measure the change in an individual student's performance over time (see section D2). In areas where student performance has been weak statewide, such as early literacy and middle school mathematics, and for student groups such as students with disabilities and English language learners, the state has collaborated with strong partners to develop and deliver effective professional development for educators to improve their content knowledge and pedagogical skills. Our performance standards have been judged nearly equivalent to NAEP's on three of the four NAEP assessments (NCES 2007), and our recent revisions to our ELA and mathematics standards are informing the development of the CCSSO/NGO Common Core Standards (see section B1).

In **Data Systems to Support Instruction**, we have provided free statewide access to a Data Warehouse housing state- and local-level education data in an easy-to-use system, including both pre-built reports and the option for more complex queries. We have developed a rigorous curriculum for training educators on how to effectively use education data and have certified providers to deliver it. We have implemented a new collection of educator-level data on preparation and course assignments, allowing us to better plan for our educator workforce. Funded by our 2009 State Longitudinal Data Systems grant and a state technology bond, we are currently piloting a new data collection system that will connect teachers with the students they serve. Another new data tool (the Schools Interoperability Framework) will reduce the burden of providing data and facilitate real-time data access. Finally, we have partnered with WGBH public television and Moodle to provide curriculum supports through MassONE, our web-based teacher support system.

In **Great Teachers and Leaders**, Massachusetts recently strengthened the standards for teachers seeking certification in elementary or special education. To our knowledge, we are the first and only state to require candidates for those licenses to demonstrate proficiency on both the overall state licensure test and its mathematics sub-section. We also adopted new performance standards for administrators. We have supported alternate routes to certification (see section D1) and incubated innovative models of educator preparation. To make faster and more coherent progress in this important policy area, an associate commissioner was recently hired to lead a newly reorganized center for educator policy, preparation, and licensure. The center has already launched stakeholder-based efforts to develop new performance standards for educational leaders, to define the knowledge and skills of professional teaching practice, and to produce an annual report about the state's educator workforce. This unit is poised to make strong progress in improving educator policy over the next several years. Further, in May 2010 the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted to establish a Task Force on Evaluation of Teachers and Administrators that will recommend a revised set of regulations and principles for educator evaluation no later than February 2011 (see Appendix D10 for the Board motion to establish the Task Force and section D2 for details of its charge). The new regulations will meet the requirements for teacher and principal evaluation systems set forth in the Race to the Top competition, require the adoption of new evaluation systems in every district, and ground the evaluation process and standards in evidence of student performance.

In Turning Around the Lowest Achieving Schools, over the last two years, ESE has developed a new Framework for District Accountability and Assistance that defines the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of both the district and the state, based on the performance of the district's schools. Its elements were driven by Massachusetts' disappointing experience with its prior "light touch" school turnaround efforts² and were vetted against findings from the latest academic research. Three major stakeholder groups and the Board consulted regularly with ESE on every step of the framework's design, and the work was also supported by a National Governors Association initiative convened in partnership with Mass Insight Education and Research Institute to help four states develop state turnaround plans and policies that create the conditions to improve chronically low performing schools. The resulting framework identifies specific Conditions for School Effectiveness that districts provide for their schools through district systems of support. A set of district standards and indicators measure the strength of these systems of support and are assessed through regular district accountability reviews (20 scheduled for 2010–2011). In the new framework, ESE focuses its efforts on supporting and building district capacity to ensure the Conditions exist in each of its schools. Just as importantly, ESE holds districts accountable for the performance of all of their schools, placing each district at one of five accountability designations based on the performance of its lowest achieving school. Level 3 schools (and districts) are schools performing in the lowest 20% of all schools in the Commonwealth. Level 4 schools (and districts) are "underperforming districts" with one or more persistently low achieving school that has shown both low overall student performance and little or no growth over the last several years. Level 5 schools (and districts) are those schools that districts have been unable to turn around and for which ESE assumes major responsibility; as early as 2012, ESE expects to identify its first Level 5 schools. In March, ESE announced 35 Level 4 schools in 9 districts; all Level 4 districts are participating LEAs in this proposal. A new state law passed in January 2010 gives districts and ESE greater authority to turn around these persistently low achieving schools and districts. (See Appendices E1 to E12 for a schematic of the framework, the membership

² Between 2001 and 2006 ESE identified 57 schools as underperforming or chronically underperforming and directed modest state resources and technical assistance to support their improvement (up to \$25,000 each in state grants for underperforming schools and up to \$150,000 each for chronically underperforming schools). The limits of "light touch" turnaround without close district engagement were evident: Only seven schools exited status on the basis of substantial improvement, and of the 44 identified schools that remain open, only four have made dramatic progress.

of the stakeholder groups involved in its development, the District Standards and Indicators, the associated Conditions for School Effectiveness, an example of self-assessment tools for one standard, the research basis for the Standards and Indicators, the new law and its associated regulations, the methodology for identifying the Level 4 schools, and a list of Level 4 schools including their characteristics.)

At the same time, we have also changed the legal framework for accountability in our persistently low achieving schools. Governor Patrick signed An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap on January 18, 2010. The law allows all staff in Level 4 and 5 schools to be required to reapply for their positions and provides staffing flexibility not available under previous law. Unlike previous law, it also allows for the alteration of collective bargaining agreements and allows the commissioner under certain conditions to appoint a receiver for a Level 5 school (not just for a Level 5 district). The new law also lowered the standard for dismissal for teachers with professional teacher status (tenure) in Level 4 and 5 schools from “just cause” to “good cause” and makes the lowest 10% of districts eligible for designation as Level 5 districts. The threat of a Level 5 designation—state receivership—will serve as further motivation for rapid improvement in persistently low achieving schools.

Conclusion

We know what we’ve done right, we know what we can do better, and we know the steps we need to take to get there. With or without Race to the Top funding Massachusetts is headed in this direction; RTTT resources will allow us to build the skills, expand the capacity, create the tools and harness the innovation we need to get there faster. We are committed to transforming ourselves into a state where every student’s needs are met, where every teacher and leader is well-trained and supported, and where every district has the tools, guidance, and direction necessary to continue to improve. Through the strategies detailed in this proposal, we expect to see our graduation rates rise, our achievement gaps shrink, and our performance continue to improve.

As Horace Mann once said, “Let us not be content to wait and see what will happen, but give us the determination to make the right things happen.” We are certain that he wouldn’t want the nearly one million children in the Massachusetts public schools to wait any longer.

(B) Standards and Assessments (70 total points)

State Reform Conditions Criteria

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

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

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

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

(ii) — (20 points)

- (b) For Phase 2 applications, the State's adoption of a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) by August 2, 2010, or, at a minimum, by a later date in 2010 specified by the State in a high-quality plan toward which the State has made significant progress, and its commitment to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way.³

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

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

³Phase 2 applicants addressing selection criterion (B)(1)(ii) may amend their June 1, 2010 application submission through August 2, 2010 by submitting evidence of adopting common standards after June 1, 2010.

- The number of States participating in the standards consortium and the list of these States.

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

For Phase 2 applicants:

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

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

(B)(1)(i)

Massachusetts has demonstrated its commitment to high quality, common standards in several ways. Prior to his arrival in Massachusetts in May 2008, Commissioner Chester was a member of the NGA, CCSSO and Achieve advisory group that produced the 2008 report, “Benchmarking for Success: Ensuring U.S. Students Receive a World-Class Education,” which called for high, internationally-benchmarked standards to be adopted by all states. In spring 2009, Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick and ESE Commissioner Mitchell Chester signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Council of Chief State Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA) that committed the Commonwealth’s support to the development of K–12 internationally benchmarked, rigorous Common Core Standards in English language arts and mathematics aligned to college and career expectations (see Appendix B1 for the MOA, Appendix B2 for the list of the 51 states and territories participating in the Common Core efforts, Appendix B3 for the final March 10, 2010 version of the Standards, and Appendix B4 for evidence of international benchmarking).

Massachusetts has been deeply invested in the development of the Common Core Standards. Our involvement is a logical step after the last decade of our multi-state collaborations with NGA, CCSSO and Achieve. In 2000–01, Massachusetts voluntarily participated in an evaluation by Achieve of standards and assessments in three states; Achieve researchers called the Massachusetts system of academic standards and tests one of the best in the country and cited the high school exam as a national model (see Appendix B5 for the Achieve report). The Commonwealth became one of the founding partners of Achieve’s American Diploma Project (ADP) in 2005, participating in Achieve’s high school/college standards alignment project in 2005–07, the review of the

Achieve’s standards and benchmarks for ELA in 2007, and the development of an Algebra II exam in 2006–08. We received more than \$2.5 million in grants from NGA to develop college readiness policies and resources and an adolescent literacy plan between 2005 and 2007, and we intend to participate in the CCSSO States Collaborative on Student Standards (SCASS) Implementing the Common Core System (ICCS) group (see Appendix B6 for a description of the ICCS SCASS project).

Since November 2009, six members of our staff have served on the Common Core development teams for English and Mathematics. As further evidence of our commitment, we have provided the Common Core teams with access to our 2009 and 2010 draft revised standards in ELA and mathematics and have offered conceptual advice and line-item edits frequently over the past year. We have actively participated in more than a dozen conference calls and webinars and have provided extensive formal comments on six successive drafts of the Common Core Standards. (See Appendix B7 for a list of people from Massachusetts who participated in the Common Core working teams and Appendix B8 for ESE’s comments on the Common Core Standards March 2010 Public Comment Draft.)

(B)(1)(ii)

Legal process for adopting standards. Chapter 69, Section 1D of the Massachusetts General Laws (see Appendix B9) states, “the board [of elementary and secondary education] shall establish a set of statewide educational goals for all public elementary and secondary schools in the Commonwealth.” Further, the statute states that “the board shall direct the commissioner [of elementary and secondary education] to institute a process to develop academic standards for the core subjects of mathematics, science and technology, history and social science, English, foreign languages and the arts.” In practice, the commissioner convenes Curriculum Framework Advisory Panels comprised of local educators, scholars, and business and community leaders to assist ESE staff to develop standards, which are then presented to the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for consideration. The Board then votes to release draft standards for public comment and further revision, if necessary, prior to voting to adopt them. The Commonwealth’s Curriculum Frameworks contain the state’s academic standards.

Plan for adopting the K–12 Common Core Standards in 2010. We plan to adopt the Common Core Standards by August 2, 2010, and have established a timeline that will make it possible for the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to meet this deadline. The Board will receive the final version of the Common Core Standards by June 2, along with a side-by-side analysis completed by our staff and Achieve, Inc., which compares the Common Core Standards with drafts of our own ELA and mathematics standards revisions (2009 and 2010 respectively). By June 21, an independent panel of educators from PreK–12, higher education, and business will review the Common Core standards and present a report to the Board to inform its vote on adopting the standards, which will be taken at a special meeting in late July 2010. This independent panel will validate that the Common Core is at least as comprehensive and rigorous, if not more than, our current standards. In addition, we will secure at least one expert reviewer to conduct a gap analysis of the Common Core and Massachusetts standards. These validations will ensure that by adopting the Common Core standards, Massachusetts will maintain, if not exceed, its high standards.

ESE has prepared the Board to be fully informed for a vote on adoption through several steps that have already been taken. We have discussed the standards with them in the context of our Race to the Top application multiple times since September 2009; we have shared copies of the Department’s six commentaries on the standards sent to CCSSO/NGA (in July, October, and December 2009 and January, February, and April 2010) and held teacher forums and Board meeting discussions of the standards in January, March, May, and June 2010. We expect the Board to vote on this issue in late July and will provide documentation of the results of the vote once available.

Following adoption of the standards in July, our plan is for the Board to discuss the possible addition of unique Massachusetts standards in September. Following this action, the Board will formally seek public comment on the need to augment the standards within the 15 percent allowance and vote on the inclusion of any additional standards in November 2010. (See Appendix B10 for the minutes of the March 22 and 23 BESE meetings in which the Common Core Standards were discussed with Massachusetts educators and members of the Common Core writing teams and Appendix B11 for the May 25 memo from Commissioner Chester to members

of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education outlining the timeline for the vote for adoption before August 2, 2010.) Beginning in fall 2010, following adoption of the Common Core, the state will initiate a series of annual regional forums and webinars to ensure full and effective implementation of the standards (see B3 for complete implementation strategy).

Timeline for B1

Activity	Years 1 and 2
Adopt the Common Core Standards by August 2, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hire independent panel of experts to review Common Core Standards and present results to the Board: June 2010 ▪ Board vote on adopting Common Core Standards before August 2, 2010
Add unique Massachusetts standards and disseminate statewide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Receive recommendations from Curriculum Framework Review Panels to Board on adding unique MA standards and solicitation of public comment: September and October 2010; ▪ Board vote on adding any additional standards to the Common Core Standards: November 2010; full documents are the new Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for ELA and Mathematics ▪ Post of new standards on website, integrate into ESE standards database, align assessment items to new Common Core Standards: January to June 2011 ▪ Complete aligning district curricula to Common Core Standards by June 2012

Responsible parties: Commissioner, Secretary of Education, Governor, Deputy Commissioner, ESE Centers for Curriculum and Instruction and Student Assessment

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

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

- (i) Is working toward jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice); and
- (ii) Includes a significant number of States. Evidence for (B)(2):
 - A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of a consortium that intends to develop high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards; or documentation that the State's consortium has applied, or intends to apply, for a grant through the separate Race to the Top Assessment Program (to be described in a subsequent notice); or other evidence of the State's plan to develop and adopt common, high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice).
 - The number of States participating in the assessment consortium and the list of these States.

Recommended maximum response length: One page

(B)(2)

Massachusetts is well poised to play a substantial role in the development of a new common college and career readiness assessment system based on common standards in English language arts and mathematics. In four years we will be prepared to administer this assessment in place of our current state assessments in those subjects. The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), in place since 1998, is the state's valid and reliable, standards-based, customized state assessment system. Our experienced assessment staff has expertise in psychometrics and test content and is both committed and eager to play a major role in the design, development, and implementation of the next generation common assessment system that the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) will create.

On May 4, 2010 Commissioner Mitchell Chester signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to participate in PARCC, fulfilling the requirements outlined in this notice (see Appendix B12 for the PARCC MOU). At least 27 states have agreed to participate in PARCC (see Appendix B13 for the list of states agreeing to participate in PARCC as of May 25, 2010).

Since PARCC's inception in December 2009, Massachusetts has taken a leadership role among the states participating in the consortium to develop a shared vision and set of design principles for a multi-state assessment system. As a Governing State in PARCC, along with Florida, Louisiana, New York, Tennessee, Indiana, Rhode Island, and the District of Columbia, Massachusetts has committed to (1) implement the consortium-developed assessments in 2014–15; (2) be a member of this consortium exclusively; and (3) provide staff and leadership time to assist both in developing the RTTT Assessment Program application and in implementing the grant, once awarded.

PARCC assessments will be fully aligned with the Common Core K–12 Standards for English language arts and mathematics and measure the full breadth and depth of knowledge and skills described in those standards. The assessment system developed by PARCC will be designed to promote coherence among summative, interim, and formative assessments, even if the partnership focuses development efforts on summative measures.

PARCC assessments will be designed to address the following major purposes and uses:

- Measuring and documenting students' college and career readiness at the end of high school and measuring students' progress toward this target throughout the rest of the system.
- Ensuring that assessment results are: comparable across states at the student level; meet internationally rigorous benchmarks; support valid assessment of student longitudinal growth; and serve as a signal for effective instructional practices.
- Supporting multiple levels and forms of accountability, including decisions about graduation for individual students, teacher and leader evaluations, and school accountability determinations.

Over the next four years, we will facilitate the development of the new assessment system while continuing to administer MCAS. We will field test the new system by including in our tests for 2012 to 2014 items that align both to our current math and ELA standards and to the Common Core, in preparation for the first operational assessment based on the Common Core in 2015. (See Appendix B14 for a full description of PARCC that was included in a paper issued by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association titled *Designing Common State Assessment System, April 2010*.)

Timeline for B2

Activity	Year 1	Years 2 to 4
Develop and implement common, high quality assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With other governing states, submit PARCC application for USED funds in June 2010. ▪ Assuming funding, begin work on design of system: September to December 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop, pilot, and set standards for PARCC assessments in English language arts and mathematics ▪ Continue to administer MCAS in ELA and mathematics, making the transition to PARCC by including on MCAS only items that are aligned to both ▪ Continue to administer MCAS in science at grades 5, 8, and high school, developing new assessment items as needed to align with new state standards or, if Common Core Standards are developed for science, making a similar transition as for ELA and math ▪ Implement MCAS history assessments at grades 5, 7, and high school in 2012 ▪ PARCC assessments in ELA and mathematics replace MCAS in 2015

Responsible parties: Commissioner, Student Assessment Services staff, MCAS assessment contractor, Governing states of PARCC

Reform Plan Criteria

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

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

Recommended maximum response length: Eight pages

(B)(3)

In keeping with our commitment to reducing the variation in student achievement, a cornerstone of our proposal is to provide high quality curricular and assessment resources and exemplar units to support teacher and principal efforts to improve instructional programming. State education agencies must play an active role in developing and disseminating high quality curriculum, instruction, and assessment resources, since few schools or districts have the capacity to develop strong curriculum and assessments on their own. Massachusetts will build on its record of superior standards and summative assessments (see Appendix B15 for a list of independent evaluations by national organizations) by using RTTT funds to assist local educators in making the transition from our current standards to the Common Core and reducing the variation in student performance through strong curriculum and instruction.

Goal: Enable more students to meet high standards by creating an aligned, standards-based teaching and learning system.

Massachusetts’s standards and assessments are among the best in the world. Yet achievement gaps persist, in part because we have not sufficiently invested in curriculum, instruction, and classroom assessment tools needed to improve teaching and learning. Among our participating districts, 242 (nearly 90%) of them agree and have committed to helping us to build a comprehensive PreK–12 teaching and learning system. As the system components described below are developed, a statewide professional development initiative facilitated through our six regional Readiness Centers and District and School Assistance Centers will provide a “train-the-trainer” model to enable district leaders to disseminate resources and tools in their districts (see section D5). Use of this standards-based teaching and learning system will be mandated for Level 3 districts (those that have one or more schools in the lowest 20% of performance on MCAS; see section E), unless they can show that they already have a system of comparable scope and quality in place. Many of these tools will also be useful in helping educators to demonstrate their students’ performance and growth for the purpose of evaluation (see section D2 for a description of our proposed educator evaluation system.)

Activities:

- **Align all Massachusetts standards documents to the Common Core.** Since many of our standards documents build on and make references to our current ELA and math standards, we will revise or update the following documents to be consistent with the Common Core Standards: science and technology/engineering (overall revision and addition of literacy standards); history and social science, arts, and health (addition of literacy standards); career and vocational technical education standards (alignment of academic strand with Common Core in ELA and math standards); and foreign languages (revisions to parallel the standards of the Common Core ELA). Given the challenges our English language learners face, it is critical that we also align our English Language Proficiency standards with the Common Core English language arts standards.
- **Curriculum maps and units.** Curriculum maps are guides that show the sequence and pacing of grade-level standards across the school year and lay the foundation for effective instructional planning. Working with educators from LEAs across

Massachusetts, we will develop curriculum maps that divide the year into at least quarters, with selected model instructional units, curriculum-embedded performance tasks, and interim assessments aligned to the content and sequence of each quarter. We will also include guidance for teachers on providing background content knowledge that low-income students and English language learners may need and adaptations for students with disabilities, English language learners, and advanced students. Over four years, more than 100 curriculum maps will be developed for grades PreK–12 in English language arts, mathematics, science and technology/engineering, history and social science, English language development (curriculum for assisting English language learners to acquire English), and selected vocational-technical areas such as automotive technology and culinary arts. In the case of mathematics, several maps will be developed at each grade level to address varied math texts widely used in schools. Guidance for implementing Massachusetts standards for foreign language, the arts, and health will also be developed.

- **Digital library.** Our digital library will be a collection of engaging, high quality, accurate, up-to-date, and academically relevant resources coded to standards and our model curriculum maps. ESE has a formal partnership with the WGBH Educational Foundation, a PBS affiliate, to align the extensive instructional resources on the Massachusetts/WGBH Teachers’ Domain website to the Common Core and Massachusetts standards. As the producer of *Nova*, *Frontline*, and *American Experience*, children’s programming on science, engineering, and reading, and a partner with New York’s WNET, WGBH is in a position to customize digital resources from public broadcasting and other sources, including ESE’s other major digital partner, Verizon’s *Thinkfinity* (whose online collection includes resources from organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the International Reading Association). WGBH will also provide videos of effective standards-based classrooms and a new set of resources from Massachusetts museums and cultural organizations. The library will include a social networking component, “Teachers’ Corner,” where Massachusetts educators can upload, comment on, and share locally and regionally developed instructional resources. (See Appendix B16 for a description of Massachusetts Teachers’ Domain and the digital library.) These teaching and learning resources are not only

of exceptional quality, but also are engaging and motivating to students and will help draw in students most at risk of disengagement or failure.

- **Interim assessment.** Massachusetts has administered summative assessments (MCAS) since 1998 and up until recently has released 100% of the items each year. We will use this extensive item pool of more than 8,500 high quality, previously used and released MCAS questions and scoring materials to populate an online scoring and reporting system for interim and formative assessments (see Section C3). The existence of this set of items is important because it will reduce the cost of building the system and ensure that the assessments are rigorous enough to promote instruction of the full continuum of performance. Our interim assessments will be aligned to our model curriculum maps, administered at least quarterly, and used to determine whether students have mastered the standards covered during a particular quarter. Interim assessments will generate results at the student, classroom, and school levels in order to identify students who have yet to master the standards and may need additional instruction as well as teachers whose students are achieving at high levels, so that their practices can be shared and emulated in other classrooms. The interim assessment system will be developed in the following areas: reading (3–11) and mathematics (K–8, geometry, and algebra I and II). We will develop additional items for writing (3–11) and for K–2 reading and mathematics based on the Common Core Standards. We have worked closely for five years with 27 districts and Assessment Technology, Incorporated (ATI) to pilot with 58,000 students an instructional improvement system of interim and formative assessments in math, ELA, and science. This experience provided us with crucial lessons learned, such as the importance of a robust administration, scoring, and reporting platform; psychometrically sound assessments; and the need to build local educators’ expertise in using data to make instructional improvements. We will build upon this experience in developing and implementing our new system, the professional development for which is described in section D5.
- **Formative assessment.** Our formative assessment resources will assist teachers in the ongoing process of monitoring students’ progress and adapting instruction to meet their needs in real time. The process of formative assessment includes a range of approaches, from oral questions to written assignments. Our online formative assessment resources will include a bank of

thousands of previously administered MCAS multiple-choice and constructed-response test questions and related scoring materials (e.g., answer keys, rubrics, and benchmarked student work) as well as newly developed items for grades K–12 in English, math, science and technology/engineering, and history and social science. Since the bank will include multiple items for each standard ranging from fundamental to complex, it will be especially useful in helping teachers pinpoint students' misconceptions and misunderstandings so their learning gaps can be effectively addressed.

- **Extended performance tasks.** These are tasks that will be designed to measure multiple standards simultaneously, including standards that have traditionally been difficult to measure in an on-demand test, and to elicit complex student demonstrations or applications of knowledge and skills (e.g., scientific investigations, research papers, oral presentations, and interdisciplinary projects). Drawing on existing models of performance tasks such as those used in our high performing schools, we will develop at least two to four tasks for each of the grades 3–11 in English language arts, mathematics, science and technology/engineering, history and social science, and two vocational-technical areas, totaling over 150 tasks. Each task will be piloted so that scoring rubrics can be supplemented with benchmarked student work to promote scoring reliability and consistency across classrooms. We envision these tasks being used in the near term as either formative or interim assessments and eventually as a component of summative assessments. Massachusetts has already begun design work in this area with the support of the Nellie Mae Foundation and plans to build on this initiative with RTTT funds (see Appendix B17 for the design plan for curriculum-embedded assessments and section D5 for professional development to support implementation).
- **Tools for data-driven instruction.** Through our 2010 State Longitudinal Systems Grant, we will provide all teachers and administrators access to the state's Educator Data Warehouse (EDW), which will include both state (summative) and local level (interim) student achievement and growth data. Section C2 of this proposal describes the enhancements that will be made to the EDW through Race to the Top. Sections C3 and D5 describe the extensive training and professional development we plan to provide to promote effective use of the data to improve instruction.

- Regional forums and summit conferences.** We will ensure that educational leaders from all of our school districts and educator preparation programs are kept well informed by holding regional and online forums annually in which our staff will present updated information about changes in the standards and assessments, and about new curriculum and assessment tools, services, and professional development opportunities. LEA staff will present how they are implementing the teaching and learning system and other aspects of Race to the Top in two annual statewide curriculum, instruction, and assessment summit conferences. We will post materials from the events on our website to serve as resources for LEAs. (See section D5.)

Timeline for B3 Goal 1: Teaching and learning system

Strategy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Revise standards, disseminate statewide, and develop standards-based model curricular materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align English language proficiency standards to Common Core ELA standards Build curriculum maps with educators Disseminate Common Core Standards (CCS) through regional roundtables, webinars, and statewide curriculum summits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise science standards; add literacy standards from CCS to history/social science, health, and arts Publish curriculum maps and alignments to interim assessments Pilot additional units linked to resources in the digital library Roundtables, webinars, and summits to discuss CCS implementation in schools, goals and structure of PARCC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align academic strand of career/vocational technical standards to CCS Publish curriculum units and continue to develop additional units Roundtables, webinars, and summits to discuss formative and interim assessments, curriculum resources Launch train-the-trainer model for implementing the model curriculum through DSACs and professional learning communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align foreign languages standards to CCS Standards-based model curricula will be adopted in all Level 3 districts Roundtables, webinars, and summits on the transition to PARCC Continue train-the-trainer on model curriculum implementation
Build digital library, interim and formative assessments, and extended performance tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand WGBH Teacher’s Domain / digital library to incorporate resources from <i>Thinkfinity</i> Build interim assessment forms for ELA and math grades 3–8 Solicit, review, and pilot- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand digital library to include videos of effective teaching practices and a social media environment Support implementation of interim assessments Build and pilot online formative assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand digital library to include links to Massachusetts museums and cultural institutions Online formative and interim assessment system fully operational; extensive PD available on using the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to add and improve resources in the Digital Library Online interim and formative assessment system in use in all Level 3 districts Continue to provide PD on

Strategy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	test extended performance tasks; publish tasks with student work samples	system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to solicit, review, and pilot-test extended performance tasks; pilot electronic submission of student work and scores 	system to improve student achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue previous work on extended performance tasks and add statewide field tests, matrix-sampled tasks, score auditing, and publication of required tasks in Year 4 	using the system to improve student achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue previous work on extended performance tasks

Responsible parties: ESE Centers for Curriculum and Instruction and Student Assessment; LEA curriculum and assessment leaders; Readiness Centers and DSACs

Goal: Increase dramatically the number of students who graduate from high school ready for college and career.

Massachusetts has increased its four-year cohort high school graduation rate from 79.9% for the 2006 cohort to 81.5% for the 2009 cohort and has increased the percentage of high school graduates going on to higher education consistently each year for seven straight years, from 64.2% in 2003 to 72.0% in 2009. During this same time period, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has added a requirement that students who score *Needs Improvement* on our required high school exit tests demonstrate proficiency before graduation, added science to the battery of high school exit tests, and adopted MassCore as a recommended high school program of studies. These new requirements notwithstanding, we continue to have too many students, especially low-income and minority students, who are not ready for college and careers when they graduate from high school. We aim to reduce this variation in outcomes through four related strategies.

Strategy 1: Prepare more students for success after high school through exposure to rigorous curricula and college-level work, particularly in STEM fields.

Early exposure to rigorous curricula and college-level work is a proven strategy for increasing college and career readiness, particularly for low-income and minority students (Dougherty & Mellor 2010). We will promote this exposure through two activities.

Activities:

- **Pre-AP teacher training.** While Massachusetts has one of the highest AP enrollment rates in the country, we see a significant participation and performance gap among our low-income and minority students. More intensive early preparation is essential to enabling them to be college-ready by high school graduation. ESE will strengthen the state's Advanced Placement pipeline by offering pre-AP teacher training in math, science, and English language arts to middle and high schools with a high percentage of first generation, low-income and minority students. Using materials authorized by the College Board, ESE will target teachers in grades 6 to 10 for professional development in content knowledge, teaching strategies, vertically aligned materials, and assessments to help prepare more students for success in AP-level coursework. We will also provide curricular

and instructional resources, vertical team facilitation and implementation, and leadership support. At the end of 4 years, we will have trained 1,000 teachers in up to 65 schools in low-income communities.

- **STEM Early College High Schools.** Emerging data from Jobs for the Future provide evidence that early college high school (ECHS) is extremely effective in preparing low-income and minority students for success after high school. Nationally, 74% of ECHS students are of color and 56% are economically disadvantaged. Yet of the 2,258 graduates of early college high schools open for four or more years in 2008, 92% graduated from high school—40% with more than a year of college credit, and 11% with a high school diploma and an associate’s degree. Through RTTT, ESE will build six STEM Early College High Schools, each of which will serve approximately 400 students. Of the six, three will be modeled on Columbus, Ohio’s highly successful Metro Early College High School and will be located on state four-year college or university campuses. The other three ECHSs will be on community college or existing high school campuses. The ECHSs funded through RTTT will serve as models for future expansion and dual enrollment state policy development. (See Appendix B18.)

Strategy 2: Adopt MassCore as the default curriculum for all high school students in the Commonwealth and align public 4-year college entrance requirements with MassCore.

Activities:

- **MassCore as default curriculum.** Massachusetts currently has a recommended program of high school studies, MassCore, that includes a minimum of four years of mathematics and three years of lab-based sciences, four years of English, three years of history and social science, and a year of the arts. However, our LEAs currently establish their own local graduation requirements. ESE will propose new regulations that make MassCore the *default* curriculum for all Massachusetts high school graduates beginning with the Class of 2016 (next year’s seventh graders). By default curriculum, we mean that MassCore will be the required curriculum for high school graduation unless a student’s parent or guardian agreed to an alternate program of studies. We will encourage LEAs to use RTTT funds to develop new courses, expand existing ones,

and acquire sufficient curricular and instructional materials to ensure that every student has the opportunity to complete MassCore.

- **Align college entrance requirements.** Currently MassCore is not aligned with the Department of Higher Education's admissions requirements to four-year state colleges. Working with the DHE, we will establish a single set of minimum high school course expectations that match the state's four-year college admissions requirements. (See Appendix B19.)

Strategy 3: Build tools to monitor vocational students' progress toward career readiness.

Activities:

- **Competency Tracking System.** To improve career readiness for the more than 58,000 students enrolled in one of the state's career/vocational programs, ESE will enhance its existing Vocational Technical Competency Tracking System, a web-based system that assists teachers in monitoring student progress toward mastery of the standards in the Massachusetts Vocational Technical Education Frameworks. The new system will include the Common Core Standards and will provide better monitoring of students' progress toward attaining both academic and technical standards. This system will help educators to better track student progress in meeting all of the vocational standards in their area, and will lead to more students receiving their vocational license or certification.

Strategy 4: Assist students in making smart postsecondary choices through improved guidance and counseling

Activities:

- **YourPlanforCollege.com.** ESE and its partner, the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority, have developed a free, one-stop comprehensive college and career planning resource: *YourPlanforCollege.com*. Developed in part with the federal College Access Challenge Grant, *YourPlanforCollege* is available in both English and Spanish and enables students and their families to explore colleges and careers, apply to colleges online, and research and complete financial aid applications. It is

also a powerful tool for guidance counselors, simplifying the process of submitting transcripts to colleges and generating reports for more complete and accurate college recommendations. We will encourage LEAs to use a portion of their RTTT funds to help implement *YourPlanforCollege* by sending their guidance counselors to training on the system, uploading student data into the system, and promoting its use. Our goal is that at the end of 4 years, every Massachusetts high school student will have a college and career plan entered into the system.

- Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs.** To promote more effective school counseling, ESE will expand implementation of *The Massachusetts Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*. The model’s purpose is to “guide administrators and counselors in: (1) the development of measurably effective school counseling programs, (2) the identification and removal of barriers to student success, (3) increased equity in access to school counseling services, (4) increased student motivation to enroll in and complete rigorous coursework, (5) the development of essential attitudes, knowledge and skills for student achievement and successful post-secondary transition, and (6) assisting students with their education and career planning.” LEAs may use a portion of their RTTT funds for professional development of school counselors and school administrators on the model to ensure that they are adequately trained to assist students in making smart postsecondary choices and navigating the college admissions and financial aid process. (See Appendix B20 for the counseling document and the report.)

Timeline for B3 Goal 2: College and career readiness

Strategy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Prepare more students for success after high school through exposure to rigorous curricula and college-level work, particularly in STEM fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAs and college partnerships chosen for STEM ECHS; planning phase begins Intermediary(ies) chosen to support start-up of ECHS ESE identifies lead partner(s) in providing pre- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEM ECHSs enroll the first cohort of students Year 2 of pre-AP training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEM ECHSs enroll the second cohort of students; first class of students graduates with college credit Year 3 of pre-AP training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEM ECHSs enroll third cohort; second class of students graduates with college credit

Strategy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	AP training; 1,000 educators receive first year of training			
Adopt MassCore as the default curriculum for all high school students and align public 4-year college entrance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BESE and BHE vote on default curriculum, college admission requirements LEAs use RTTT funds to implement MassCore 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAs use RTTT funds to implement MassCore 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAs use RTTT funds to implement MassCore 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAs use RTTT funds to implement MassCore
Build tools to monitor vocational students' progress toward career readiness	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor hired to implement enhancements to the Competency Tracking System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced Competency Tracking System fully operational
Assist students in making smart postsecondary choices through improved guidance and counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First cohort of high schools and colleges join and use YourPlanforCollege for college and career planning LEAs use RTTT funds to provide PD for counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second cohort joins YourPlanforCollege; portal expanded to include a middle school module LEAs use RTTT funds to provide PD for counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAs use RTTT funds to provide PD for counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAs use RTTT funds to provide PD for counselors All high school students in Massachusetts have a college and career plan

Responsible parties: ESE Centers for Secondary School Support and Student Assessment; LEA curriculum and assessment leaders; Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), Board of Higher Education (BHE)

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline	End of SY 2010-11	End of SY 2011-12	End of SY 2012-13	End of SY 2013-14
Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.					
% of LEAs implementing the Common Core Standards	n/a	n/a	100%	100%	100%
% of Massachusetts standards documents aligned to the Common Core	0%	25%	66%	80%	100%
% of grades and subjects with curriculum maps and at least one model curriculum unit	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
Number of interim assessment forms completed for English and math	n/a	72	90	90	90

Number of extended performance tasks developed	n/a	24–32	48–64	96–118	144–172
% of LEAs using one or more component of the teaching and learning system, other than the EDW (<i>also a performance measure for C2</i>)	n/a	n/a	35%	75%	90%
% of participating LEAs using the interim / formative assessment system	n/a	n/a	35%	75%	75%
% of participating LEAs using extended performance tasks	n/a	n/a	20%	50%	75%
% of high school graduates successfully completing MassCore	50%	55%	65%	75%	85%
Number of Early College High Schools (ECHS) established as a direct result of Race to the Top funding	n/a	n/a	6	6	6
Number of teachers participating in pre-AP training	n/a	n/a	1,000	1,000	1,000
MassCore established as the default curriculum and aligned with four-year college entrance requirements	n/a	✓	✓	✓	✓
% of high school students with a plan on <i>YourPlanforCollege.com</i>	n/a	10%	35%	75%	100%

(C) Data Systems to Support Instruction (47 total points)

State Reform Conditions Criteria

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

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

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

Evidence:

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

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

(C)(1)

Massachusetts has developed data collections and implemented an Education Data Warehouse (EDW) that together address all of the 12 essential elements stipulated by the America COMPETES Act.

- 1) **Unique statewide student identifier:** In 1998, Massachusetts implemented a confidential, unique State Assigned Student Identifier (SASID) that ensures that a student cannot be identified by unauthorized parties.
- 2) **Student-level demographic and program participation data:** Our Student Information Management System (SIMS) has collected student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation data for all public school students since 2001.
- 3) **Student-level information on P-16 enrollment, transfer, dropout, and graduation:** SIMS captures information on enrollments, transfers, dropouts, and graduations for all K–12 public school students. We assign SASIDs to children enrolled in early education programs and we capture their enrollment in elementary school. Data matching conducted by the Department of Higher Education (DHE) captures the enrollment of public high school students into public post-secondary programs.
- 4) **Capacity to communicate with higher education data systems:** DHE conducts data matching with our database of public high school graduates and provides FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) -compliant reports regarding students' subsequent enrollment and performance in post-secondary education. DHE is preparing to assign SASIDs (consistent with PK-12) to all public higher education students to increase the ease and frequency of these analyses.
- 5) **State data audit system:** Massachusetts currently has extensive data verification systems to assess data quality, validity, and reliability, including complex validation rules that confirm each data element meets all required specifications.
- 6) **Individual student test records under section 1111(b) of ESEA:** Massachusetts has collected student-level test record data since 1998 (including every student's response to every Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) question as required by ESEA Title I, Part A 1111(b)) and provides these data to LEAs.

- 7) **Information on students not tested:** The data system referenced above in #6 also provides information on students not tested by grade and by subject.
- 8) **A teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students:** Massachusetts established its Education Personnel Information Management System (EPIMS) in 2007. EPIMS includes a unique teacher identifier and links teachers to their assigned classes using a unique class code. Massachusetts has recently completed development and implementation of its newest data collection that connects SIMS and EPIMS, which enables us to match teachers to students through course assignments.
- 9) **Student-level transcript information:** The new SIMS-EPIMS data collection referenced in #8 also includes the collection of all course enrollments, courses completed and grades earned. Massachusetts is now able to generate student-level transcript information based upon these collections.
- 10) **Student-level college readiness test scores:** Massachusetts uses a combination of MCAS, SAT, and Advanced Placement test results to assess student-level college readiness. We have conducted a study establishing a positive relationship between high school MCAS scores and placement into public college and university credit-bearing coursework.
- 11) **Data about transitions from secondary to postsecondary schools:** DHE conducts data matching with our database of public high school graduates and provides FERPA-compliant reports regarding their enrollment and subsequent performance in post-secondary education, including enrollment in remedial coursework.
- 12) **Other data necessary for alignment and preparation for postsecondary education:** Currently Massachusetts collects information on whether graduating seniors have completed MassCore, our recommended and soon to be “default” curriculum for college readiness (see section B3). These data are linked to state assessment results and college readiness scores. Analysis of post-secondary preparedness is then completed and reported for each MA high school. We also use National Student Clearinghouse data to calculate college enrollment and retention rates.

(See Appendix C1 for further documentation on Massachusetts’s status on each element.)

Reform Plan Criteria

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

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan to ensure that data from the State’s statewide longitudinal data system are accessible to, and used to inform and engage, as appropriate, key stakeholders (*e.g.*, parents, students, teachers, principals, LEA leaders, community members, unions, researchers, and policymakers); and that the data support decision-makers in the continuous improvement of efforts in such areas as policy, instruction, operations, management, resource allocation, and overall effectiveness.⁴

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

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

(C)(2)

Goal: Transform state data systems to efficiently deliver comprehensive, accessible, actionable, and timely data to all Massachusetts K–12 educators and key stakeholders.

Massachusetts anticipated the rapidly growing importance of high quality data to inform policy and decisions at the beginning of the prior decade. Since that time, we have made significant progress in building more comprehensive data systems, primarily at state

⁴ Successful applicants that receive Race to the Top grant awards will need to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including 34 CFR Part 99, as well as State and local requirements regarding privacy.

expense. Now, to achieve our vision of education reform and reduce the variation in student outcomes, we must enhance our strategic and timely use of data and information to better support teaching and learning and educational policy decisions. Without reliable data about our students, educators, and services, we remain limited in our ability to deliver effective interventions when and where they are most needed. To that end we aim to build a system over the next four years that will enable all 80,000 K–12 educators to use data to inform their decision-making and target instruction; link data from the ESE to the Departments of Early Education and Care and Higher Education; provide near real time data to policy leaders, district and school administrators and teachers; and improve the usability of the ESE public data profiles.

Today, LEAs across our state are eager to use data in new and powerful ways, but we run the risk of wasting scarce resources—both human and financial—if each of our 393 LEAs builds its own set of systems and tools. To meet this demand, we have invested in comprehensive statewide systems and data tools, but capacity challenges within our Education Data Warehouse (EDW) and a complex public website limit their current utility for supporting decisions. Moreover, we must cultivate consistent data quality and use across every level of the education enterprise to ensure the utility, value, and impact of these data systems. And our data systems must continue to expand to support the increasing use of data for instruction, policy, operations, management, and resource allocation.

Going forward, Massachusetts must transform our static state data collections into comprehensively integrated data efficiently delivered “near real time” to teachers, principals, and LEA leaders, and eventually to parents, students, community members, unions, researchers, and policymakers. This transformation supports many of the goals and strategies laid out in other sections of this proposal. We will use RTTT funds to pursue three data systems strategies:

1. Add data and reports to the Education Data Warehouse to better support the needs of its 80,000 anticipated users
2. Improve the usability and efficiency of ESE’s public data Profiles
3. Increase the timeliness and accuracy of data reported by districts

Strategy 1: Add data and reports to the Education Data Warehouse to better support the needs of its more than 80,000 anticipated users.

The Education Data Warehouse (EDW) is the information backbone of the many projects and strategies identified elsewhere in the proposal, such as the PreK–12 teaching and learning system and initiatives targeted to increase educator effectiveness. Massachusetts owns an unlimited statewide license for K–12 educators to access and use the EDW for a multitude of purposes described throughout this proposal. The EDW combines data from multiple sources in order to provide every level of the enterprise with student, teacher, class, grade, school, LEA and statewide reports that range from narrowly focused to broadly comprehensive. Significant investments in this system are crucial to the success of our overall reform plan.

In its current form, the EDW integrates data from SIMS, EPIMS, and MCAS (including item-level responses to every MCAS test for every student and a measure of individual student-level growth), and LEAs have the option to import local data as well. Several dozen intuitive, secure, FERPA-compliant reports, each with many views and variations, are available, and more technically adept users can generate their own reports. While this is an important first step, meeting our goal of serving all of the state’s 80,000 educators will require us to accommodate 10 times the 8,000 current EDW users. We have learned from the past year’s 300-percent increase in the number of EDW users that it is neither efficient, sustainable, nor advisable to provide full functionality to every user. Through our recently awarded \$13 million State Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) grant, we will transition to a system that provides additional users with customized information based on their most likely needs. We will use RTTT funds to build on these activities, to incorporate new data elements, and to work toward building the state’s Readiness Passport, a priority initiative in Governor Patrick’s 2008 Education Action Agenda. (See Appendices C2 to C5 for an overview of ESE data systems, samples of currently available reports, a graph of historical and projected EDW users, and a conceptual schematic of the Readiness Passport.)

Activities:

- **Create role-specific dashboards to target critical information to educators.** Time is the greatest challenge for many educators. Our goal is to create dashboards for central office administrators, school administrators, and teachers to put the information at their fingertips that is most critical for driving daily educational decisions. We will interview representative educators to determine what information is of highest value, and focus on creating user-friendly, easily readable designs. This will result in a system that presents users with exactly what they need, when and how they want it. For example, when entering the EDW, a principal might first see an invitation to compare action plans with the principal of a neighboring school, an alert about a trend in their school's 2nd graders based on recent math interim assessment scores, and a report that indicates one of their 2nd grade teachers has students that are defying this trend. On the other hand, a teacher might be presented with an alert that certain of their students are not making enough progress in reading comprehension, an invitation from their teaching coach to discuss activities and lesson plans to improve student performance, and an excerpt from a data training course which explains how to systematically approach determining the underlying causes of specific outcomes.
- **Add student discipline data to the EDW.** The concept of the Readiness Passport (see Appendix C5) calls for appropriate access to timely and accurate data on a particular student that can be used to design effective instructional practice. The last remaining student-level data set to be incorporated into the EDW is data from the School Safety and Discipline Report (SSDR). The SSDR has been collecting student-level incident and discipline data since 2004 on drug and violent offenses for all students as well as all incidents resulting in suspensions for special education students. We propose to add the previous six years of SSDR data to the EDW to complete the student history available to appropriate users (see Appendix C6 for a sample of the data elements to be included). The benefit of presenting this data in an integrated format, alongside other data, will provide educators a thorough understanding of historical performance, current challenges, and the opportunities for future improvements. Further, SSDR data can be used to enhance the accuracy of ESE's comprehensive early warning system to be developed under our recently awarded SLDS grant, and it will also be useful in developing measures of school climate.

- **Expand the EDW to include financial expenditure and district comparison data.** ESE plans to add two more data sets to the EDW so users can better answer analytical questions about school districts. The first is a large set of financial indicators about schools and districts such as aggregate teacher salaries, special education expenses, and transportation costs. While some financial data has been available for years through ESE’s website, it has been managed separately through ESE’s financial unit rather than integrated into analyses of programs and performance. Similarly in districts, financial data is generally the purview of the business side and brought forward only for budget negotiations. ESE can use the Data Warehouse to structure relationships between financial, programmatic, and performance indicators and build useful tables and charts to prompt discussion of whether educational dollars are being spent effectively. Second, we have already developed a methodology for comparing any school district to the 10 others most similar to it on the basis of student demographic characteristics. We will incorporate these data into the EDW to meet a long-standing user request for this functionality in the EDW. Adding these data will allow school districts to analyze their performance relative to districts that serve similar student populations and will allow ESE and district users to gain additional perspectives on the relationship between educational inputs and outcomes.

Strategy 2: Improve the usability of ESE’s public data Profiles on the ESE website

Our agency’s public website, one of the largest and most complex state government websites in Massachusetts, has an extraordinary wealth of information and resources for educators, parents, students, policy leaders, researchers, and the public at large. The website’s Profiles section includes aggregate data on every LEA and school in the Commonwealth on dozens of measures, from student demographics and performance data dating back to 1998–99 to average teacher salaries to school technology resources (see Appendix C7). All of this data can be downloaded in common file formats to support the Open Data Initiative standards. However, the volume of data available can make the site difficult for the general public to navigate. Now that many district users are using the Education Data Warehouse as a source of data, we will redesign the Profiles website with a greater focus on parents, policy makers,

and community members as its primary audience. We will also automate our process for updating Profiles data, resulting in a more efficient system that requires less human intervention.

Activities:

- **Create new user-centered interface for ESE’s public data Profiles.** Redesign Profiles to make it easier for parents, policy leaders, and community members to answer the questions they have most often about their schools and districts. Highlight the indicators that matter most as signs of the health of a school or district.
- **Automate data updates to Profiles.** Streamline the process for updating data on the Profiles site so that updates can be done directly by data analysts, without intervention by IT staff.
- **Incorporate financial and district comparison data into Profiles.** Integrate data from our extensive school finance website directly into Profiles so that it can be seen with all other information about a district, and build in the ability to compare districts to others like themselves. (See descriptions of these data in Strategy 1.)

Strategy 3: Increase the timeliness and accuracy of data reported by districts

Schools, districts, and the state are increasingly using our state data systems to support decision-making around instruction, management, operations, and resource allocation. As the use of our systems increases, the timeliness and quality of the data become paramount concerns. Educators should not and will not use data that are out of date. We will address this concern by deploying the Schools Interoperability Framework statewide, resulting in data that are both extremely current and of the highest quality.

Activities:

- **Expand use of the Schools Interoperability Framework.** The Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF), a common education data-sharing protocol, facilitates the delivery of “near real time” data to Education Data Warehouse (EDW) users. Building upon work already completed under an earlier Longitudinal Data Systems grant, ESE will work with LEAs to procure the services of a reliable SIF vendor capable of rolling out SIF statewide. By the end of four years, every LEA will transmit data from SIS, HR, and other LEA data systems to ESE through SIF. We will integrate the collection of School Safety and Discipline Report (SSDR) data into ESE’s SIF infrastructure and establish a foundation for future cross-agency data integration that provides data to support the vision of the Readiness Passport. We will also work with vendors and the Department of Early Education and Care to implement SIF solutions that will ultimately allow for seamless integration of PreK–12 data, and also enable their participation in the teaching and learning system described in Section B3.

Timeline for C2 on next page

Timeline for C2

Strategy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Add data and reports the EDW to better support the needs of its 80,000 users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate dashboard software ▪ Analyze requirements for additional data sets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research requirements for educator dashboards ▪ Design and implement additional data sets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build dashboards ▪ Roll out reports based on additional data sets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roll out dashboards
Improve the usability and efficiency of ESE’s public data Profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collect and evaluate user preferences and finalize web design ▪ Redesign navigation and validate prototype with sample users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Re-architect and streamline data flows into Profiles ▪ Migrate 60% of Profiles features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Migrate remaining 40% of Profiles features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to implement changes based on user feedback
Increase the timeliness and accuracy of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement SIF in 77 LEAs ▪ Gather requirements for additional discipline data ▪ Update MA SIF profile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement SIF in an additional 77 LEAs ▪ Pilot collection of discipline data through SIF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement SIF in an additional 77 LEAs ▪ Roll out collection of discipline data through SIF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement SIF in an additional 80 LEAs

Responsible parties:

Expand EDW: ESE Associate Commissioner, Chief Information Officer, IT Director, Director of Data Analysis for early indicators

Improve Profiles: IT Director

Expand SIF Statewide: SLDS Program Manager

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010–2011	End of SY 2011–2012	End of SY 2012–2013	End of SY 2013–2014
Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.					
Number of data sets available in EDW	3	3	4	5	6
Percent of districts using EDW data to improve instruction, assessment, and operations	40%	55%	75%	90%	100%
Percent increase in Profiles traffic after usability improvements and addition of finance and district comparison data	0%	0%	5%	10%	15%
Number of LEAs implementing Schools Interoperability Framework	0	106	213	311	393

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

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

- (i) Increase the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness;
- (ii) Support participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) and schools that are using instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) in providing effective professional development to teachers, principals and administrators on how to use these systems and the resulting data to support continuous instructional improvement; and
- (iii) Make the data from instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice), together with statewide longitudinal data system data, available and accessible to researchers so that they have detailed information with which to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students (*e.g.*, students with disabilities, English language learners, students whose achievement is well below or above grade level).

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

Recommended maximum response length: Five pages

(C)(3): Overview

Goal: Empower educators to meet the learning needs of every Massachusetts student through access to technology resources that facilitate instructional improvement.

Imagine the Massachusetts classrooms of the future. One teacher uses the Education Data Warehouse to see how each of his students performed on a formative assessment he administered the previous day. Down the hall, a teacher of English language learners accesses the digital library to find a model lesson plan developed by a team of effective educators who have worked successfully with similar students. A third wants to measure her students' mastery of science standards not typically covered in paper-and-pencil assessments so locates an appropriate grade-level science laboratory experiment from the database of extended performance tasks. All of these teachers are interacting with and effectively using technology to reduce the variation in student outcomes.

To achieve this vision, we must build a wide-reaching, easily accessible education technology infrastructure that facilitates instructional improvement and promotes the use of the quality of curriculum and instruction, rather than just reporting and compliance. ESE will work with LEAs to provide an integrated technology and data platform that supports the adoption and implementation of the state's instructional improvement system in every school and classroom (see section B3 for a description of the Massachusetts PreK–12 teaching and learning system). Many Massachusetts LEAs are experienced users of currently available instructional improvement systems, particularly for formative and interim assessment. (See Appendix C8 for a brief description of one district's system.) We will build upon their knowledge and experience as we develop and implement a more comprehensively integrated system for all to access. ESE support and training is particularly critical for many smaller and mid-size LEAs to take advantage of the new system and to benefit from economies of scale (see Appendix C9 for our track record of legacy system builds). ESE must also make information available to researchers, so that we can continuously assess the impact of the system on student performance and identify best practices and priorities for improvement.

To accomplish these goals, the state will use RTTT funds to pursue three strategies:

1. Invest in the data systems and technology necessary to support the PreK–12 teaching and learning system
2. Strengthen and expand educator training and supports for data use
3. Make state longitudinal data available to researchers

(C)(3)(i)

Strategy: Invest in the data systems and technology necessary to support the PreK–12 teaching and learning system

An anchor of our Race to the Top proposal is the development and implementation of a statewide PreK-12 teaching and learning system that allows every educator to provide individualized instruction to meet the needs of our diverse student population (see section B3). Significant investments in the delivery of seamlessly integrated systems, particularly for the Digital Library and the interim and formative assessment system, are necessary for the system to operate at its full potential. Siloed systems which each deliver only partial functionality are significantly less effective than those which are comprehensively and successfully integrated. We plan to build, modify available open source solutions and/or subscribe to systems that together will provide teachers and instructional leaders with a comprehensive, well integrated teaching and learning system. We are evaluating all options in close partnership with participating LEAs in order to ensure maximum value and impact while minimizing high ongoing subscription costs. We anticipate these efforts will continue during the grant review period in order to finalize these decisions by the time awards are announced. Our plan is to establish the teaching and learning system with a coalition of LEAs, particularly those with prior experience with interim and/or formative assessment as we develop related tools. Key LEAs, including Boston and Springfield, have agreed (see Appendix C10) to help us develop and roll out these systems, and we will engage other LEAs as well to confirm that we develop tools that meet the needs of all LEAs. The logon and accompanying role-specific dashboards will be common across all resources.

Activities:

- **Online repositories for standards and curriculum materials.** We will develop and implement online repositories for the Common Core Standards, model curricula, and standards-coded resources in a Digital Library for use by all Massachusetts LEAs, schools, and educators. This initiative will be coordinated with parallel developments proposed for summative assessments by the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Career Consortium (see section B2), in which Massachusetts is a governing state.
- **Test builder engine.** We will develop and/or customize, field-test, and deploy a test builder engine that enables educators to assemble, score, and access results from the interim and formative assessment tools in our PreK–12 teaching and learning system. We will tag all released MCAS items performance tasks by standard, including 8,759 items already created for prior MCAS tests along with over 3,210 more items available by 2014 (see Appendix C11 for counts of released items by subject and grade). We will also work with the field to develop additional items for formative assessments (see section B3). These items will be loaded into two item banks: a secure bank for items designated for interim assessments and accessible only to designated LEA personnel, and a non-secure bank with items available to all educators and other interested users. The non-secure bank will be subdivided into two sub-groups: known high quality assessment items (e.g., MCAS released items) and non-vetted teacher-developed items. We will build an online assessment delivery system for LEA use with hard copy backup (including scannable answer sheets), along with tools to automate scoring (including constructed response items) to the maximum feasible extent and to support additional hand scoring as needed. We will also evaluate the feasibility of collecting item statistics for the non-vetted items, with the expectation that some will ultimately meet our criteria for acceptance into the vetted item bank. An item bank will be established as a repository for items related to subjects and grades for which we do not have released MCAS items, e.g., grades 1 & 2 reading and math, foreign languages, music, art, etc. These items available to districts, along with the test builder engine, can be used to construct additional assessments and related measures of growth. We will align pre-built interim assessments with our curriculum maps (see section B3), but the system will allow districts

flexibility to adapt them to their own curriculum scopes and sequences. Finally, we will build the system to load results into the EDW for delivery to LEAs, schools, and teachers within 24 to 72 hours of scoring. We anticipate that the test builder engine will also be a resource for the development of pre- and post-assessments that measure student performance for the purpose of teacher and administrator evaluation (see section D2).

- **Automated access and user support for the Digital Library.** The Digital Library is a standards-based system for storing, organizing, and using PreK–12 teaching and learning materials (see section B3). It will provide users with intuitive access to ESE’s Curriculum Frameworks, including both Common Core Standards and any additional Massachusetts standards. The library will include a wide array of digital materials including model curricula units, lesson plans, and instructional materials. A key feature of the digital library system will be a search tool which will allow users to easily search for and find teaching resources based on their associated standards, organizing ideas, and keywords. Once materials have been found and reviewed, the system will provide tools to support assembling these resources into reusable units and lesson plans. These tools will be available to all assessment consortia members as referenced in section B2.

(C)(3)(ii)

Strategy: Strengthen and expand educator training and supports for data use

Over the last five years Massachusetts has dramatically increased the data available to educational leaders for policy development and operational decisions. We have developed and delivered a variety of professional development opportunities for teachers and principals on effective data use. What we have learned is that, for most educators, significant investment in training and job-embedded activities is required before data use becomes a regular component of their practice. Our activities in this section reflect this approach.

Activities:

- **Additional courses.** We currently offer a six-course core sequence of Educator Data Warehouse training, covering both the mechanics of using the EDW and the appropriate use of data to inform instruction, and we are in the midst of developing a seventh course on using our student growth model (see section D2). We have identified a need for 10 additional courses in data use and analysis, including topics such as effective use of the curriculum materials and interim and formative assessment tools in the PreK–12 teaching and learning system and use of the EDW to inform professional development planning and educator evaluations. Collectively, the six data use courses can be thought of as the core curriculum district users will complete in their ongoing development of trained educational data professionals; the 10 additional courses can be thought of as electives. We will pre-qualify vendors to deliver this training so LEAs can easily issue contracts and be assured they are selecting high quality trainers. Professional development activities supporting the PreK–12 teaching and learning system are discussed in sections B3 and D5; data use training will also help support the school capacity building initiatives described in section E2.
- **Course delivery infrastructure.** We will upgrade ESE’s online course delivery infrastructure and related tools and release all data use courses online. This improved infrastructure will also be available to support other professional development activities described elsewhere in the proposal, such as training for teachers on the new educator evaluation system and on the content required to acquire a licensure endorsement in special education (see sections B, D, and E). Developing online courses will make them more broadly accessible and easier to integrate into daily job activities. This infrastructure will ensure that all district users have consistent, reliable access to the data use courses and tools, anytime and anywhere.
- **Data specialists.** We will place a data specialist in each of the six regional District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs) to launch, train, and directly support district and school data teams and provide additional data analysis capacity for small and midsize districts that do not have their own data staff. (See section D5 for a description of ESE’s proposed system of professional supports.)

- **Training provided to 25,000 educators.** We will provide educators with comprehensive training to support the effective use of the data systems developed to support the PreK-12 teaching and learning system. The training curriculum will include modules for each system: data dashboards, the EDW, the digital library, and the teaching and learning system. Training participants will view the training modules as one cohesive and seamless training system built upon the District Data Toolkit (see Appendix C12) already delivered by ESE. This training will consist of highly valuable electives which will supplement the core curriculum of the seven data use courses described in Activity 1 above.
- **Policy and standards.** We will use policy tools to further encourage effective use of data in three ways. First, we have already included effective use of data as an indicator in our District Standards and Indicators (see Appendix E8), so districts will be reviewed frequently on their effective implementation of this standard. Second, we will strengthen standards for using data to support continuous instructional improvement in our requirements for educator preparation program approval. Third, we will create a data team leader endorsement for teachers with professional licensure; earning this endorsement, would make a teacher eligible for additional compensation for expanded roles and responsibilities (see section D2).

(C)(3)(iii)

Strategy: Make state longitudinal data available to researchers

ESE already has a robust system for sharing confidential student-level data with researchers. We are currently pursuing more than a dozen research projects with nationally known researchers, and we have used findings from these studies to inform our policies in the areas of charter schools, expanded learning time, and school redesign, to name just a few. However, our website does not currently provide the specialized aggregate breakdowns that researchers often require to answer their research questions. Access to these data sets would allow researchers to create their own aggregate data tables to better support investigations of the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different students.

Activity:

- **Build researcher access to aggregate data.** We will build out more detailed aggregate data files in a subsection of our website targeted to researchers in order to facilitate access to data sets currently only available through the EDW. We already have a standard legal agreement to facilitate sharing confidential student-level data with researchers (see Appendix C13 for the template) and will adapt the agreement to allow researchers to access the extended data sets, as needed.

Timeline for C3

Strategy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Invest in the data systems and technology necessary to support the statewide PreK–12 teaching and learning system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document functional, access, and performance requirements including analysis of current LEA implementations ▪ Evaluate options, finalize architecture, purchase licenses ▪ Engage contractor(s) ▪ Begin adding resources to the Digital Library (see B3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create detailed system designs ▪ Develop and validate the system and integrate into the EDW ▪ Launch test builder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete and evaluate the pilot, modify as needed ▪ Connect Digital Library resources to other elements of the teaching & learning system ▪ Plan test builder rollout to all LEAs ▪ Continue pilot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate impact of state-built instructional system
Strengthen and expand educator training and supports for data use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a data training implementation plan ▪ Enhance online course delivery infrastructure ▪ Hire data specialists in DSACs ▪ Review districts on effective data use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise courses as indicated and make available face-to-face and online ▪ Review districts on data use ▪ Develop curricula for courses on the PreK–12 teaching and learning system; pilot the courses and train trainers ▪ Data team leader endorsement to licensure available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue course delivery ▪ Determine which trainings developed under section B, D and E initiatives are priorities for adaptation to online delivery ▪ Review districts on effective data use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue course delivery ▪ Adapt and implement additional courses for online delivery ▪ Review districts on effective data use
Make state longitudinal data available to researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue existing processes of providing confidential data to researchers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue existing processes of providing confidential data to researchers ▪ Discuss req'ts with researchers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop processes and protocols for sharing more detailed aggregate data with researchers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build detailed data files and begin providing data sets to researchers

Responsible parties:

Technology systems: ESE Associate Commissioner, CIO, IT program manager; Training & supports: ESE Deputy Commissioner, project manager for roll-out of teaching and learning system, professional development specialist; Data for researchers: IT Director, Director of Strategic Planning, Research, and Evaluation

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010–2011	End of SY 2011–2012	End of SY 2012–2013	End of SY 2013–2014
Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.					
% of LEAs using EDW to inform instructional decisions	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
N of educators trained on how to effectively use data and instructional tools to improve student achievement and growth	100	1,000	5,000	10,000	25,000
% of participating LEAs using one or more components of the teaching and learning system, other than the EDW (<i>also a performance measure for B3</i>)	n/a	0%	35%	75%	90%
Percentage of user visits during which the teaching & learning system meets published service level agreements for:					
• Availability: continuously available other than at scheduled maintenance times	n/a	n/a	n/a	99%	99%
• Responsiveness: loads pages in less than 3 seconds	n/a	n/a	n/a	95%	99%
• Usability: easy to use and navigate	n/a	n/a	n/a	95%	100%

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

State Reform Conditions Criteria

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

The extent to which the State has—

- (i) Legal, statutory, or regulatory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) for teachers and principals, particularly routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education;
- (ii) Alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) that are in use; and
- (iii) A process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and for preparing teachers and principals to fill these areas of shortage.

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

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

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

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

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

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

Overview

Massachusetts will only close its achievement gap when instruction in every classroom is uniformly strong. Today it is not. Too many students—typically those living in poverty, learning English as a second language, or struggling with disabilities—are still too often taught by teachers ill-prepared to teach them effectively, in schools led by principals unable to make their schools meet the needs of every student.

To change this over the next four years, Massachusetts will institute a series of intertwined statewide policy reforms to attract, develop, mentor, support, and retain an effective, academically capable, diverse, and culturally proficient educator workforce. To achieve these reforms, Massachusetts will:

- Develop a performance-based, comprehensive annual statewide evaluation process for teachers and principals, and provide training and support to ensure its effective implementation in every school. (D2)
- Review and enhance teacher induction policies and revise the licensure system for principals. (D2)
- Provide the most underserved students with access to the most effective teachers and principals. (D3)
- Strengthen and expand effective educator preparation programs and improve or close the one that are ineffective. (D4)
- Develop a comprehensive professional development system to support effective implementation of our objectives. (D5)

Our approach assumes that there is a range of effectiveness among teachers and principals, and that too few supervisors currently credibly identify where each individual falls within that range or provide actionable feedback. Four years from now, each district in the Commonwealth will evaluate teachers and principals annually, using student performance measures as a core indicator, to identify into which of at least three categories each individual falls (D2). Evaluations will be used to make decisions related to tenure, improvement planning, career ladder opportunities, compensation, and dismissal (D2 & 3). We will invest heavily in support for evaluators and provide training in evaluation protocols, including classroom observations, and offer coaching through a cadre of

master evaluators employed by the state. Finally, we will link evaluation feedback to opportunities (e.g., coaching, professional development) and resources (e.g., data, curriculum materials) for improvement.

The work described in the section was strengthened in May 2010 when the leadership of the Massachusetts Teachers Association (including its Executive Committee) endorsed our approach to teacher and leader policy and encouraged their local unions to participate in our Race to the Top proposal. In addition, on May 25, the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education directed the commissioner to convene a task force to develop recommendations for revising the teacher and administrator evaluation regulations. The task force is to complete its work by January 31, 2011, to allow the Board to adopt regulations governing teacher and administrator evaluations in spring 2011. Included in the Board's directive is the requirement that the task force incorporate student growth as a significant factor, as well as goals for improving teaching and student performance.

New evaluation regulations will require districts to begin implementation of the new evaluation framework the following school year. We will work with participating districts to develop a model supervision and evaluation system that will be used as a default for the 35 turnaround schools, beginning in August 2011. The model will also serve as a starting point for all districts to use as they collaborate locally over the 2011–12 school year to tailor the framework to their specific needs.

Reaching agreement on the key elements of a supervision and evaluation system that has student performance and educator improvement at its core required tough negotiations, but resulted in consensus. This is the approach that Massachusetts is taking to accomplish the reform agenda embodied by Race to the Top, and we are committed to doing this hard work with—not to—the field. While other states have adopted new laws dictating an arbitrary percentage of evaluation be based on student results from a single state test, we have chosen a more nuanced strategy that will support educators in developing the commitment and expertise needed to see these reforms come to life in the classroom. (Please note that throughout this section, we refer to the state-level evaluation structure as the “framework” and to the district-level structure as the “system.”)

Consensus around essential elements of a strong system to recruit, develop, support, and retain effective educators is being achieved in Massachusetts with the help of the five-year effort of the Working Group for Educator Excellence (WGEE). Every major

educator stakeholder group in Massachusetts has been engaged in this work and has endorsed the WGEE platform (See Appendix D1). Massachusetts' RTTT proposal incorporates key elements of this platform to develop a comprehensive, aligned, and systemic approach to educator development, effectiveness and equitable distribution.

We recognize that this is critically important work and intend to move forward on these initiatives with or without federal support, but RTTT funding will allow us to accelerate our efforts. Over the next four years, we will dramatically change the education landscape for our most underserved students by ensuring that educators in every district are evaluated based on student performance; that teacher and principal development goals include the improvement of teacher and student performance; that high poverty schools can attract and retain highly effective educators; that the best educator preparation programs are expanded and the weakest ones are closed; and that teachers and principals receive the effective and targeted support they need to be successful with the most challenging students. We will increase the supply of teachers qualified to work with English language learners and students with disabilities; improve middle grades math and literacy instruction, both gateways to college readiness; and expand the ability of teachers and schools to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of individual students while aiming for high levels of achievement.

In short, we will put in place the essential elements we need—great teachers and leaders—to ultimately close the persistent achievement gap in our schools.

(D)(1)(i)

Massachusetts has long known that attracting high quality educators requires multiple pathways into schools and classrooms, and has developed licensure regulations that allow for multiple alternative routes to initial licensure (see Appendix D2 for the relevant educator certification law and Appendix D3 for licensure regulations). The alternative routes include district-based models, options sponsored by the SEA, higher education institutions, professional associations, and other non-profit organizations for aspiring teachers, principals, and other administrators. Unlike many states, candidates who complete alternative route programs in Massachusetts receive the same initial license as those completing traditional preparation programs. Alternative routes usually provide

both a residency-style experience for candidates and a streamlined path to licensure, while meeting the same standards for program approval as traditional routes, including fieldwork requirements. Multiple alternative routes to administrative licensure also exist. For example, the Panel Review is a state-run portfolio-based licensure review targeted to career changers, and the 300-hour district-based Administrative Apprenticeship is a residency-style route (see Appendix D4 on alternative routes to licensure). These routes ensure high and consistent standards statewide, while allowing for local flexibility in the recruitment and preparation of teachers and administrators.

(D)(1)(ii)

A total of 39 alternative route programs conforming to the USED's RTTT definition are currently approved statewide, with additional approvals pending. The number of teachers and leaders prepared through alternative routes has grown steadily in recent years, reaching more than 1,700 educators in 2008, or 15% of newly licensed teachers and more than half of newly licensed principals (see Appendix D5 for a current list of the programs and data on program completion). The Boston Teacher Residency, an alternative master's program in education that recruits and trains educators for immediate placement in Boston Public Schools, is an example of the state's commitment to innovation in high quality, practice-based pathways to teaching. Several charter schools and other alternative sponsors have also developed successful school-based residency-style alternative routes to licensure.

(D)(1)(iii)

Effectively addressing student achievement gaps has required ESE to take steps to identify both the subjects and locations of educator shortages, and focus resources on preparation of teachers and leaders who can fill those vacancies effectively. Massachusetts has already taken important steps to identify, monitor, and evaluate areas of educator shortages and the districts most affected by them. Numerous programs have been developed to fill identified needs in shortage areas, most notably English as a second language, special education, and STEM subjects.

ESE regularly collects data on the educator pipeline from the state's Education Personnel Information Management System (EPIMS), and Educator Licensure and Recruitment system (ELAR); from Title II and state annual reporting data; and from ESE's annual survey of projected program completers, Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT) reporting, and waiver data. Linking EPIMS and ELAR in 2010 will enhance the state's and LEAs' abilities to target areas of shortage and identify patterns of inequitable distribution of effective teachers and leaders (see section C2 for a description of the planned linkages across data systems and section D3 for plans to publish an annual *Status of the Educator Workforce* report).

Governor Patrick's recent Commonwealth Readiness Project (see appendix A1) illustrates the state's use of data to inform policy decisions related to monitoring, evaluating, identifying and filling areas of shortage. The Recruiting and Retaining Educators Subcommittee recommendations included expanded recruitment efforts and incentives to teach in hard-to-staff schools and in high need subjects based on a careful review of available data from the state's EPIMS, ELAR, and retirement system databases. These recommendations led to the reorganization of educator policy, preparation, licensure, and leadership into a single center at the Department in 2008, and helped shape the recommendations for monitoring and expanding the pool and pipeline of effective teachers and leaders, discussed in section D3.

Most of the state's alternative route programs have been developed specifically to address areas of identified shortage in high need districts or fields. For example, the BTR requires its candidates to become dually licensed in a subject field and special education. ESE's pilot Massachusetts English Language Teachers initiative (MELT), developed in collaboration with Brattleboro Vermont-based School for International Training, has provided 100 Worcester and Boston teachers with an alternate route to ESL licensure. Others, such as Teach South Coast focus on attracting mid-career candidates to shortage fields like STEM.

Massachusetts also has considerable experience in using incentives to address shortages, including differential pay and signing bonuses for STEM teachers, as a direct outgrowth of its supply/demand data analyses. The 2009 National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) *State Policy Yearbook* noted that Massachusetts is one of only 16 states meeting all goal components regarding differential pay for teachers in shortage subjects and high need schools (NCTQ 2009).

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

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

- (i) Establish clear approaches to measuring student growth (as defined in this notice) and measure it for each individual student; (5 points)
- (ii) Design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth (as defined in this notice) as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement; (15 points)
- (iii) Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback; as part of such evaluations, provide teachers and principals with data on student growth for their students, classes, and schools; (10 points) and
- (iv) Use these evaluations, at a minimum, to inform decisions regarding— (28 points)
 - (a) Developing teachers and principals, including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development;
 - (b) Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals, including by providing opportunities for highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities;
 - (c) Whether to grant tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures; and
 - (d) Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and ensuring that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.

The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII,

Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Recommended maximum response length: Ten pages

(D)(2)(i)

Goal: Measure growth for all students in all grades.

Finding ways to quantify the variation in student learning that currently occurs in our schools will be key to the effective implementation of the Commonwealth's evaluation and improvement reforms. In October 2009, Massachusetts publicly released the state's first student growth data, allowing educators to quantify both achievement levels and how much an individual student's MCAS performance had changed. Massachusetts measures student growth by comparing the change in a student's MCAS performance from one year to the next, relative to that of their academic peers: all other students who had similar previous results. (For example, if one student performed better than 70 percent of her academic peers, she would receive a student growth percentile score of 70.) To measure growth for a group of students such as a classroom, school, or district, student growth percentiles are summarized using medians: the middle student in the group. Data are also summarized in the Education Data Warehouse using tables that show the percentage of students in each quintile (see Appendix D7 for the October 2009 growth model report and Growth Model Interpretive Guide). In the initial stage of growth reporting Massachusetts included students in grades 4 through 8 in 2008 or 2009 who had two or more consecutive years of MCAS results, along with students in grade 10 in 2009 who attended public schools in their eighth, ninth, and tenth grade years. With each successive year of MCAS results we expand the number of students for whom we have growth data, and this fall we will have our first statewide data set linking teachers with students' growth scores. We provide educators with access to reports of student growth results by district, school, grade, and subgroup through our Education Data Warehouse, and instructional leaders can also drill down to the student level or create custom class-based reports. School and district aggregate growth data are available to the public on ESE's Profiles website.

The Massachusetts growth model is a critical tool in our efforts to close the achievement gap, as it allows us to identify individual schools and classrooms where underserved groups (e.g. English language learners and students with disabilities) are either making exceptionally strong gains or are falling further behind their academic peers, triggering appropriate intervention. In both teacher and principal evaluation processes, the growth model will be used to help identify if a teacher's or principal's students are making growth that is higher than, typical of, or lower than their academic peers across the Commonwealth. English language arts and mathematics growth scores will be used in the evaluation process for both principals and teachers. In addition, MCAS growth data, along with other assessments that are comparable across subjects and grades (see below), will be a significant factor in performance ratings.

That said, only the 16 percent of teachers who teach 4th through 8th grade math and ELA can be *individually* matched to a student's growth score (see Appendix D8). Therefore, the state will provide direction and guidance to districts on how to evaluate the growth in performance of students in *all* courses and grades. Massachusetts will build on its extensive experience using student work samples as an alternative assessment (see Appendix D9), and will engage stakeholders and experts in those subjects not currently covered by the growth model to develop tools and approaches for measuring progress in all grades and subjects. In some subjects, this evidence may take the form of district pre- and post-tests; in others, teachers and teacher teams will require training on how to gather student work that demonstrates individual student learning, as well as typical student learning in a class. The state will develop and validate these measures, and will provide national leadership by developing an accountability system that applies to all teachers.

Activities:

- **Collect growth data.** Currently, the state is working with 69 LEAs, representative of the states' 393 LEAs and educating 61% of its Title I eligible students, to connect student growth and achievement data to individual teacher and principal information. This work will be scaled to collect growth data for all students in MCAS tested grades and subjects by the end of 2010.
- **Provide support.** The state will provide support for the development of district-based assessments that are comparable across subjects and grades through item banks, test builder tools, and exemplary models posted for all districts to access and use.

- **Provide training and implementation support on assessing growth in non-MCAS subjects.** The state will provide training and support on creating tools to assess student growth in non-MCAS tested subjects. This will include minimum requirements for collecting student work samples as evidence of student learning; guidance on scoring and interpreting results, and exemplars for different grades and subjects; and data systems to track student results (see Sections C and D5).

(D)(2)(ii)

Goal: Implement a new statewide framework for teacher and principal evaluation built on student performance by April 2011, and provide the tools and support districts need to implement the framework.

By April 2011 Massachusetts will have adopted new regulations defining a new statewide framework for teacher and principal evaluation in which impact on student performance will be considered as a significant factor. In addition, the state will develop a “default” evaluation protocol with forms, procedures and timelines that districts can either adopt or improve on, and rubrics to assess whether district evaluation systems conform to new evaluation regulations. This work will be a catalyst to promote effectiveness across the entire educator career continuum and will create powerful new tools for educators as they pursue their own professional growth.

Strategy 1: Approve new teacher and principal evaluation regulations

Activities:

- **Establish a statewide task force.** Stakeholders from groups representing the state’s teachers, administrators, other school personnel, businesses, non-profit organizations and other coalitions have met over the past several months to shape the framework for a statewide teacher and principal evaluation system. On May 25, 2010, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted to establish a Task Force on Evaluation of Teachers and Administrators, charged with recommending to the Board by January 31, 2011, a revised set of regulations and principles and a comprehensive state evaluation framework. The

Task Force will include representatives from all Mass Partners organizations (the state associations of superintendents, school committees, teachers, elementary and secondary school principals and parents), other specialized subject matter organizations, the Statewide Student Advisory Council, and representatives from organizations representing parents of students with disabilities and English language learners. In doing its work, the Task Force will seek guidance from local and national experts in evaluation.

- **Define their scope of work.** In developing its recommendations, the Task Force will create communication mechanisms for feedback from the field and will make recommendations for effective state and local implementation of the framework. Comprehensive statewide implementation of new regulations will begin in the 2011–12 school year.
- **Recommend a state evaluation framework.** Stakeholders have already agreed on specific elements that must be incorporated into the final framework the Task Force recommends (see Appendix D10). The framework must:
 - Ensure that annual evaluations provide teachers and principals with honest, fair, and improvement-oriented feedback;
 - Establish a two-year cycle of improvement via a formative assessment and summative evaluation based on a Continuous Improvement Plan for every educator. This plan will define goals for improving teaching/administrative performance and student performance, the professional development to achieve these goals, other professional support and interim benchmarks of progress.
 - Differentiate performance by *at least* three rating categories (e.g. ineffective, effective, highly effective) based on student growth as a significant factor for the purpose of establishing the requirements of the Continuous Improvement Plan.
 - Include measures of student growth (including MCAS growth scores where they apply, along with state, district, school and/or teacher-generated assessments comparable across subjects and grades) in the evaluation process.
 - Determine student performance through locally developed and/or publisher-created measures that assess student academic improvement and are reliable and comparable across similar subjects and/or grades in the school and/or district.
 - Link comprehensive evaluation to key personnel decisions, including:

- Professional teaching status (tenure)
- Career advancement through a teacher leadership career ladder
- Compensation for additional roles and responsibilities and for hard-to-staff schools
- Demotion and dismissal: A teacher or principal identified as ineffective who does not make acceptable progress toward achieving the goals of his/her Continuous Improvement Plan after at least one year of intensive support may be demoted or dismissed.

The Task Force will start with the following organizing elements:

Teacher Evaluation	Principal Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Impact on student growth as a significant factor, via multiple measures of student learning. Include state-level growth data, as well as district, school, and/or teacher generated assessments ▪ Supervisor ratings using research-based observational tools and rubrics ▪ Evidence of content knowledge, cultural proficiency, professional growth, and self-assessments ▪ Other measures that may be considered (indicators of school culture, climate, and conditions; student, and parent survey data; etc) will be determined at the local level through collective bargaining, consistent with parameters of the new statewide framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multiple measures of school-wide impact on student growth ▪ Effectiveness measures that align with statewide leadership standards and performance indicators (See Appendix D11) ▪ Impact on improving teacher effectiveness (successfully guiding good teachers to become great, struggling teachers to improve practice, and great teachers to take on additional roles and responsibilities, where appropriate) ▪ Additional measures that address: instructional leadership; administration and management; cultural proficiency and promotion of diversity; relationships with the community; distributive leadership; and other professional duties.

Strategy 2: Provide districts with the tools necessary to implement the new evaluation system

Laws and regulations are only as effective as the quality and impact of the training, professional development, technical assistance, and implementation support provided to practitioners to ensure they understand the new framework and are able to effectively implement it in their districts, schools and classrooms. To that end, Massachusetts will use RTTT funds to provide implementation support to ensure that LEA administrators, principals, and other evaluators have the tools they need to conduct annual evaluations—consistent with new evaluation regulations—that provide meaningful feedback to both teachers and principals.

Activities:

- **Implement a “default” evaluation system.** By March 2011, ESE will complete a model teacher and principal supervision and evaluation process and procedure (including criteria, forms, and timelines) that is consistent with the framework developed by the Task Force and can be used by schools to meet the teacher and principal evaluation requirements of the federal School Turnaround Grants, effective August 2011. We envision that this model will become a “default” evaluation system that districts can build from in implementing the new framework.
- **Disseminate rubrics to assess compliance.** Using the model, ESE will develop and disseminate rubrics to assess how well each district evaluation system aligns with the state evaluation framework.
- **Make tools and exemplars available to support the development of local assessments.** The state will support district evaluation groups’ efforts to develop valid, reliable, and comparable assessments for measuring student performance in all subjects and grades by providing written guidance and training in assessment and the use of the test builder tool described in Sections B3 and C3. In addition, the state will gather and disseminate through the Digital Library (see Sections B3 and C3) exemplar local assessments and methods for using the results of those assessments to measure growth in performance.
- **Provide online evaluation training.** The state will develop a series of online training units, targeted to both teachers and administrators, covering the implementation of evaluations. The units will be available through the WGBH Teachers’ Domain Digital Library of instructional resources (see sections B3 and D5).

- **Conduct hands-on training.** District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs) will conduct hands-on training for educators and answer questions about the new evaluation framework in a timely manner. Through the regional DSAC networks, LEAs will have the opportunity to share best practices and work collaboratively on their development and implementation. Evaluation coaches available through the DSACs will work directly with LEAs on implementation and training.
- **Support superintendents to require more effective supervision and evaluation.** A three-year induction program for new superintendents jointly sponsored by the state superintendents' association and ESE is being launched in July 2010, which will be offered at no cost to superintendents of Level 3 and 4 districts. Beginning in 2011–12, this induction program will be available to superintendents of Level 1 and 2 districts on a fee basis. One of the program's four strands, which will be funded in part using RTTT dollars, will include building and maintaining effective HR systems (see also D2iv and D3i). The program will also include content and follow up coaching in supervision and evaluation of *principals* with a focus on their effective supervision and evaluation of *teachers*.

(D)(2)(iii)

Goal: Implement improvement-oriented annual evaluations that include student performance data and timely and constructive feedback, beginning in school year 2011–12.

One key to improving the educator workforce is to provide each educator with honest, fair, and improvement-oriented feedback every year. New evaluation regulations and their accompanying training and implementation support will ensure that all of the state's 80,000 educators receive annual evaluations beginning in school year 2011–12 (see below for full implementation plan). These evaluations will provide educators with timely feedback to improve instruction, identify effective educators and practices, inform ongoing professional development planning, and inform key personnel decisions. RTTT funds will enable the state to develop the tools needed to ensure effective statewide implementation and to identify and share best practices. With effective monitoring,

approval, and technical support in place, the state will ensure that local evaluation systems are revised to align with the new regulations, and that meaningful, performance-based, annual evaluations continue to be conducted well beyond the span of RTTT.

Strategy 1: Plan for effective implementation

Activities:

- **Phased-in implementation.** The state will employ a phased-in approach that will ensure that school districts implement improvement-oriented annual evaluations that include student performance data and timely and constructive feedback:
 - The *nine Level 4 districts* will be required to implement these provisions in their Level 4 schools in August 2011. All teachers, regardless of subject, will be evaluated using student growth as one component.
 - The *remainder of the state's RTTT participating districts* will be required to implement the statewide framework by 2012–13.
 - *All districts in the state* will be required to implement evaluations in which student growth is a significant factor by school year 2013–14, enabling them to learn from, and build on, the efforts of RTTT-sponsored LEAs.
- **Evaluation Working Groups.** Each participating LEA will form an Evaluation Working Group comprised of teachers and administrators to develop implementation plans. These groups will be a vehicle to build consensus among local stakeholders on what constitutes acceptable student growth, and how growth can be assessed among teachers and administrators at the subject, grade, building, district, and state levels. The DSACs will provide regional meetings to support their efforts.
- **Identify and disseminate model evaluation systems.** As district evaluation systems are approved, ESE will flag them on the searchable online statewide teacher and principal contract database so that districts can review models in addition to the “default” model developed in spring 2011 (see above) to inform the development of their own evaluation system. (See Appendix D12 for information on the contracts database.)

- **Provide access to growth data and training on how to use it effectively.** Massachusetts will provide teachers and administrators with access to data on their own students' growth, and provide training to help them use this data to improve instruction, inform professional development, and accelerate professional growth (see C3 and D5).

Strategy 2: Monitor implementation of the new evaluation systems

Activities:

- **Analyze district evaluation plans.** Beginning in July 1, 2010, districts will be required to provide details of their current evaluation systems annually through the Teacher Effectiveness and Quality Improvement Plan (TEQIP) required by the state to monitor Title IIA (See Appendix 13 for details). The state will develop and use a rubric to analyze district evaluation plans to ensure they are consistent with the new regulations. The standards and indicators used in the state-mandated district performance reviews through ESE's Center for School and District Accountability will be revised so that these reviews can serve to monitor district compliance with and effective implementation of the state's new evaluation framework. (See Section E.)
- **Collect and analyze evaluation ratings.** The state will collect and analyze educator evaluation ratings annually under the new framework. These results will be made available to district review teams and will become a central component in the analysis of patterns in the distribution of ineffective, effective, and highly effective educators at the local, regional, and state levels (See D3). The analysis will identify any irregularities (e.g. high numbers of either ineffective or highly effective teachers in one school), and results will be used to prompt evaluation audits.
- **Establish a feedback system.** ESE will annually set aside a meeting of its Education Personnel Advisory Committee (EPAC) to review the status of implementation of the new evaluation system. ESE will take action as needed based on their feedback and internal staff assessments.

(D)(2)(iv)

Goal: Use evaluations to inform educator improvement, growth, and personnel decisions.

The framework adopted by the Board (see Appendix D10) calls for a continuous improvement approach to evaluation. Year One evaluations will result in improvement plans for all educators. Evaluations will prompt the need for targeted professional development provided through districts, ESE, DSACs, and the regional Readiness Centers (see D5 for more details about the state’s professional development plans). Teachers or administrators identified as ineffective based on student growth or other factors will have goals set for student and teacher performance and will be provided with intensive support to improve. Summative evaluations will be conducted in Year Two, and will be based on achieving the goals of their improvement plans, which must include measures of student performance that are reliable and comparable across similar subjects and grades in the district. The results of evaluations will be used to inform critical personnel decisions including tenure, compensation, promotion, and dismissal. Teachers and principals identified as ineffective will have a performance improvement plan put in place and supports provided to improve. If acceptable progress toward the goals of the improvement plan is not made after at least one year of intensive support, the teacher or principal may be dismissed. (See Appendix D14 for a summary of Section 4 of H425, “An Act to Ensure Educator Excellence,” sponsored by the Working Group for Educator Excellence (WGEE)).

Consistent with the WGEE framework, the state and participating LEAs will invest substantially to ensure that rigorous new evaluation systems are implemented at the district level and that evaluators receive the training and support needed to conduct fair and meaningful evaluations. Technical assistance will be provided through the DSACs to ensure that all districts have access to an evaluation trainer and coach, and to provide districts with exemplary models, tools and guidance for conducting rigorous annual evaluations at the local level (see section D2ii).

These changes in evaluation will be buttressed by performance-based endorsements to licensure—certifications in specialty areas not covered by their license—for highly effective teacher leaders. These endorsements will give teachers access to career ladder leadership roles and expanded responsibility.

Strategy 1: Evaluate each teacher and principal annually

Activities:

- Support districts in their efforts to conduct annual evaluations and develop improvement plans for all teachers and principals.** Using the framework adopted by the Board, the state will support districts in conducting evaluations for all teachers and principals on a two-year cycle. Year One evaluations will result in improvement plans for all educators, and will prompt the need for targeted professional development. Teachers or administrators identified as ineffective based on student growth or other factors will be provided with intensive support to improve. Summative evaluations will be conducted in Year Two, will be based on achieving the goals of their improvement plans (including goals for teacher and student performance), and must include measures of student performance that are reliable and comparable across similar subjects and grades in the district as well as supervisor ratings using research-based observational tools and rubrics. Also considered will be other measure of educator effectiveness, such as:

Teachers	Principals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of content knowledge, professional skills, cultural competency, professional growth Teacher self-assessments Peer observations Additional student, classroom, team, and school measures including indicators of school culture, climate, and conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisor ratings Professional skills such as strategic planning, instructional leadership, evaluation and supervision, cultural competence, human resources and development, management, external development, and micro political leadership Professional growth Principal self-assessments Peer observations Additional student, classroom, team, and school measures including indicators of school culture, climate, and conditions.

- **Employ a cadre of human resources and evaluation specialists to train, coach, and support principals and superintendents as they implement the new evaluation framework.** Through the DSAC structure, the state will employ teams of three specialists to conduct trainings on the evaluation framework and provide coaching to local district administrators (see Section D5). We will also employ three specialists at the state level to support the Commissioner’s Districts, which are not included in the DSAC structure.

Strategy 2: Use the state’s new evaluation framework to inform personnel decisions

Activities:

- **Provide tools and assistance to districts to help them make personnel decisions based on comprehensive evaluations.** The state will work with districts to help them use the new state evaluation framework to inform personnel decisions, including:
 - Improvement-oriented feedback, resulting in targeted professional development and other supports (see D5).
 - Professional teacher status (tenure).
 - The identification and promotion of highly effective teachers into teacher leadership roles, such as mentor, instructional coach, or data team leader. These positions are likely to be accompanied by additional compensation. Districts may choose to award additional pay to highly effective teachers under locally determined collective bargaining agreements.
 - The demotion and/or dismissal of persistently ineffective teachers. Teachers and principals identified as ineffective will have a performance improvement plan put in place and supports provided to improve. If acceptable progress toward the goals of the improvement plan is not made after at least 1 year of intensive support, the teacher or principal may be dismissed.

Strategy 3: Develop a career ladder for educators

Activities:

- **Implement a career ladder that includes performance-based teacher leader endorsements to licensure by 2012.** The state will develop a new career ladder to recognize and compensate a variety of new teacher leader roles. ESE will develop endorsements to licensure for at least five of these roles, e.g. mentor, instructional coach, parent outreach coordinator, instructional team leader, and data team leader. These will be developed and available to teachers beginning in 2012. In addition, the state will encourage high need districts to provide additional compensation to recruit and retain highly effective teachers in leadership roles (see section D3). One promising effort to develop a teacher leader program is already under development at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE), and the state will work with HGSE faculty to expand the program to other Massachusetts higher education campuses.
- **Review and enhance teacher induction policies.** The state will comprehensively review and enhance its policies on teacher induction in concert with the development of new teacher leader endorsements and changes in educator preparation approval requirements (see D4i).
- **Revise the licensure system for principals.** The state is already developing new Leadership Standards and Performance Indicators for Board adoption in fall 2010. These will be used to develop new performance assessments for principals at the Initial stage and portfolio assessments at the Professional stage.

Strategy 4: Support the reform of key human resource functions to help districts attract and retain the best teachers and leaders

Activities:

- **Create model human resource (HR) systems and supports.** A statewide coalition of educators (WGEE) has begun working with partner districts to align key HR functions and measure the impact of such alignment on student achievement. We will build on this work as well as homegrown models, such as Springfield Public School's "Instructional Learning Teams" and

career ladder. Beginning in 2010, the state will work with selected LEAs to create model HR systems and supports that cohesively align the key levers of educator growth and development: induction, professional development, advancement to new roles and responsibilities, and the removal of persistently ineffective teachers (See Appendix D15). ESE staff will document and disseminate model practices including those identified through the state’s district review process (see below).

- **Expand support to reform existing human resource practices.** DSACs will provide LEAs with support to conduct self-assessments of current HR practices, identify local structures and systems that impede their work, and adopt elements from the model HR systems and supports (see above). DSACs will share promising practices around recruitment, selection, induction, advancement, tenure (professional teaching status), and removal of ineffective teachers and administrators. The state will partner with the Massachusetts Association of School Personnel Administrators to identify a cadre of the state’s most effective HR professionals to work with DSAC staff as consultants to provide technical assistance to districts, disseminate best practices, and conduct in-person workshops and webinars using state-produced HR toolkits that will be available online.
- **Hold districts accountable for HR effectiveness.** The state’s current District Standards and Indicators, used to monitor and assess district performance, include the extent to which the district “identifies, attracts, and recruits effective personnel, and structures its environment to support, develop, improve, promote, and retain qualified and effective professional staff who are successful in advancing achievement for all students” (see Appendix E8 for full list of District Standards and Indicators). This standard provides a mechanism for the state to hold districts accountable for the quality of their HR operations and identify best practices in linking HR practices to the educator effectiveness.

Timeline for D2 on next page

Timeline for D2

Goal	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Measure growth for all students and all grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extend growth model to all LEAs statewide ▪ Track student results by individual teachers and principals by linking student and educator data ▪ Establish district exemplars for measuring growth in non-tested subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement student performance measures for non-MCAS subjects ▪ Deploy test builder engine and item banks statewide ▪ Issue guidance in how to use test builder engine and item banks for measuring student growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue support for measuring student growth in all subject areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to gather and disseminate non-tested subject best practices
Implement a new statewide framework for teacher leaders and principal evaluation by April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish Task Force to advise/develop new statewide Evaluation Framework (regulations and guidelines) ▪ Develop measures of effectiveness for both principals and teachers ▪ Adopt new educator evaluation regulations ▪ Develop new educator evaluation framework/guidelines with rubrics ▪ Develop default model of evaluation available for district implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Begin tiered implementation of new evaluation framework/guidelines ▪ Provide technical assistance and training for new evaluation guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to provide technical assistance and training for ongoing implementation of new evaluation guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to provide technical assistance and training for statewide implementation of new evaluation guidelines <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Continued...</i></p>

Goal	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<p>Ensure improvement-oriented annual evaluations that include student performance data and timely and constructive feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop training modules for principals and teachers on implementing effective evaluation plans ▪ Train cadre of evaluation coaches ▪ LEAs form Evaluation Working groups ▪ Launch 3-year inductions program for superintendents (no cost for Level 3 & 4 districts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement all participating LEA evaluation systems based on statewide framework ▪ Conduct hands on training through DSACS on new evaluation framework ▪ Collect and analyze LEA evaluation plans ▪ Provide professional development opportunities for school leaders on becoming effective evaluators ▪ Collect LEA evaluation results noting equitable distribution of educators ▪ Provide searchable educator contract database and evaluation protocols ▪ Provide online LEAs' best practices of new evaluation framework ▪ Deploy evaluation coaches to work with LEA evaluation teams through the DSACs ▪ Extend superintendent induction program to Level 1 and Level 2 districts on a fee basis ▪ LEAs use evaluation to target professional development to educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement LEA evaluation systems statewide ▪ Conduct hands on training through DSACS on new evaluation framework ▪ Continue to provide evaluation coaches through the DSACs ▪ LEAs use evaluation to target professional development to educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refine measures of student performance in LEA evaluation systems ▪ Conduct hands on training through DSACS on new evaluation framework ▪ Continue to provide evaluation coaches through the DSACs ▪ LEAs use evaluation to target professional development to educators <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Continued...</i></p>

Goal	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Use evaluations to inform educator improvement, growth, and personnel decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop framework for teacher leader endorsements & career ladder ▪ Review induction policies ▪ Adopt regulations for principal standards and performance indicators ▪ Adopt regulations for tiered principal licensure system and career ladder ▪ Develop principal performance assessments and portfolio for licensure ▪ Create HR systems models/pilots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adopt regulations for teacher leader endorsements ▪ Develop teacher leader performance assessments and portfolio systems ▪ Field-test principal performance assessment and portfolio systems ▪ Develop HR systems toolkit ▪ Train cadre of coaches to provide technical assistance on HR model, toolkit, and LEA self assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Field-test teacher leader performance assessment and portfolio systems ▪ Implement principal performance assessment and portfolio systems ▪ Disseminate exemplars of usage of HR models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement teacher leader endorsement and performance assessment system

Responsible parties:

Measure growth: ESE Offices of Student Assessment Services and Strategic Planning, Research, and Evaluation; ESE Center for Educator Policy, Preparation, and Licensure; LEAs.

Develop new framework: ESE Center for Educator Policy, Preparation, and Licensure; statewide Task Force; Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and its Education Personnel Advisory Committee; all participating LEAs.

Ensure annual evaluation: ESE Center for Educator Policy, Preparation, and Licensure; ESE Center for District and School Accountability; District and School Assistance Centers; all LEAs

Use evaluations to inform decisions: Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, ESE Center for Educator Policy, Preparation, and Licensure; DSACs; LEAs; stakeholders.

Performance Measures Notes: Data should be reported in a manner consistent with the definitions contained in this application package in Section II. Qualifying evaluation systems are those that meet the criteria described in (D)(2)(ii).	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014

Criteria	General goals to be provided at time of application:	Baseline data and annual targets				
(D)(2)(i)	Percentage of participating LEAs that measure student growth (as defined in this notice).	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for teachers.	0%	0%	4.4%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for principals.	0%	0%	4.4%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems that are used to inform:	--	--	--	--	--
(D)(2)(iv)(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing teachers and principals. 	n/a	n/a	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compensating teachers and principals. 	n/a	n/a	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting teachers and principals. 	n/a	n/a	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retaining effective teachers and principals. 	n/a	n/a	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Granting tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals. 	n/a	n/a	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals. 	n/a	n/a	100%	100%	100%

As described in the narrative, we will take a tiered approach to implementation of the new evaluation framework. All LEAs should have qualifying systems by Year 3. *At least* 4.4% of LEAs will implement the new evaluation framework at the *beginning* of Year 2. These districts enroll 42.3% of the Commonwealth's low income students. However, we expect many more participating districts may choose to implement the default system created by the Task Force or develop qualifying systems at an accelerated pace, which would increase these percentages substantially. Once LEAs have qualifying systems, they will be eligible to use their evaluation systems to make decisions in all categories listed.

General data to be provided at time of application:	
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Total number of participating LEAs.	276	
Total number of principals in participating LEAs.	1,424	
Total number of teachers in participating LEAs.	55,549	

Criterion	Data to be requested of grantees in the future:	
(D)(2)(ii)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems.	
(D)(2)(iii)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.	
(D)(2)(iii)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.	
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems whose evaluations were used to inform compensation decisions in the prior academic year.	
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better and were retained in the prior academic year.	
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	Number of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were eligible for tenure in the prior academic year.	
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	Number of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems whose evaluations were used to inform tenure decisions in the prior academic year.	
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs who were removed for being ineffective in the prior academic year.	

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recommended maximum response length: Three pages

(D)(3): Overview

A key to closing the state's achievement gap will be to ensure that all students receive high quality curriculum and instruction. This will only be accomplished by getting more highly effective teachers and leaders into all of our schools, with a particular focus on high poverty, high minority districts, and the fields in which we face critical shortages (ESL, special education and STEM). We will do so by pursuing three intertwined strategies: setting ambitious but achievable targets and holding districts accountable for meeting them; strategically employing incentives to recruit and retain great teachers and leaders in high poverty/high minority schools and shortage fields; and strengthening the ways in which new recruits are brought into the classroom and supported. Taken together, our focus on targets, incentives and supports will help us close the achievement gap by ensuring that our most underserved students in our most underserved schools and districts will be taught and led by our most effective teachers and leaders.

Goal: Establish and monitor state and local targets to increase equitable distribution of teachers and leaders.

We will tie annual district reporting on the equitable distribution of educators to each district's Title IIA funding for teacher improvement, to the extent allowable by law. We will expand the state's Teacher Equity Plan (TEP) to include effectiveness ratings, and establish challenging targets for each district based on data from the online TEQIP, TEP, EPIMS and other sources. Finally we will use the state's district review process to hold districts accountable for making progress toward equitable distribution.

Activities:

- **Monitor effective teacher supply and distribution.** The state currently identifies districts that fail to meet their Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) targets under Title IIA and requires that they address the issue using funding from Title IIA and a portion of their Title I allotment through a corrective action plan. We will expand our monitoring of the supply and distribution of effective and highly effective educators through EPIMS and TEQIP data collections and annual district TEQIPs (see Appendix D13). ESE also currently monitors district compliance with HQT provisions, and will do the same for teacher

effectiveness beginning in 2011–12 by revising requirements for reporting to replace the HQT standard with an effective educator standard based on educator ratings of *ineffective*, *effective*, and *highly effective*.

- **Publish an annual trends report.** Beginning in fall 2010, ESE will publish an annual report on key issues in educator supply and demand and the distribution of effective educators by district, school, and preparation pathway. This *Status of the Educator Workforce* report will be updated annually to incorporate new data and educator effectiveness ratings (as they become available) and will be distributed to stakeholders across the Commonwealth through the regional DSACs and Readiness Centers. This report will give us critical information for targeting resources and will make the public tracking and monitoring of progress against goals more transparent.
- **Hold districts accountable.** District progress in achieving their targets will be included in the state-mandated district self-assessment and review process (see Section E), tying equitable distribution targets to the state’s revised accountability system. This will expand state-level authority to hold districts accountable for equitable distribution of teachers and to take corrective action as needed to ensure continued progress.

(D)(3)(i)

Goal: Ensure more great teachers and leaders work in high poverty / high minority schools.

Massachusetts will offer a variety of incentives to attract and retain more effective and highly effective teachers and principals to high need districts and schools, including opportunities for increased compensation and targeted initiatives to improve conditions and school climate. This effort will be supported by the target-setting work described above and the work described in D3ii to recruit and retain educators in hard-to-fill subjects. As described in Sections A and E, recent legislation is helping address two underlying causes of the inequitable distribution of effective educators by enabling leaders of the lowest achieving 4% of schools to require all staff to reapply for their positions, and replacing the “just cause” standard for dismissal with a “good cause” standard. For example, Boston has already required the faculty in 6 of its 12 turnaround schools to reapply and has provided principals with authority to make staff

selection decisions on each candidate's merits, not seniority. Leaders of these low performing turnaround schools can now be assured that they will not receive forced placements of ineffective teachers. The state will build on these efforts.

Strategy 1: Offer district-level incentives to attract effective educators to high-need schools to build school-based capacity for improvement

Activities:

- **Expand existing statewide recruitment campaign and tie to national efforts.** The state will expand its Level 4 school “aMAzing teachers” (www.amazingteachers.org) recruitment campaign and website (see Appendix E13) over the next four years to include all high-need districts and fields and will expand on-line marketing and outreach through social media and public service announcements. The state’s recruitment campaign will also link to USED’s recently announced national teacher recruitment initiative.
- **Develop exchange policies.** To encourage experienced, effective educators from high performing districts to take on difficult teaching assignments at Level 3 or 4 schools, ESE will develop guidance that allows them to temporarily move to a struggling school for up to two years without that time constituting a break in service or loss in professional status in their original district, should they seek to return.
- **Develop a corps of master educators in high-need schools.** The state will provide financial support for 200 teachers and/or principals in high-need schools to obtain their National Board certification, developing a new corps of master educators in our highest poverty schools. For highly effective teachers, ESE will also provide recruitment and retention incentives and/or opportunities to take on leadership responsibilities, thereby attracting National Board certified or district-designated master or lead teachers to transfer into high-need schools.
- **Provide incentives for principals to work in high-need schools.** ESE has partnered with the Center for Collaborative Education to design a program to recruit, prepare, place, and support teams of principals and assistant principals in designated

underperforming schools around the state (see Section E) and has already applied for non-RTTT federal funding to support this effort. This program will include a Turnaround Leaders Institute to prepare 160 current successful principals and assistant principals to assume leadership of underperforming schools, as well as a Turnaround Leaders Residency to credential 80 aspiring leaders through a 14-month apprentice-based program to assume assistant principal and principal positions in underperforming schools. We will use RTTT funding to supplement these efforts by providing a monetary incentive offered in two parts: a recruitment bonus at the beginning of the first year, and a retention bonus following the third year of employment. A combination of RTTT funds and Title I School Turnaround Grant (STG) funds will be used to test out the efficacy of these incentives in the 33 high poverty/high minority recently-named Level 4 schools (across 9 districts) that are eligible for federal STGs plus an additional 10 schools out of 60 that will compete for these federal grants (see Appendix E12 for a description of the characteristics of the Level 4 schools). See Section E for other steps being taken to recruit and retain effective educators in underperforming schools and districts (Level 4) and those most at risk of underperforming (Level 3).

Strategy 2: Improve school climate and conditions in high poverty/high minority districts and schools

Teachers and leaders are attracted to work at and more likely to stay in schools with healthy conditions, cultures and climates. No strategy for recruiting and retaining educators would be complete without directly addressing changes needed to improve these factors. In addition to the activities detailed below, see section E for other steps being taken to strengthen working conditions in underperforming schools and districts (Level 4) and those most at risk of being designated underperforming (Level 3).

Activities:

- **Use the results of a biannual climate and condition survey to improve working conditions.** The state will conduct biannual school surveys in *all* districts to identify areas of school climate and conditions in need of improvement (See Massachusetts Teaching, Learning, and Leading Survey (TeLLS) description in Appendix D16). Survey results will be published and lead to district action plans for improving school conditions, climate and culture. Regional DSACs will

disseminate best practices and ESE will encourage districts to use a portion of their RTTT funds to improve school conditions and climate, informed by survey results and findings from their district self-assessment and reviews. ESE will fund initiatives in Level 3 and 4 districts to address these issues. Possible district projects include:

- Hiring school administration managers (SAMS) to support principals with administrative duties;
 - Offering the *Take One!* professional development program, aligned with standards for NBPTS certification;
 - Providing increased time for teacher planning and collaboration; and
 - Other targeted school climate initiatives that directly address LEA-specific issues.
- **Provide principals in high-need schools with access to a support network.** To increase support for principals in high need schools, the ESE will create a professional development and effective practice sharing network across districts to enable school leaders to learn from and share with other principals undertaking similar turnaround efforts.
 - **Expand ongoing instructional leadership training to build the capacity of principals to support effective teacher teams.** The state will expand instructional leadership training for principals and other school administrators in partnership with the National Institute of School Leadership (NISL) (see Appendix D17). Preliminary evaluation results have indicated that NISL-trained principals have a significant positive impact on student achievement in mathematics (in press).
 - **Expand targeted human resources assistance to high poverty (Level 3 and 4) districts.** To address the systems issues that often inhibit the ability of our neediest schools to retain highly effective teachers, ESE has already begun to provide technical assistance through HR experts to the 10 Commissioner’s Districts to strengthen recruitment, hiring, and selection practices. This targeted support focuses on creating tools for districts and schools, including new selection competencies for turnaround teachers and improved screening and interviewing tools; training district leaders and principals on effective practices in hiring and staffing; helping districts access the pipelines of effective teachers; working with districts to craft both monetary and non-monetary incentive packages; supporting districts to use effectiveness measures to redesign systems for selection, hiring, assignment, compensation and dismissal of teachers. This work will be expanded through the DSACs, with priority given to

Level 3 districts via the activities discussed in D2iv. For other teacher capacity-building initiatives already underway, see Appendix D18.

- **Build capacity to recruit and retain a diverse work force.** The state will convene a diversity summit in fall 2010 to focus on the recruitment and retention of a diverse and culturally proficient educator workforce. The summit will produce specific actionable recommendations to guide state, district, and higher education efforts to inform the state's equity plan and to strengthen the diversity and cultural proficiency of Massachusetts educators.

(D)(3)(ii)

Goal: Increase the number of effective educators in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas.

The state will use the monitoring mechanisms described above to target specific initiatives to high-need teaching fields in order to reduce the number of licensure waivers, increase the number of educators entering high-need fields and specialty areas, and increase the number of teachers who are successful and remain in the field. We will focus on ESL, special education and the STEM fields; see Section E for other steps being taken to address the need for effective teachers in underperforming districts and schools.

Strategy 1: Provide incentives, support and alternative pathways to encourage educators to teach hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas

Activities:

- **Use data to implement targeted recruitment initiatives.** Regional Readiness Centers will assist in the development and implementation of targeted initiatives to recruit and retain prospective teachers, informed by data from regional educator labor markets and results of the *Status of the Educator Workforce* report (see D3). The Department of Higher Education's Vision Project is also focusing on aligning higher education with statewide workforce needs through better reporting and metrics (See Appendix D19).

- **Partner with UTeach.** The state will partner with UTeach to create a STEM-focused educator preparation program site that will prepare 250 new teachers in STEM teaching fields throughout the RTTT grant. The UTeach model design includes a focus on programmatic sustainability, so the program will continue to prepare teachers in STEM areas after the grant period. (See Appendix D20.)
- **Expand proven models of effective teacher and principal preparation.** The state will create a competitive grant fund (described in D4ii) to expand proven models of effective teacher and principal preparation. Massachusetts will incentivize preparation programs to create residency-style models and to expand successful preparation initiatives for recruiting and preparing effective educators, with an emphasis on urban teaching in high-poverty schools, and high need fields (STEM, special education, and English language learners). Some examples of successful programs include:
 - The Boston Teacher Residency, a national model for urban teaching residency programs, which was recently awarded a significant Teacher Quality Partnership grant to expand their work in recruiting, preparing and developing teachers in high-need areas and teachers of color, and to create teacher leadership opportunities for teachers after their first years.
 - Teach for America, a state-approved program, which attracts outstanding college graduates to work in some of our lowest performing schools in five urban districts in Massachusetts and would like to expand to all 10 Commissioner’s Districts.
- **Develop and provide online courses for 800+ licensed teachers to earn ESL or special education licensure at little or no cost.** We will increase our pool of educators licensed in special education and/or English as a second language (ESL) by 800 or more by developing and offering online competency-based courses in special education and ESL for teachers with existing licenses in other subjects to earn the certification they need to take on assignments in high-need areas (see Appendix D21).
- **Develop online mentor training.** High quality mentoring and induction is a factor in improving educator retention in high need schools and fields, and when offered, helps to reduce unnecessary recruitment costs. (See Appendix D22 for a report on the cost of recruitment and retention in the Boston Public Schools.) Massachusetts will develop and implement online training to support teacher leaders in their mentoring of new teachers working with high need populations, especially English language

learners and students with disabilities. These online courses and tools will be made available through WGBH's Teacher's Domain (see section B3) to all LEAs to strengthen induction practices statewide.

- **Offer customized professional development.** Working through the Readiness Centers and other venues, Massachusetts will provide teachers in high-need schools with high-quality, results-oriented, and customized professional development offerings to enhance their effectiveness (see section D5).

(Timeline for D3 on next page)

Timeline for D3

Goal	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<p>Ensure students in high-poverty/high-minority schools have equitable access to highly effective educators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand aMAzing teachers recruitment website and revise Massachusetts Educators Career Center ▪ Develop and implement recruitment and retention incentives for educators in high poverty and high minority schools ▪ Launch support network for principals in high need schools ▪ Adopt exchange policies for enabling effective educators to move to high poverty districts ▪ Conduct Mass TeLLS survey results and publish results ▪ Expand instructional leadership training (NISL) ▪ Collect EPIMS and TEQIP data to monitor equitable distribution ▪ Publish <i>Status</i> report ▪ Convene statewide diversity summit and formulate action agenda and indicators with Readiness Centers ▪ Expand National Board certified and other master educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement exchange policies for effective educators ▪ Continue incentives for educators ▪ Disseminate exemplars of school conditions and culture initiatives ▪ Develop and implement online network for educators to share best practices for school turnaround efforts ▪ Continue incentives for educators ▪ LEAs develop action plans for improving school culture based on results from Mass TeLLS survey ▪ Publish <i>Status</i> report ▪ Continue NISL training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue incentives for educators ▪ Continue implementing exchange policies for effective educators ▪ Conduct Mass TeLLS survey results and publish results ▪ Publish <i>Status</i> report ▪ Continue NISL training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue incentives for educators ▪ Continue implementing exchange policies for effective educators ▪ LEAs develop action plans for improving school culture based on results from Mass TeLLS survey ▪ Publish <i>Status</i> report ▪ Continue NISL training <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Continued...</i></p>

Goal	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Expand the pool and pipeline of effective educators in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create STEM-focused educator preparation site (Uteach) ▪ Develop online competency-based special education and ESL courses ▪ Develop online courses for mentors of ESL, special education, and STEM field teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement competitive grant fund for expanding proven models of educator preparation programs ▪ Implement online competency-based special education and ESL courses ▪ Train cadre of ESL and special education field coaches ▪ License 400 new ESL and special education teachers ▪ Continue UTeach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ License 300 new ESL and special education teachers ▪ Continue UTeach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support 10–15 working conditions/school climate teams ▪ License 400 new ESL and special education teachers through new online courses (total of 900 over the four years) ▪ Produce 250 new STEM teachers through UTeach

Responsible parties:

ESE Center for Educator Policy, Preparation, and Licensure; ESE Center for Targeted Assistance; Readiness Centers

Performance Measures for (D)(3)(i)	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or	End of SY 2010- 2011	End of SY 2011- 2012	End of SY 2012- 2013	End of SY 2013- 2014
<i>Note: All information below is requested for Participating LEAs.</i>					
General goals to be provided at time of application:	Baseline data and annual targets				
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	10%	n/a	15%	17%	20%
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	15%	n/a	18%	20%	23%
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	35%	n/a	27%	22%	10%
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	20%	n/a	18%	15%	10%
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	7%	n/a	11%	15%	25%
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	12%	n/a	15%	18%	25%
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	35%	n/a	25%	19%	12%
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	15%	n/a	14%	12%	10%

The development of an evaluation framework based on multiple measures of educator effectiveness is central to the state's RTTT proposal (see section D2). The only current statewide proxy for teacher ineffectiveness is non-Highly Qualified Teachers (2.5% in low poverty / low minority schools; 5.2% in high poverty / high minority schools). However, as a baseline this figure seems low when compared to the work of other districts and states with stronger measures (e.g., Pittsburgh Public Schools, Teacher Advancement Program, Tennessee Department of Education, School District of Palm Beach County). We have adjusted the benchmark to reflect these estimates, taking into consideration our state's history of high student achievement. Based on the plan we have laid out, we will begin to measure educator effectiveness in Year 2 of the grant and will

implement the evaluation framework for all participating districts in Year 3. Accordingly, Year 1 targets are not applicable. The targets in Years 3 and 4 represent our aspiration to dramatically improve the effectiveness of our teachers and principals and to close any effectiveness gaps across schools.

General data to be provided at time of application:	
Total number of schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	538
Total number of schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	734
Total number of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	21,373
Total number of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	29,193
Total number of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	561
Total number of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	749

Data to be requested of grantees in the future:	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as highly effective (as defined in this notice) in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as highly effective (as defined in this notice) in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers and principals in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.	

Performance Measures for (D)(3)(ii) <i>Note: All information below is requested for Participating LEAs.</i>	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
General goals to be provided at time of application:	Baseline data and annual targets				
Percentage of mathematics teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	75%	n/a	79%	83%	88%
Percentage of science teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	75%	n/a	79%	83%	88%
Percentage of special education teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	65%	n/a	70%	75%	85%
Percentage of teachers in language instruction educational programs who were evaluated as effective or better.	65%	n/a	70%	75%	85%

As in D3i the performance measures set above signal the state’s intent to pursue significant gains in the percentage of effective teachers statewide, while closing any existing gaps in the effectiveness of teachers across all subjects and specialty areas. The estimated baseline and annual targets reflect some of the challenges faced by teachers in certain subject and specialty areas. The effectiveness of all math and science teachers is expected to be roughly equal to the average effectiveness across the state (as estimated for D3i), since teachers in these subjects are spread across all schools. Notwithstanding, the percentage of teachers on waivers in these subjects tend to be higher than in other teaching fields. Finally, estimates for teachers of special education and English language learners (referenced as language instruction educational programs above) are set at the same levels as high poverty, high minority schools in D3i, recognizing that these groups face particular challenges and that the percentage of teachers on waivers is highest among this group.

General data to be provided at time of application:	
Total number of mathematics teachers.	6,988
Total number of science teachers.	5,303
Total number of special education teachers.	8,224
Total number of teachers in language instruction educational programs.	1,527

Note: Headcount data on teachers is for school year 2008–09.

Data to be requested of grantees in the future:	
Number of mathematics teachers in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.	
Number of science teachers in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.	
Number of special education teachers in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.	
Number of teachers in language instruction educational programs in participating LEAs who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.	

(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs (14 points)

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—

- (i) Link student achievement and student growth (both as defined in this notice) data to the students’ teachers and principals, to link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, and to publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the State; and
- (ii) Expand preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice).

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

Recommended maximum response length: One page

(D)(4)(i-ii)

Goal: Strengthen and expand effective educator preparation programs and improve or close ineffective ones.

Massachusetts currently has five routes to licensure, which include several alternative options for programs and providers (see Appendix D4 and D5 for more detail). Over the next four years we will use performance based-criteria (e.g. job placement rates, retention, and impact on student achievement and growth) to identify the strongest teacher and principal preparation programs, and offer expansion incentives to help them grow. We will strengthen all preparation programs through new regulations, reporting structures and program approval requirements tightly linked to outcome measures, and offer expansion incentives to help them grow.

Ineffective programs, identified using the performance based criteria, will be provided with technical assistance and/or closed. The effectiveness of all programs will be publicly reported on an annual basis. (See Appendix D23).

Strategy 1: Base the educator preparation program approval and accountability system on outcomes and effectiveness measures

Activities:

- **Adopt rigorous program approval regulations.** Over the next two years ESE will establish program approval regulations, identify struggling educator preparation programs, provide those that can be improved with technical assistance, and close programs that are deemed the most ineffective. Under the *Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval (603 CMR 7.00)*, the state can develop and implement new approval and accountability requirements for preparation programs linked to outcome measures and the effectiveness of program graduates in promoting student achievement. In developing the regulations, ESE will consider the success of exemplary programs including those currently approved in Massachusetts, such as Teacher Residency, UMass-Boston Teach Next Year program, and the UMass-Dartmouth Teach SouthCoast and UrbanSouth. The new requirements will align with new professional standards, be informed by the measures of effectiveness developed in section D2, and include the use of student achievement and growth data. The framework will be used to determine how to expand effective programs, improve or close ineffective ones and promote a model of continuous review and improvement. The new approval guidelines will be aligned with state content standards, and will require that each program have a standards-based curriculum that reaches all students; rigorous admissions standards; effective partnerships between institutes of higher education (IHEs) and LEAs; academic and clinical instruction integrated throughout the program via substantial field-based experience and teacher/principal residencies; a system to measure effectiveness (based on work in D2); a tight integration between preparation and induction during the first two years of a teacher's placement; a strong focus on the use of evidence throughout the program to promote pupil learning and improved instruction; and clear methods of evaluation to monitor program quality, graduates' impact on their students' learning and retention in teaching.

- **Develop web-based public accountability reporting.** The new regulations will be buttressed by a new statewide, web-based public reporting system that will make key indicators and outcome data on preparation program effectiveness publicly available. This will include placement of graduates, retention rates and impact on student achievement (see Appendix D23 for a draft Annual Report Card).
- **Expand pilot program approval process.** A pilot program approval process based on outcome-based effectiveness indicators (see Appendix D24) has been completed through a partnership with 12 representative preparation programs (see Appendix D25). This pilot will be further expanded with enhanced measures of effectiveness linked to placement and retention of graduates, and their impact on student achievement and growth.

Strategy 3: Provide competitive grants to expand and scale effective programs

Activities:

- **Support principal residency programs for high-need schools.** Grants will be made available to support the development of regional residency models for principal preparation.
- **Expand highly effective preparation programs.** Funding will be provided to expand programs that have demonstrated their effectiveness in recruiting, preparing and placing academically-talented and diverse candidates in high need schools and licensure areas, such as STEM fields, ELL and special education. Candidates will be prepared in cohorts and provided with induction support, as a result of increased collaboration between LEAs and preparation programs. The Readiness Centers will use their networks of partners to encourage the development and implementation of new collaborative programs, as well as the enhancement of existing educator preparation programs offered by the institutions of higher education that manage the centers. The DSACs will assist in sharing best practices.

Timeline for D4

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Strengthen and expand effective educator preparation programs and improve or close ineffective ones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refine effectiveness indicators and measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide competitive expansion grants to scale effective teacher and principal preparation programs ▪ Provide competitive grants for residency models of principal preparation ▪ Adopt regulations for educator preparation program approval and reporting, including new effectiveness indicators and measures ▪ Align accountability systems with new program approval regulations ▪ Develop educator preparation program report cards via Title II data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide technical assistance to preparation programs on new approval and reporting requirements ▪ Establish platform, using ELAR, for capturing new approval evidence and reporting requirements ▪ Provide competitive expansion grants to scale effective teacher and principal preparation programs ▪ Provide competitive grants for residency models of principal preparation ▪ Refine publicly available educator preparation program report cards with effectiveness measures and publish on state website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and approve at least 25 preparation programs based on new regulations of program approval ▪ Continue annual publishing of educator preparation program report cards with effectiveness measures on state website

Responsible parties: Board of Elementary and Secondary Education; ESE Center for Educator Policy, Preparation, and Licensure; ESE Center for Assessment, Technology, and Adult and Community Learning; LEAs; educator preparation programs; Readiness Centers.

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most	End of SY 2010- 2011	End of SY 2011- 2012	End of SY 2012- 2013	End of SY 2013- 2014
General goals to be provided at time of application:	Baseline data and annual targets				
Percentage of teacher preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice) of the graduates' students.	0%	0%	0%	60%	100%
Percentage of principal preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice) of the graduates' students.	0%	0%	0%	20%	100%
<p>As described in section C2, the state plans to link the databases for students (SIMS), teachers (EPIMS), and licensure (ELAR) in order to collect data on the effectiveness of a preparation program based on its graduates' impact on student growth. This data will become publicly available beginning in Year 3 of Race to the Top, starting with programs that have at least 20 educators completing the program each year (to ensure a fair and reliable sample size). By Year 4, the state will have at least two years of data for each program and will publicly report such data, including impact of program completers on student growth and achievement, for all of its approved preparation programs (see Appendix D23 for a draft report card).</p>					
General data to be provided at time of application:					
Total number of teacher credentialing programs in the State.	73				
Total number of principal credentialing programs in the State.	33				
Total number of teachers in the State.	75,356				
Total number of principals in the State.	1,901				

Note: Data above, including headcount data on teachers and principals, is for school year 2008-2009.

Data to be requested of grantees in the future:

Number of teacher credentialing programs in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.

Number of teachers prepared by each credentialing program in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.

Number of principal credentialing programs in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.

Number of principals prepared by each credentialing program in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.

Number of teachers in the State whose data are aggregated to produce publicly available reports on the State's credentialing programs.

Number of principals in the State whose data are aggregated to produce publicly available reports on the State's credentialing programs.

(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals (20 points)

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

(i) Provide effective, data-informed professional development, coaching, induction, and common planning and collaboration time to teachers and principals that are, where appropriate, ongoing and job-embedded. Such support might focus on, for example, gathering, analyzing, and using data; designing instructional strategies for improvement; differentiating instruction; creating school environments supportive of data-informed decisions; designing instruction to meet the specific needs of high need students (as defined in this notice); and aligning systems and removing barriers to effective implementation of practices designed to improve student learning outcomes; and

(ii) Measure, evaluate, and continuously improve the effectiveness of those supports in order to improve student achievement (as defined in this notice).

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

Recommended maximum response length: Five pages

(D)(5)(i)

Goal: Support effective implementation of our objectives through a comprehensive professional development system.

Massachusetts has set ambitious objectives for our next phase of education reform to reduce the variation in student outcomes by reducing the variation in the quality of curriculum and instruction that students experience. We have learned from our previous work

that to put desired reforms into practice in classrooms, we need to devote substantial and systematic attention to implementation support for educators, largely in the form of professional development. Short of this, our reforms will be nothing more than hopes and aspirations.

Strategy 1: Focus the content of professional development on supporting effective implementation of our four overarching objectives.

Our four state objectives define the priority areas where professional development and implementation support is most needed to help educators reduce the variation in student outcomes. Further, our proposed new evaluation system relies heavily on professional development as a strategy for improving the performance of ineffective educators as defined in their Continuous Improvement Plans. To meet these needs, we will expand existing effective development opportunities and create new ones where necessary, as follows.

Attract, develop, and retain an effective, academically capable, diverse, and culturally proficient educator workforce to ensure every student is taught by a great teacher and every school and district is led by a great leader.

- Teams of three human resources and evaluation specialists will be placed within each DSAC, plus another team placed at ESE to serve the ten Commissioner’s Districts, to help districts develop and implement educator evaluation systems aligned with our new state evaluation framework as well as programs and policies to support equitable distribution of educators. (See section D2 and D3.)
- For teachers, we will offer online training on the new evaluation framework and on how to document student improvement through pre- and post-assessments and other rigorous, valid, and reliable methods. (See section D2.)
- For administrators, we will offer training on how to provide effective feedback to educators through DSACs and how to develop local measures of educator effectiveness. (See section D2.) We will also continue our principal leadership program modeled on the National Institute for School Leadership, which in preliminary analyses has shown promise in improving student performance in mathematics. This training will develop principals’ skills as instructional leaders and talent developers.

Finally, we will offer a superintendent induction program that will include training on strengthening human resources systems, supervision, and evaluation.

- Readiness Centers will take the lead on disseminating results from the Status of the Educator Workforce report, with a particular focus on filling gaps and needs in their own regions and on complementing ESE efforts to expand the supply of effective educators and distribute them to high need schools and in high need subjects. (See section D3.)

Provide curricular and instructional resources to provide every educator with the tools necessary to promote and support student achievement.

- We will provide face-to-face and online versions of our training on how to use data to improve instruction and how to integrate the elements of the teaching and learning system into classroom practice. These elements include the model curriculum, digital library, interim and formative assessments, the test builder engine, and the Educator Data Warehouse. (See sections B3, C2, and C3.) We will also place a data specialist in each DSAC to augment this training and foster the effective use of data in districts.
- We will place mathematics and literacy specialists in each DSAC to provide instructional coaching in Level 3 districts, a high priority need in these districts, to prevent them from reaching Level 4 status. (See sections B3 and E2.)
- We will offer opportunities for educators to acquire endorsements for licensure in special education and English language development at low cost through online courses, to help expand the supply of educators in these two low supply, high waiver licensure areas. (See section D3.)
- To strengthen educators' content knowledge, we will continue to offer Intel Math for elementary teachers, our Professional Development Institutes (see Appendix D26) in all content areas and in special education, and other grant-funded opportunities in mathematics, literacy, and instructional technology. Courses will be offered through Readiness Centers, DSACs, and ESE-approved vendors.

- To expand educators' repertoire of instructional strategies to reduce the variation in student outcomes, we will provide access to training in tiered instruction models in literacy and mathematics as well as sheltered English immersion.

Concentrate great instruction and supports for educators, students, and families in our lowest performing schools and their districts to create the conditions needed for improved student achievement.

- We will use the DSACs and the district liaisons in our Office of Urban District Assistance to connect Level 3 and 4 districts with the professional development opportunities best aligned with their school improvement plans.
- We will provide intensive professional development to our cadre of turnaround teachers and leaders on tiered instructional models in literacy and mathematics and behavioral supports to help them manage the challenges they are likely to face, including remediating students performing significantly below grade level, working with English language learners and students with special behavioral or emotional needs and their families, and improving school-level working conditions. (See section E2.)
- As described in section E2, we will build district capacity in effective governance and leadership; human resource management and development systems; integrated community support for students' social, emotional, and health needs; and improved dropout prevention and recovery. All these strategies will include a relevant professional development component aimed at supporting deep implementation.

Increase dramatically the number of students who graduate from high school ready for college and career.

- We will provide training for vertical teams of middle and high school teachers of mathematics, English language arts, and science in low income districts to develop effective pre-AP curriculum and instruction in grades 6 to 10 designed to increase the number of low income and minority students prepared to succeed in AP coursework in high school. (See section B3.)
- We will provide guidance counselors and administrators with training on using the YourPlanforCollege website and the Massachusetts Model for Comprehensive School Counseling described in section B3.

Strategy 2: Shape our existing statewide professional development activities into a comprehensive professional development system.

Massachusetts already offers substantial professional development opportunities targeted toward high priority needs statewide, and we are already in the process of developing a coherent statewide strategy for its delivery. Race to the Top will allow us to accelerate these efforts and to focus specifically on using these mechanisms to reduce the variation in student outcomes by reducing the variation in the quality of curriculum and instruction that students experience.

- **Readiness Centers.** As described in sections A1 and A2, our six regional Readiness Centers serve two functions:
 - To convene stakeholders from early education, elementary and secondary education, higher education, and other sectors to collaboratively address key education priorities, leverage resources, build statewide capacity, and increase integration and coherence across the education continuum; and
 - To provide high quality professional development and instructional services to educators in early education and out-of-school-time programs, K–12 institutions, and higher education institutions to address both local / regional needs and statewide priorities.

The programmatic priorities for both functions are directly aligned with Massachusetts’ RTTT initiatives and the professional development priorities described in this section (see Appendix A6). In addition, the Readiness Centers are leveraging existing relationships and building new partnerships among regional stakeholders to improve the delivery mechanisms through which professional development and instructional services are provided to educators, which, coupled with activities through ESE and the DSACs, will result in the development of a more coherent and aligned delivery system in the state.

- **District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs).** The six DSACs focus specifically on the K–12 sector and deliver foundational professional development explicitly tied to school improvement plans. The DSAC directors work individually with superintendents in their region to develop each district’s strategy for accessing professional development resources available through the DSAC and ensuring that the tools and techniques learned are implemented in classrooms. Because of

their expertise in on-the-ground implementation, we have created six positions in each DSAC to support participating districts in implementing our priorities around coaching for mathematics and English language arts in Level 3 schools, effective use of data to inform instruction, and the educator evaluation and equitable distribution activities described in sections D2 and D3.

- **Online coursework.** Offering courses partially or entirely online has proven to be an effective approach for making professional development opportunities more broadly accessible to educators and easier for them to embed into their day-to-day activities. We will enhance our existing online course delivery infrastructure and use it to deploy online courses related to effective data use, using the teaching and learning system, implementing educator evaluations, special education and English language learner certification, mentoring, and so forth.
- **Professional learning communities.** We have an existing tool that helps districts to implement professional learning communities related to using student data to improve instruction. Through Race to the Top we will support its statewide dissemination and expand it to include modules on using the curriculum, instruction, and assessment tools described in B3.
- **Regional networks.** Our mathematics and literacy curriculum specialists have already established networks of curriculum coordinators in our urban districts that meet frequently to learn from one another and disseminate best practices. Through Race to the Top we will expand this approach to build a network to support science curriculum coordinators as well.
- **Pre-approved vendors.** We have pre-approved vendors to deliver our six existing modules on effective data use (see section C3) and put them on statewide contracts so they are easily available to districts. This strategy simplifies the contracting process and also assures districts that their professional development vendors are of high quality. We will continue to pre-approve vendors for data use training and extend this strategy to additional content areas as appropriate.
- **Regional forums and statewide summits.** We have successfully held two statewide Curriculum Summits to provide opportunities for educators to learn about ESE-built tools and resources related to curriculum and instruction, as well as a number of regional forums to disseminate information about statewide policy initiatives such as the student growth model, stimulus funding, and Race to the Top. We will continue to hold the Curriculum Summits and expand this strategy to other

areas of statewide interest. We will also conduct regional forums to support implementation of the Common Core Standards, use of the various components of the teaching and learning system described in B3, the new teacher and principal evaluation framework, and other areas of our proposal.

Timeline for D5i

Strategy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Focus the content of professional development on supporting effective implementation of our four overarching objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyze 2010 statewide student achievement and teacher shortage data to identify high need areas; survey districts statewide on PD needs ▪ Develop and make available PD aligned with RTTT objectives, high need areas, and LEA priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to identify high-need areas for PD ▪ Develop and make available PD aligned with RTTT objectives, high need areas, and LEA priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to identify high need areas for PD ▪ Develop and make available PD aligned with RTTT objectives, high need areas, and LEA priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to identify high need areas for PD ▪ Develop and make available PD aligned with RTTT objectives, high need areas, and LEA priorities
Shape our existing statewide professional development activities into a comprehensive professional development system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop formal agreements of the scope of work for Readiness Centers and DSACs on professional development for 2010-2012 ▪ Review, interview, and pre-approve PD providers for online and in-person courses ▪ Hold statewide summits and regional forums ▪ Create professional development calendar for the following year ▪ Enhance infrastructure for online course delivery (see C3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop specific PD offerings for Readiness Centers and DSACs for next year with an emphasis on RTTT priorities, ▪ Review evaluations of PD providers and select providers to continue; recruit additional providers as needed to expand course availability or offer them online ▪ Online course infrastructure ready for use ▪ Hold statewide summits and regional forums ▪ Create professional development calendar for the following year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue previous year’s activities ▪ Hold statewide summits and regional forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue previous year’s activities ▪ Hold statewide summits and regional forums

Responsible parties: ESE Centers for Curriculum and Instruction; Student Assessment; Educator Policy, Preparation, and Licensure; and Targeted Assistance; LEAs and professional development providers; DSACs; and Readiness Centers

(D)(5)(ii)

Goal: Hold ESE, providers, and LEAs responsible for providing effective professional supports aligned with the state’s priorities.

In the past, ESE has provided basic guidelines to help districts identify potentially effective professional development opportunities; for instance, we have suggested that professional development should be at least 10 hours, given by a provider who can supply an appropriate résumé and references, and have content directly related to standards and the educators’ teaching assignment. Through Race to the Top we will establish more rigorous standards for effective professional development to help us measure, evaluate, and continuously improve our professional development strategy and offerings. This work will be coordinated by a professional development specialist in the Office of Curriculum and Instruction in collaboration with the Office of Strategic Planning, Research, and Evaluation.

Activities:

- **Standards for professional development.** We will revise our existing standards for professional development so that they are clear, rigorous, and useful for monitoring the quality and impact of professional development on educators’ knowledge and practice, using the National Staff Development Council’s standards as a guideline (see Appendix D27). We will apply these standards to formative evaluation of the RTTT professional development activities listed in D5i so that activities can be improved and refined over the course of the four years, and we will develop tools for districts so they can assess the quality of their own professional development offerings against our standards. As a result of these efforts, by the end of the RTTT grant period 80% of districts will have used our professional development assessment tools and experienced their value firsthand.

- Alignment and quality assurance.** With RTTT funds, ESE will work with LEAs, the Readiness Centers, DSACs, and providers to 1) develop criteria for aligning professional development activities to state priorities and standards, and 2) revise the standards for professional development to include performance and quality measures that could be used in monitoring professional development activities supported by federal, state, or district funds. Over time, the state and participating LEAs will be able to identify those activities and vendors with the largest positive impact on educator effectiveness and student growth, and ESE will revise the state’s preferred provider list to include only those vendors and activities.

Timeline for D5ii

Strategy	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Hold ESE, providers, and LEAs responsible for providing effective professional supports aligned with the state’s priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct NSDC survey in a representative sample of schools and LEAs With LEAs and providers, revise standards for professional development to include performance and quality measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise draft PD standards based on Year 1 experiences Develop professional development assessment tools for districts and disseminate statewide Apply standards in evaluations of Year 2 PD Publish performance criteria for providers to be on the preferred provider list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish final version of standards for professional development providers Continue to deploy assessment tools statewide Apply standards in evaluations of Year 3 PD Publish preliminary preferred provider list and share findings on effective PD through Readiness Centers, DSACs, and other venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deploy assessment tools statewide Apply standards in evaluations of Year 4 PD Update preferred provider list and share findings on effective PD through Readiness Centers, DSACs, and other venues

Responsible parties: ESE Centers for Curriculum and Instruction; Educator Policy, Preparation, and Licensure; and Targeted Assistance; ESE Office of Strategic Planning, Research, and Evaluation; DSACs and Readiness Centers; professional development providers; LEAs; Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Performance Measures Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.	Actual Data: Baseline	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
Revised standards for professional development are complete	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	✓
% of PD offered through DSACs, Readiness Centers, Professional Development Institutes, and ESE grant-funded PD programs that is aligned to new standards	n/a	n/a	50%	75%	100%
Preferred provider list based on new professional development standards is available	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	✓
% of LEAs using ESE-developed tool and processes to evaluate the impact of professional supports	0%	0%	10%	25%	80%

(E) Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools (50 total points)

State Reform Conditions Criteria

(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs (10 points)

The extent to which the State has the legal, statutory, or regulatory authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) and in LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status.

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

Evidence for (E)(1):

- A description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.

Recommended maximum response length: One page

(E)(1)

Perhaps the most visible representation of the variation in student outcomes is the contrast in results between the highest and lowest performing schools in the Commonwealth. Legislation enacted in January 2010 and final regulations adopted by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in April 2010 provide extraordinary authority to intervene in the lowest performing schools and districts. This authority includes significant autonomy and flexibility in school staffing decisions and the ability to enlist health and human services support for students and their families.

Schools: Amendments to Section 1J of Mass. General Laws chapter 69, signed into law by Governor Patrick on January 18, 2010 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day), made eligible for designation as underperforming (Level 4) or chronically underperforming (Level 5) the lowest 20% of schools statewide. Up to 4% (72) of the state's schools may be designated as either at any given time. ***For an underperforming school (Level 4)*** the superintendent is to develop a turnaround plan with approval by the commissioner; at the

school's annual review the commissioner may require changes to the plan, the appointment of an external partner, or a new turnaround plan; and when the plan expires the commissioner may, among other courses of action, determine that the school is chronically underperforming. *For a chronically underperforming school (Level 5)* the commissioner creates the turnaround plan and may appoint an external receiver to operate the school and implement the plan. The commissioner evaluates each school at least annually and, if it has failed to meet multiple goals, may appoint a receiver if one has not been appointed previously or, after a full school year, may terminate the receiver's contract. The commissioner has similar options when the turnaround plan expires, or may renew the plan.

Districts: The law makes the lowest 10% of districts eligible for declaration by the Board as chronically underperforming, based on a fact-finding report; 2.5% of districts (seven) may be so designated at any given time. After such a declaration, the Board designates a receiver "with all the powers of the superintendent and school committee;" the commissioner and receiver create the district turnaround plan. The commissioner evaluates the receiver's performance at least annually and may take various actions, up to termination of the receiver, depending on how well the plan's goals have been met.

Critical Powers under Turnaround Plans: Under the law, any turnaround plan may, "[n]otwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary," provide for reallocation of the budget, revision of district policies and practices, alteration of collective bargaining agreements (either after expedited bargaining with a resolution process that considers students' needs at Level 4 schools and Level 5 districts, or unilaterally at Level 5 schools), and the requirement that all staff reapply for their positions. Teachers with professional teacher status (tenure) may be dismissed under a "good cause" rather than "just cause" standard.

Regulations: In March 2010, the Commissioner identified the first 35 underperforming schools under proposed regulations. On April 27, 2010, the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approved final regulations to support implementation of the law, making it possible for all 35 schools to open their doors in August 2010 with turnaround plans in place.

(See Appendices E1 to E3 for all documents referenced above.)

Reform Plan Criteria

(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools (40 points)

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—

(i) Identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) and, at its discretion, any non-Title I eligible secondary schools that would be considered persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) if they were eligible to receive Title I funds; and (5 points)

(ii) Support its LEAs in turning around these schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models (as described in Appendix C): turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model (provided that an LEA with more than nine persistently lowest-achieving schools may not use the transformation model for more than 50 percent of its schools). (35 points)

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

Evidence for (E)(2) (please fill in table below):

- The State's historic performance on school turnaround, as evidenced by the total number of persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) that States or LEAs attempted to turn around in the last five years, the approach used, and the results and lessons learned to date.

Recommended maximum response length: Eight pages

Massachusetts will invest significant time, resources, and support in a targeted set of schools and districts to break the cycle of underperformance and accelerate the gains of students most in need. In section E2i below, we outline the state's process for accurately and aggressively identifying our lowest-achieving schools. In E2ii, we propose an ambitious strategy for using RTTT and other funds to close the achievement gap by changing the trajectory of our lowest-performing schools.

(E)(2)(i)

Goal: Identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools in the state.

Activities: ESE created a process to identify those schools most in need of intervention, based on MCAS scores (both absolute performance and progress), the state's new measure of student growth (see section D2), and dropout rates. The process aligns with both this notice's definition of persistently lowest-achieving schools and federal School Turnaround Grant requirements. It also builds on the Framework for District Accountability and Assistance work ESE started in 2008 to redefine how Massachusetts works with districts to intervene in struggling schools.

- **Identify Level 3 and 4 schools.** First, ESE identified the persistently lowest-achieving 20% of schools; these are Level 3 schools in the Framework, with their districts also earning Level 3 status based on a principle of ESE's framework that a district is only as strong as its most struggling school (see Appendix E4 for an example of a district self-evaluation). We then narrowed that list to the lowest achieving 4% and identified the least improving schools within that group. (See section A3 for further description of the Framework's development; see Appendix E5 for the methodology used to identify schools.) In March 2010, Massachusetts announced its first cohort of 35 persistently lowest-achieving (Level 4) schools, which totaled 2% of all public schools in the state. These schools are the focus of our initial turnaround work. They encompass 20 elementary, 8 middle, 3 K-8 and 4 high schools located in 9 urban districts. Together, they educate 17,000 students; if they made up a school district, it would be the 4th largest—and poorest—in Massachusetts. Of the total enrollment, nine in ten students are eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch; nine in ten are students of color; one in five has an identified disability, often an emotional or

behavioral disability; and one in four is an English language learner. These districts employ 1,500 teachers and 900 other staff. Of the 35 schools, 33 are eligible to compete for Title I School Turnaround Grants and are receiving the highest priority for these funds. District leaders have indicated that they plan to employ the federal Transformation model for 22 of the schools, the Turnaround model for nine, and are considering the Restart model for two. Final decisions await completion of the Turnaround Plan proposals that they will be submitting to the commissioner starting in June.

- **Hold districts responsible for accelerating improvements.** Each district will be responsible for achieving accelerated improvement in these 35 schools, aided by strong ESE guidance and support, federal School Turnaround or other grant resources, and increased authority to act. As early as 2012, ESE will designate Level 4 schools that fail to achieve ambitious annual benchmarks after two or more years as Level 5 schools. At Level 5, ESE will assume major responsibility and authority to implement turnaround strategies for dramatic improvement. Projected annual targets for the number of Level 4 and 5 schools are included in the performance measures table at the end of this section.

Timeline: The Framework for District Accountability and Assistance, its standards and indicators, accountability tiers and complementary assistance tools and strategies, and the measures to identify schools are already in place. Final regulations implementing them were adopted by the Board in April 2010, and the schools have been identified. (See Appendix E6 to E12 for a schematic of the Framework, the membership of the stakeholder groups involved in its development, the associated District Standards and Indicators, examples of resources ESE provides districts on each standard and indicator, and a list of the 35 Level 4 schools and their characteristics).

Responsible parties: ESE's Center for Targeted Assistance will lead the turnaround work. The initiatives described below will build on work already underway and are designed both to enhance districts' capacity to rapidly improve the performance of their struggling schools and to pave the way for even more aggressive and effective state intervention if district efforts are unsuccessful.

(E)(2)(ii)

Goal: Transform today’s struggling schools and prevent other schools from failing by building expertise and capacity at the state level, within our districts, and among proven and promising partners.

Turning around low-achieving schools requires changes that will enhance students’ readiness to learn, teachers’ readiness to teach, and leaders’ readiness to act (Calkins et al. 2007). There is no silver bullet for achieving these changes or guarantees they will be used effectively to dramatically improve student achievement. To that end, our strategy calls for building expertise and capacity at the state level, within our districts, and among proven and promising partners. This approach will allow us to transform today’s struggling schools and help us prevent other schools from falling into that category in the future.

Experience and independent research (Augustine 2009, Lane 2009) support this focus on building district capacity. Given the dearth of proven turnaround operators nationally and the state’s history of local control, rapid and sustained school turnaround depends on robust district systems of support. Districts must successfully manage the implementation of at least one of the four intervention models—a role that is particularly important for the Transformation model, which relies on district decision-making and successful changes to evaluation systems, incentives, governance, and schedules. More specifically, the districts must learn to support school leaders in a focused way rather than distracting them with light-touch improvement strategies. Similarly, a coherent state strategy must tackle the district deficiencies that have contributed to persistently low-achieving schools.

Massachusetts will use RTTT funds to pursue four interconnected strategies to build state and district capacity to turn around the persistently lowest achieving schools, and to prevent others from falling into that category in the future:

1. Develop a specialized corps of turnaround teacher and leader teams
2. Build district capacity to intervene in struggling schools
3. Identify and scale up effective partners to address priority conditions for school effectiveness
4. Develop, attract, and manage lead partners and turnaround operators

Additional investments to scale up the regional DSACs will provide targeted professional development to help teachers and leaders in smaller districts prevent more schools from entering Level 4 (see section D5).

Strategy 1: Develop a specialized corps of turnaround teacher and leader teams

Great principals and teachers are critical to achieving rapid improvement in low-performing schools, but existing district capacity to meet this need is insufficient (see Fuller and Young 2009 for data on high turnover in low performing schools). We will accelerate the flow of highly effective teachers and leaders into turnaround schools by recruiting, training, supporting, and retaining a corps of Massachusetts teachers and leaders committed to turning around our persistently lowest-achieving schools. At the end of four years, Massachusetts will have a well developed pipeline that will have produced at least 45 principals and 450 teachers whose specialized skills and preparation have enabled them to contribute substantially to school turnaround; the systems put in place will enable the state to provide 12 principals and 150 educators each year with comparable skills.

We have already begun to build this corps of turnaround teachers and leaders. In May 2010 we launched aMAzingteachers.org, a statewide turnaround teacher recruitment website that had 15,000 unique visits in its first week (see section D3i). We have also developed the design and secured funding for a Level 4 Principals' network designed to support and retain strong turnaround principals. (See Appendix E13 for a sampling of other ESE capacity building efforts for Level 4 districts and schools.) We will build on these efforts, and those described in section D3 related to equitable distribution of educators, by recruiting and supporting proven, experienced teachers and leaders to do this critically important work in our lowest achieving schools. In doing so, we will take advantage of new authorities made possible under the new law, described in section E1. We will also draw upon the state's wealth of expertise and success in educator preparation: urban teacher and principal residency networks, on-the-ground presence of national teacher recruiting and mentoring groups, innovative induction programs in districts, and strong professional development for instructional leaders.

Activities:

- **Turnaround leaders.** Experts agree that proven leaders are needed to achieve dramatic improvement at the persistently lowest-achieving schools. Massachusetts' approach includes an executive search to identify and recruit leaders; up to six months of training, planning, and mentoring before placement; and involvement of the principal in staff selection and planning with a team of turnaround teachers. Schools replacing their principals under the Turnaround and Transformation models will be able to draw on a state-supported pool of experienced, effective school leaders while a stream of new, well trained principal candidates developed through the principal residency programs described in D3 will be prepared to backfill the positions that experienced leaders vacate.
- **Turnaround teachers.** To build our turnaround teacher corps, we will draw on both experienced teachers with proven success in the classroom as well as the enhanced pipeline of new teachers (see section D3), with experienced teachers providing additional instructional leadership. For Level 4 schools employing the Turnaround and Transformation models, we will supply sufficient experienced teachers to take on 30 to 40% of a school's staffing needs. Under the Restart model, schools will draw on both new and experienced teachers. Experienced teachers will receive, at a minimum, incentives such as career ladder opportunities (leadership and greater responsibility) and enhanced compensation to work in Level 4 and 5 schools, up to six months of intense training and support, ongoing mentoring and interaction with a cohort, and opportunities for close collaboration with turnaround leaders.
- **Intensive professional development.** Turnaround teachers and leaders will be provided with intensive professional development for differentiated instruction in literacy and math and behavioral supports to meet likely challenges, including accelerating learning for students performing substantially below grade level, working with English language learners and students with special behavioral or emotional needs and their families (see section D5), and improving school-level working conditions (see section D3).

By 2014, ESE and districts will have developed sufficient numbers of teachers and leaders to fill most of the leadership and core teaching positions in the Level 4 schools. Thereafter, philanthropy and Title I grants will fund continued efforts to recruit and support turnaround teachers and leaders.

Timeline for E2: Turnaround teacher and leader teams

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Program design and assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene experts to complete the design of program models with an emphasis on recruitment, training, and retention of experienced educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build program models with expert input, focusing on placement and Year 1 supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update recruitment, training, and retention models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess early results and modify model as needed Link learning and results to broader MA human capital initiatives
Principal pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select the first class of 10 proven principals, engaging executive search experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with higher education and residency programs to launch training and induction in western MA (Springfield) and greater Boston 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place first leaders in schools Select second class for original regions and first class for two more regions (11 additional principals) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select and place cohorts of 12 leaders each year (45 total by Year 4) Continue induction and support
Teacher pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select the first class of 50 proven teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with higher education and residency programs to launch training and induction in western MA (Springfield) and greater Boston 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place first class in schools Select second class for original regions and first class for two more regions (100 additional teachers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select and place cohorts of 150 teachers each year (450 total by Year 4) Continue induction and support

Responsible parties: ESE will work with local philanthropy to invest in consulting support for program design and assessment. The state’s RTTT allocation will fund initial investments in each of four regions in the state and appropriate networking of teacher and leader cohorts. In addition to program design investments, the state will partially fund district principal recruitment, training, and support costs.

Strategy 2: Build district capacity to intervene in struggling schools

All four school intervention models depend on changes in district systems of support. We will focus first on strengthening four systems critical to districts’ ability to intervene effectively in struggling schools: effective governance and leadership, integrated

human resource management and development systems, enhanced community support for students' social, emotional, and health needs, and improved dropout prevention and recovery. We will work directly with districts, engaging external experts and providers as appropriate, to equip leaders (including superintendents, school committees, and union leaders) with the knowledge and skills needed for successful school turnaround.

To this end, ESE has already established the Level 4 Network, a network consisting of district administrators and union leaders from the nine districts with Level 4 schools. Through conference calls, half-day workshops, and meetings focused on effective implementation of the law and the federal School Turnaround Grant opportunity, ESE is building capacity of all nine districts to intervene more effectively in their Level 4 schools. At the same time, ESE is building its capacity to provide meaningful technical assistance to these districts and to identify and coordinate district intervention partners. See Appendix E14 for a sampling of Level 4 Network activities to date.

Activities:

The state will identify, vet, scale up and network partners who can provide districts with training, consulting, and implementation assistance. ESE will use RTTT funds to help districts engage the right partners to work with both the district office and Level 4 schools in the following priority areas:

- **Effective governance and leadership.** Experience tells us that collaboration among superintendents, school committees, and teacher unions is essential to the success and sustainability of school turnarounds. ESE is partnering with key state associations representing these groups to support district-wide strategic goal-setting and implementation and to facilitate effective use of the tools, protocols, technical assistance, coaching, and networks that are necessary for successful intervention. We are starting with case studies of effective governance and leadership practices in place in selected MA districts that will be presented in the new superintendent induction program being launched this summer (see section D3) and at the fall joint meeting of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents. Another aspect of this work involves effective collaboration with unions, which ESE is advancing by providing implementation support

related to the Mass TeLLS Working Conditions survey (see section D3). Grants to the state associations will cover startup costs both to develop the required expertise and to support districts' efforts to develop and implement potent district-improvement strategies.

- **Human resource management and development systems.** As described in section D, insufficient HR systems can cripple a district's ability to attract and retain effective teachers and leaders. We will use RTTT resources to create and facilitate effective use of tools (e.g., model contract provisions) and networks that will help districts identify and address weaknesses in core HR functions: personnel administration; management and development; labor relations; organizational development; and professional standards. Massachusetts will fund partnerships designed to build Level 4 districts' capacity to design, implement, and sustain effective human resource management systems. An immediate priority will be support for each Level 4 district (and districts with Tier 2 schools that win federal School Turnaround Grants) to have in place by the start of the 2011–12 school year a principal and teacher evaluation system that is fully consistent with the state framework under construction. See Section D2 for details.
- **Integrated community support for students' social, emotional, and health needs.** Experience and research have consistently shown how students' behavioral, social/emotional, economic, familial, health-related, and cognitive strengths and needs affect their school performance (e.g., Greenberg et al. 2003). These challenges are typically magnified in high poverty schools where often the most effective classroom instruction cannot entirely overcome these non-academic barriers to learning. The January 2010 Act Relative to the Achievement Gap recognized this by placing significant emphasis on engaging representatives of social service agencies, early education and care providers and workforce development agencies in the design of the plan and requiring each school's turnaround plan to address social service and health needs, improve or expand child welfare services and law enforcement, and improve workforce development services.

In most districts, existing education and human service systems (e.g. child welfare, juvenile justice, and mental health services) demonstrate good intentions but also pervasive inefficiencies and fragmentation of effort. ESE will use RTTT funds

to establish coordinated wraparound zones in seven of the Level 4 districts. The challenging work of integrating community support to systematically meet students' social, emotional, and health needs is currently being done through two existing models in Massachusetts: Integrated Comprehensive Resources in Schools (a partnership between ESE, the Department of Children and Families, and the Department of Mental Health) and Boston Connects (a Massachusetts-based non-profit organization). Both models have yielded strong improvements in academic performance, classroom behavior, and accuracy of special education referrals. These two models offer alternative approaches but serve the same core functions: They assess the comprehensive needs (met and unmet) of all children and families within a school; develop a detailed inventory of all resources within a school and in the community; create a decision-making process and authority within a school that oversees and manages the effective distribution of resources consistent with verified needs of children and families; implement evidence-based programs in schools and provide professional development; create and implement options and opportunities for family engagement and parent education; and establish an interagency coalition comprised of school and community leaders who meet routinely to assess implementation progress and resolve challenges and problems. See Appendix E15 and E16 for evidence of the efficacy of these two models.

To frame this effort, ESE is working with the Governor's Cabinet on Child and Youth Development which is co-chaired by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Education and includes the secretariats of other agencies serving children, youth, and families. The Cabinet has committed to coordinating social services in the wraparound zones. Grants to proven partners will enable participating Level 4 districts to secure the technical assistance they will need to successfully customize and implement one of the two models.

These efforts will be complemented by an initiative already well underway in MA to identify and intervene with middle and high school students at risk of dropping out. The state has already piloted an early warning initiative with urban districts, using data from ESE's Student Information Management System and recommendations from the Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission. Our recently awarded State Longitudinal Data System grant will fund additional pilots

of an expanded Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS) including data analysis assistance, training for administrators and teachers, protocols and policies for intervention, and the addition of local data to the state-level data systems and reports.

Timeline for E2: Build district capacity to intervene in struggling schools

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify partners and engage four districts in one or more of the governance, HR, or community-engagement systems of support ▪ Provide grants to state associations and funding for HR experts ▪ Initiate one wraparound zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage a total of eight districts in one or more of the systems of support ▪ Initiate two wraparound zones ▪ Evaluate progress to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initiate 4 wraparound zones ▪ Continue to support district engagement with key partners and wraparound zones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to support district engagement with key partners and wraparound zones

Responsible parties: ESE will take the lead to develop tools and identify potential partners. District central offices will participate in guided assessments to identify their most pressing needs from among those listed above and will collaborate with ESE Targeted Assistance staff and partners to work on those needs.

Strategy 3: Identify and scale up effective partners to address priority conditions for school effectiveness

Even when district systems of support are functioning effectively, struggling schools often do not have the experience or capacity to implement the new strategies for instructional reform and expanded learning opportunities that the Transformation, Turnaround, and Restart models require. To provide the necessary supports, we will focus on scaling up interventions that work, tapping into our state’s rich set of innovative and nationally recognized nonprofits, residency and training programs, and school supports. RTTT funds will be used to identify these vendors through a Priority Provider process and to provide capacity-building grants to allow these providers to expand beyond the states, districts, and/or schools they currently serve. By the end of Year 4, we will have executed a rigorous process to identify, scale, and network proven partners to support six priority Conditions for School Effectiveness wherever appropriate in Level 4 schools. These partners will also be available to other schools statewide. This one-time investment will result in a lasting process, building capacity within ESE and the field to assess potential vendors and partners for quality.

Activities:

- **Scale providers in three high priority Conditions for School Effectiveness.** It is no accident that all 35 Level 4 schools serve largely poor and minority children and youth. The impacts of poverty on students' readiness to learn are pervasive, and it is critical to address those impacts through a comprehensive, community-focused approach. Thus, in the first two years of the grant, we will focus on three interconnected conditions that experience has shown are critical to catalyzing rapid improvement of low-performing schools: *social-emotional supports* that ensure students enter the classroom ready to learn, an *expanded school day and/or year*, and *effective use of data* to support tailored instruction. We have already begun to work closely with partners currently engaged in Level 4 schools to tailor services in these areas to the specific needs of persistently low-performing schools in Massachusetts. For example, a disproportionate number of students with identified special needs in the Level 4 schools have emotional and behavioral disabilities. Providers must be in a position to help schools address these needs. Similarly, one in four students in turnaround schools is an English language learner. ESE's Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement will be working with the state affiliates of the National Association of Bilingual Education, International Reading Association, and National Council of Teachers of English to identify and disseminate best practices in instruction and programming, as well as cross-cultural parent outreach and engagement strategies.
- **Help districts assess partner quality.** ESE will advance these efforts by helping districts assess the quality of potential partners. Identifying a provider that best meets the needs of a particular struggling school can be challenging, given that providers are only responsible for a piece of the school-improvement puzzle, leaving the impact of their work difficult to assess. We believe that ESE can help assess partner quality and build their capacity to meet district needs. We will use RTTT funds to design and implement a vendor review ("Priority Provider") process that places a strong emphasis on program quality assessment, proven outcomes, and capacity to expand and customize their approach to the context of Massachusetts' schools. The Priority Provider process will build upon and enhance ESE's existing procurement process. Outside experts (with the guidance of ESE and the input of key stakeholders) will design the process, customizing it to each of the Conditions for School

Effectiveness. Each application will be scored by a team that includes an ESE staff member, a stakeholder (e.g., a teacher or administrator) in the specific area, and an independent third party with expertise in site visits and school audits. Providers with successful applications will be added to a newly created list of Priority Providers. Districts can have confidence that Priority Providers have made it through a rigorous screen for quality. This one-time investment will also result in a lasting process, building capacity within the Department and the field to assess potential vendors and partners for quality.

- **Coordinate partners’ work.** We know that sometimes schools can have too many partners or partners that work at cross-purposes because of lack of coordination and/or ignorance of each others’ work. Therefore, a part of our strategy, which we have already begun, is to network strong partners so that each becomes familiar with the approaches, assumptions, and areas of expertise of the others and can adjust their work together to support a more coherent overall approach to school turnaround.
- **Identify and scale up partners for additional priority conditions.** Once we have developed our Priority Provider process and tested it on the first three priority Conditions for School Effectiveness, we will work with our Level 4 schools and other stakeholders to identify additional conditions that continue to limit student improvement and the availability of strong providers. By Year 4, we will have established a network of partners for at least six Conditions for School Effectiveness.

Timeline for B3: Identify and scale up effective partners

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hire one FTE at ESE to develop Priority Provider process ▪ Identify Priority Providers in three priority conditions for school effectiveness ▪ Make grants to three Priority Providers to allow them to fully respond to requests from two new districts with Level 4 schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate and refine Priority Provider process and identify the next three critical conditions based on school/district conditions that are limiting success ▪ Make grants to three Priority Providers to seed the capacity to expand to 50% of all Level 4 schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate and refine the Priority Provider process and identify the next conditions to address ▪ Make grants to three Priority Providers to seed the capacity to expand to 75% of all Level 4 schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finalize list of Priority Providers ▪ Execute three-year impact evaluation of Priority Providers ▪ Transition fully to district and Title I STG funding for school-partner collaboration

Responsible parties: ESE will take the lead, with consulting support, to define the Priority Provider process, to make capacity building grants to scale up providers’ work in new districts and a first set of new schools, and to evaluate the work. Districts will identify school needs and employ RTTT and Title I STG funds to engage approved partners in support of school intervention.

Strategy 4: Develop, attract, and manage lead partners and turnaround operators to execute the Restart model at Level 4 and 5 schools

Within the first two years of the grant, several of our largest districts will employ the restart model at some of their Level 4 schools. By 2012, ESE will likely identify the first group of Level 5 schools in which the state has authority to require the restart model. ESE does not want to reinvent the wheel and intends to partner with proven providers to take on this work. However, few organizations exist nationally that can drive high quality turnaround efforts at any scale. Organizations frequently cited as leaders in school turnaround work often have worked in only one or two schools and are not prepared to serve even 1% of the 5,000 lowest performing schools where the U.S. Department of Education would like to see rapid and dramatic improvement in student outcomes. Thus, we must act quickly to ensure we have sufficient capacity to manage and conduct the Restart model in our Level 4 and 5 schools.

Activities:

- **Establish a nonprofit school improvement intermediary.** A school improvement intermediary is an effective means of addressing the national lack of turnaround operator capacity. Louisiana (New Schools New Orleans) and Chicago (Academy of Urban School Leaders) have successfully incubated and grown public-private partnership organizations that are able to dramatically improve outcomes for students in the lowest-performing schools. These partnerships are typically non-profits structured outside of the local or state government in order to increase speed, flexibility, and access to private funds—three capacities that are not the core competencies of state education agencies. Closer to home, we have seen the role that the Boston Plan for Excellence has played for the Boston Public Schools in incubating ideas, approaches, and organizations such as Boston Teacher Residency. ESE is learning from these models and is working with private funders to incubate a nonprofit school-improvement intermediary organization for Massachusetts. The intermediary will support, manage, and evaluate school turnaround providers via performance-based contracts and will work closely with districts and ESE to implement these models

in Level 4 and 5 schools. Its first priority will be to scale up several school turnaround providers based on proven practices from successful turnarounds and high performing urban charter schools (see Appendix E17 and E18 for more detail on the business model of this organization and E18 for a letter of support from a likely funder).

Timeline for E3: Turnaround intermediary

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with state experts and other experts in incubation and intermediary design, and with philanthropic funders to design and create the full scope of the nonprofit intermediary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct competitive process to identify school turnaround operators ▪ Spring 2011: Identify lead partners and turnaround operators, who will have one year for planning, development, and incubation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage operators at five Level 5 Restart schools, then employ Title I School Improvement Grants, district, and philanthropic funding to provide ongoing support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue support for lead partners and turnaround operators at five Level 5 Restart schools

Responsible parties: ESE will use RTTT state funds for early-stage consulting support and planning and the convening of experts and funders to design and create the nonprofit intermediary. In the short term, the state will reallocate staff to participate in planning. The state will also contribute to the per-school costs to engage operators in Years 3–4. The new statewide intermediary, in concert with philanthropic funders, will build its own capacity to support the work and will recruit existing lead partners and school operators to MA. It will then play a leading role in contracting and holding operators accountable for performance.

Evidence

Approach Used	# of schools since SY04-05	Results and Lessons Learned
#1 Declaration of Underperforming schools and districts with targeted assistance and intervention plans	41	<p><i>Results</i> 41 schools have been declared underperforming by ESE since SY2004-05. With a variety of interventions, only 10 have shown meaningful improvement and four to five could justifiably be labeled as turnaround schools. Despite significant allocation of state and district resources toward school intervention plans, the 10% turnaround rate mirrors the national data on schools in restructuring making AYP. In addition, five districts were declared underperforming based on district-level assessments, of which one exited underperforming status. See #4 below for detail on the district and school-level intervention in Holyoke.</p> <p><i>Lessons Learned</i> Massachusetts' experience with these schools has driven the redesign of its accountability and assistance systems over the past two years, as described above. ESE learned that intervention efforts must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on district systems in order to build the district's capacity to support its schools: Without making necessary changes in district functions, individual school changes cannot be sustained. • Develop a system for arranging, planning and overseeing ESE's intervention and support to a district and its schools. • Develop clear criteria for a district's status, i.e., entering and exiting Level 4 and 5 • Clarify ESE's capacity and authority to positively affect the dynamics of local governance • Recognize the need for customized timelines and milestones and long-term support

Approach Used	# of schools since SY04-05	Results and Lessons Learned
#2 Declaration of Chronically Underperforming schools with targeted assistance and intervention plans	3	<p><i>Results</i> MA has declared three schools Chronically Underperforming in Holyoke and Fall River (all from 2000-2005, with ongoing intervention). Of these three schools, only one, Kuss Middle in Fall River, has made AYP.</p> <p><i>Lessons Learned</i> More dramatic intervention, including the district-level supports (described above), are needed to achieve turnaround.</p>
#3 Commonwealth Pilot School model (increased school level autonomy in exchange for increased accountability at candidates for “chronically underperforming” designation)	5	<p><i>Results</i> An external evaluation by the UMass Donahue Institute (see Appendix E19) identified the following results and lessons learned</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational structures were substantially revised in four of the five schools, including the hiring and integration of new staff. • New scheduling strategies enabled large increases in collaborative professional time at all schools. • Compensation was provided to teachers at schools with increased teacher work weeks. • New governance structures were established to support school- and community-based decision making. • In Year 1, four of the five schools showed improvement in vision, culture, and practice. • Improvements in staff collaboration and in the schools’ freedom to make decisions were reported at all five schools. • Improvement was reported with regard to the quality of instruction, sense of direction, focus on student needs, and approach to student support services at four schools. • Mixed impacts were reported on student behavior. • Limited improvement was reported on subject area curricula and the use of assessment data. • In Year 2, staff of all four schools cited improvement in vision, culture, and practice; however, there was some concern that freedom to make decisions had diminished.

Approach Used	# of schools since SY04-05	Results and Lessons Learned
		<p><u>Lessons Learned</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful change begins with an objective, deeply informed understanding of need and required support. • Planning, technical assistance, and support are required at both the school and district levels. Autonomies may require fundamental changes to existing school and district operations, with implications for budgeting, human resources, governance, and curriculum, instruction, and assessment systems. When there is a substantial migration of students and staff, there may be impacts on other district schools. • Short-term (implementation) and mid-term (culture and practice) performance benchmarks are needed. Otherwise, AYP is perceived as the de facto success criteria, which may obscure intermediate accomplishments. • Uncertainty regarding commitment to the model complicates implementation. Despite the substantial technical assistance and targeted grants to the five participating schools, some leaders and staff have expressed uncertainty about ESE's commitment.
#4 District-level turnaround partner (America's Choice in Holyoke as an approach for underperforming districts and schools)	2 (also included above)	<p><u>Results</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • America's Choice worked as a district-level turnaround partner in Holyoke from 2006-2008, implementing its Ramp-Up Math and Ramp-Up Literacy curricula in six schools. In addition, two underperforming schools received an additional 30 days of support from America's Choice coaches. Results were mixed (see Appendix E20 for summary of learning to date). <p><u>Lessons learned</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An up front assessment of district strengths and needs is essential. • Effective use of data must be a driving force in turning around a district. • District-level capacity and improving school performance must go hand

Approach Used	# of schools since SY04-05	Results and Lessons Learned
		<p>in hand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiating instruction is critical to addressing all students' needs. • In any partnership, it is critical to make certain that parents, teachers, administrators, and other members of the community understand the changes involved in working with an outside partner.

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
The number of schools for which one of the four school intervention models will be initiated each year.	0	45	45	45	65

In the table of performance measures, we have identified the total number of schools where one of the four intervention models will be in process in each year. These schools will be supported by the strategies defined above.

The state is requiring that districts initiate one of the four intervention models in all 35 schools declared Level 4 within the next year, both to receive supports and to be eligible for Title I STG funding. We do not expect that every element of the Transformation model will be in place in each school using that intervention by the end of Year 1; however, districts must have begun to implement key elements of transformation within the first year. In Years 2 and 3, full intervention models will be up and running in all 35 Level 4 and 5 schools in the state, including some schools implementing Turnaround, Restart, or Closure. In Year 4, with an additional round of Title I STG funding available, we plan to increase the number of interventions by identifying 10 additional Level 4 and 5 schools and requiring them to initiate one of the intervention models. This will result in a total of 45 Level 4 and 5 schools by Year 4 implementing one of the intervention models.

Using available Title I STG funding the state will also initiate a competitive process to attract Level 3 schools to volunteer to implement the Turnaround, Transformation, or Restart models. In Year 4 we will make funding and support available to an additional 5 schools for a total of 15 Level 3 schools implementing intervention models. Creating an incentive for dramatic intervention in the lowest performing Level 3 schools will be a powerful strategy to spur innovative practices, build knowledge on effective

transformation strategies, and prevent additional schools from declining to Levels 4 and 5. ESE is already using Title IID ARRA funds to establish a network for alternative secondary schools to develop and disseminate hybrid face-to-face and online competency-based courses in MassCore subjects (see section B3 for a description of MassCore). Alternative schools and programs serve 6,000 of our students most likely to drop out of school. A number of them are eligible to compete for STG funds as Tier 2 schools. ESE will work with a partner to convene and provide ongoing technical assistance to the alternative schools receiving STG funds in order to build knowledge around dropout prevention, recovery, and effective instructional and outreach practices. Using regional DSACs we will disseminate best practices to support innovation in other alternative programs and traditional high schools across Massachusetts.

(F) General (55 total points)

State Reform Conditions Criteria

(F)(1) Making education funding a priority (10 points)

The extent to which—

- (i) The percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice) that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2009 was greater than or equal to the percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice) that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2008; and
- (ii) The State’s policies lead to equitable funding (a) between high-need LEAs (as defined in this notice) and other LEAs, and (b) within LEAs, between high-poverty schools (as defined in this notice) and other schools.

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

Evidence for (F)(1)(i):

- Financial data to show whether and to what extent expenditures, as a percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice), increased, decreased, or remained the same.

Evidence for (F)(1)(ii):

- Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.

Recommended maximum response length: Three pages

(F)(1)(i)

Massachusetts is a national leader in our support for public education, and our commitment continues even in the face of the current historic economic downturn. Table F1 shows the share of the Commonwealth's revenues that have funded and will continue to fund K-12 education and higher education in fiscal years 2008, 2009, and 2010. Despite the declining revenues, current estimates predict that the state will increase the share of total state revenues funding education programs in fiscal year 2010.

Table F1: Education expenditures as a share of total state revenues, fiscal years 2008 to 2010

	FY08	FY09	FY10
Chapter 70 (K-12 local aid)	\$3,725,671,328	\$3,536,824,061	\$3,869,847,585
Special Education circuit breaker	\$220,000,000	\$215,337,070	\$133,119,160
Regional transportation aid	\$58,300,000	\$58,357,600	\$40,521,840
Other K-12 state grants and programs	\$247,397,202	\$246,384,065	\$210,602,044
University of Massachusetts	\$479,008,592	\$475,026,934	\$379,900,504
State colleges	\$215,789,565	\$210,173,408	\$171,387,324
Community colleges	\$240,185,710	\$230,749,551	\$188,150,763
Massachusetts School Building Authority	\$607,100,000	\$702,000,000	\$634,700,000
Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System and Boston Teachers' Retirement System	\$907,420,000	\$891,941,000	\$933,254,000
Total state revenues	\$20,879,200,000	\$18,259,500,000	\$18,278,700,000
Education spending as percent of total state revenue	32 percent	36 percent	36 percent
K-12 spending as percent of total state revenue	28 percent	31 percent	32 percent

Notes: Data are current as of May 10, 2010. FY08 and FY09 expenditure figures are final; FY10 figures are budgeted or estimated. FY08 revenues are final; FY09 are estimated; FY10 are projected.

(F)(1)(ii)

The state distributes education aid, commonly referred to as Chapter 70, to school districts through a progressive funding formula. The formula establishes an adequate spending level for each school district and ensures that every district reaches this spending goal annually through a combination of state aid and local resources. Chapter 70 aid can be used to fund a variety of district operating costs, with the exception of transportation and capital expenditures.

The foundation budget—the amount that each school district must spend to provide an adequate education to every student—has been a cornerstone of the funding formula in Massachusetts since fiscal year 1994. It is calculated using a set of assumptions about how much districts should spend per pupil across expenditure categories and for a variety of student groups, assigning higher rates to students whose resource needs are assumed to be greater, such as students with disabilities, vocational students, English language learners, and low income students. Rates are adjusted for inflation each year.

The formula has produced a progressive distribution of state aid. Districts that educate the highest percentage of low income students, based on their eligibility for free or reduced price lunch, receive the most state aid per pupil. Table F2 shows that in fiscal year 2009, districts serving the highest numbers of low income students received almost three times as much state aid per pupil as districts in the lowest quartile, and more than twice as much as districts in the second quartile.

Grant funding is another major source of support for Massachusetts school districts, and the data show that the state delivers our federal and state grant dollars to districts in a similarly progressive way. Districts that serve the greatest numbers of low income students received more than twice as much federal grant funding per pupil as districts in the next highest quartile in fiscal year 2009 (see Table F2). The same was true for state grant funds, which comprise a smaller yet equally important source of district funding. The state awards grants to fund expanded learning time, academic support programs, and full-day kindergarten, among other priorities, with high poverty schools receiving priority for these and other grants (see section F3).

The progressive distribution of state aid and grant dollars means that districts with the highest percentage of low income students spend more per pupil than other districts when all funding sources (local, state, and federal) are taken into consideration (see Table

F2). Spending differences between the bottom three quartiles are small, but districts serving the neediest students spend an average of nearly \$2,000 more per student than districts in the next highest quartile.

As of fall 2009, Massachusetts has 392 school districts, including charter and vocational schools. Our districts are small by national standards, enrolling an average of about 3,000 students. The state’s commitment to fund districts progressively and to prioritize high poverty schools for school-level grants helps to ensure that resources are targeted to the neediest schools. On average, the 475 schools in Massachusetts where more than 50 percent of the students are low income have higher levels of instructional spending (\$6,800 per pupil) than the 1,296 schools where less than 50 percent of the students are low income (\$6,400 per pupil). They also have higher levels of federal grant spending, at \$500 versus \$200 per pupil, and higher levels of state grant spending, at \$125 versus \$50 per pupil.

Table F2: Chapter 70, grant funding and total spending per pupil, fiscal year 2009

Quartile of enrollment of low income students	FY09 Chapter 70 aid per pupil	FY09 federal grants per pupil*	FY09 state grants per pupil	FY09 spending per pupil, all funds
Lowest quartile (smallest proportion of poor students)	\$2,087	\$475	\$79	\$12,375
Second quartile	\$2,971	\$623	\$60	\$11,376
Third quartile	\$3,458	\$818	\$49	\$12,578
Highest quartile (greatest proportion of poor students)	\$6,046	\$1,654	\$151	\$14,442
Difference between lowest and highest quartile	\$3,960	\$1,179	\$71	\$2,067

Note: FY09 is the most current year for which ESE has data on all three categories: state aid, grant awards, and per-pupil spending.

**Federal grants per pupil include dollars distributed through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)*

(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools (40 points)

The extent to which—

- (i) The State has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools (as defined in this notice) in the State, measured (as set forth in Appendix B) by the percentage of total schools in the State that are allowed to be charter schools or otherwise restrict student enrollment in charter schools;
- (ii) The State has laws, statutes, regulations, or guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools; in particular, whether authorizers require that student achievement (as defined in this notice) be one significant factor, among others, in authorization or renewal; encourage charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations, especially relative to high-need students (as defined in this notice); and have closed or not renewed ineffective charter schools;
- (iii) The State’s charter schools receive (as set forth in Appendix B) equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal revenues;
- (iv) The State provides charter schools with funding for facilities (for leasing facilities, purchasing facilities, or making tenant improvements), assistance with facilities acquisition, access to public facilities, the ability to share in bonds and mill levies, or other supports; and the extent to which the State does not impose any facility-related requirements on charter schools that are stricter than those applied to traditional public schools; and
- (v) The State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.

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

Evidence for (F)(2)(i):

- A description of the State’s applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- The number of charter schools allowed under State law and the percentage this represents of the total number of schools in

the State.

- The number and types of charter schools currently operating in the State.

Evidence for (F)(2)(ii):

- A description of the State's approach to charter school accountability and authorization, and a description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- For each of the last five years:
 - The number of charter school applications made in the State.
 - The number of charter school applications approved.
 - The number of charter school applications denied and reasons for the denials (academic, financial, low enrollment, other).
 - The number of charter schools closed (including charter schools that were not reauthorized to operate).

Evidence for (F)(2)(iii):

- A description of the State's applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- A description of the State's approach to charter school funding, the amount of funding passed through to charter schools per student, and how those amounts compare with traditional public school per-student funding allocations.

Evidence for (F)(2)(iv):

- A description of the State's applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- A description of the statewide facilities supports provided to charter schools, if any.

Evidence for (F)(2)(v):

- A description of how the State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.

Recommended maximum response length: Six pages

(F)(2)(i)

(See Appendix F1 for complete charter school statutes and Appendix F2 for regulations.)

Massachusetts' charter law (G.L. c. 71, § 89) defines two primary types of charter schools:

1. *Commonwealth charter schools* are independent local education agencies serving students from either a single district or a region made up of multiple districts. Massachusetts currently has 55 operating Commonwealth charter schools, serving more than 26,000 students. Students are accepted into a school through an open lottery and retain the right to attend if they move out of the district or region. Charter school teachers and staff are not subject to the sending districts' collective bargaining agreements, enabling schools to establish their own work rules and working conditions.
2. *Horace Mann charter schools* also operate as independent local education agencies, but teachers remain a part of the local collective bargaining unit. Massachusetts currently has seven Horace Mann charter schools. The primary differences from a Commonwealth charter are that the original charter application, subsequent applications for renewal of the charter, and any requests to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to amend the charter must receive approval from the school committee and local collective bargaining unit prior to Board approval.

Massachusetts' charter school statute was amended in January of 2010 to allow for a significant expansion of high performing charter schools in the state's lowest performing districts. In writing the "smart charter cap lift" legislation, the Governor and the state legislature recognized the successes of many existing urban charter schools. With this statutory change, Massachusetts' charter law now has a focus on creating strong charter schools to serve those students most in need. On May 25, 2010, the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adopted regulations that clear the way for implementation of the new statute.

The new statute seeks to increase the number of charter schools operated by proven providers that will serve high needs students in low performing districts primarily through three provisions. First, for the state's 30 lowest performing districts, the net school spending cap (i.e., the amount of the district's net school spending (NSS) that can be reallocated to charter schools) is doubled from 9

percent to 18 percent.⁵ Second, in districts exceeding the 9 percent NSS cap, only high performing, “proven providers” may apply to operate a charter. Third, these charters must develop recruitment and retention plans for high needs students.

The new education legislation also allows for the creation of 14 Horace Mann charter schools that do *not* require local union approval. Further, conversion of an existing district school into a Horace Mann charter does not require union approval but instead a memorandum of understanding (MOU) regarding any waivers to applicable collective bargaining agreements, and this MOU requires approval by a majority vote of that school’s teachers.

The 62 charter schools currently operating in Massachusetts represent 3 percent of the state’s schools and 2.8 percent of the state’s students. In Boston, the state’s largest district, charter schools there currently represent approximately 12 percent of all public schools, and the new law allows for a doubling of the allowable spending on charter schools in Boston.

In addition to doubling the spending cap in the lowest performing districts, the new law made two other significant changes to charter school caps. It eliminated the cap (of 4 percent) on the total number of students statewide who can attend charter schools, and it eliminated the cap on the number of district schools that can convert to Horace Mann charter schools. The new law maintains the cap of 120 charter schools statewide—72 Commonwealth charters and 48 Horace Mann charters—but this cap does not apply to the Horace Mann conversions, nor does it apply to the “smart cap” lift in the state’s lowest performing districts. The state has 1,770 non-charter public schools, so the traditional Commonwealth and Horace Mann charter schools can represent what amounts to approximately 6 percent of all public schools, while the new law’s allowance for unlimited Horace Mann conversions and more proven provider charters in the lowest performing districts enables the total number of charters to exceed 6 percent of all public schools. With the exception of the state’s lowest performing 30 districts, the amount of a district’s spending that can be reallocated to charter schools can be no more than 9 percent.

The charter statute also ensures in two other ways that the state’s sole charter authorizer, the state’s Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, focuses on high need districts. It maintains the statutory requirement that the first two charters granted in any

⁵ In fiscal year 2011, the NSS cap in these districts is set at 12 percent; by statute, it increases by one percentage point per year to reach 18 percent in 2017.

year must be granted in districts where overall student performance on the statewide assessment system is in the bottom 10 percent for two consecutive years, and it continues to provide that only one regional charter can be granted in a district in the top 10 percent. Lastly, the board is now authorized to give priority to proven providers when determining to which applicants it will award a charter.

(F)(2)(ii)

Massachusetts is one of only two states in the nation with a single charter school authorizer, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. For this reason, accountability is handled consistently for all charter schools in the state. The Charter School Office of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education operates under a comprehensive set of standards and protocols that have been in place since 1993, when the state's charter legislation was first enacted. Over the past several years Massachusetts' authorizing and accountability process has been hailed as a national model. Massachusetts was one of eight charter authorizers highlighted in USED's 2007 report "Supporting Charter School Excellence Through Quality Authorizing."

Under Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations 603 CMR 1.00, charter schools are held accountable in three areas: faithfulness to charter, academic success, and organizational viability. The process of accountability begins with the application for a charter, which uses an extensive set of criteria in all three areas of accountability in addition to an assessment of the capacity of the board of trustees. The most detailed section of the application requires answers to questions on curriculum development and implementation, instruction, professional development, and use of instructional time. The information provided against these criteria becomes a critical element in determining if the application should be chartered. Massachusetts uses a two-stage application process in which applicants first submit a prospectus and, depending on the outcome of the prospectus review, may be invited to submit a full application. Newly chartered schools are required to complete an opening procedures process to ensure schools have met state and federal statutory and regulatory requirements. Enrollment is by open lottery.

The state's recently revised charter statute has a focus on ensuring that charter schools serve a student population that is similar to the local district's student population. The new law requires that all charter schools create student recruitment and retention plans to

attract and retain a student population that, when compared to students in similar grades in schools from which the charter school is expected to enroll students, contains a comparable academic and demographic profile. In districts authorized to exceed the 9 percent net school spending cap (i.e., in the lowest performing districts in the state), charter applicants must provide and annually update recruitment and retention plans designed to attract and retain, when compared to the population of students in the grades and schools from which the charter is expected to enroll students: (1) a comparable or greater percentage of English language learners or special needs students; and (2) a comparable percentage of students from two or more of the following categories: students eligible for free lunch; students eligible for reduced price lunch; students who are sub-proficient; students who are determined to be at risk of dropping out of school based on predictors determined by ESE; students who have dropped out of school; and other at-risk students who should be targeted in order to eliminate achievement gaps among different groups of students. Additionally, the statute requires that, at the request of a charter school, districts must provide a third party mail house authorized by the SEA with the addresses for all students in the district who are eligible to enroll in the charter. This last requirement allows charter schools to do broad-based recruiting in order to meet their recruitment and retention goals.

A charter school's success in the three areas of accountability is defined by Common School Performance Criteria developed by the Department. These criteria were used to create protocols for site visits during the charter term, renewal inspections in the fifth year, and federal programs inspections to ensure schools have implemented requirements. ESE has also developed numerous guidance documents for charter schools, including a guide on fiscal policies and procedures, technical advisories on amendments and transportation, and annual report guidelines. Each charter school is required to submit an annual report of the school's progress on an accountability plan that details goals and measures in the three areas of charter accountability, and each charter school must annually contract for and submit an independent audit. The charter school statute also requires that, when deciding on renewal, the ESE Board must consider the extent to which the school has followed its recruitment and retention strategies.

Over the course of each school's charter term, the Department builds a body of evidence regarding the school's success, using data from the annual statewide assessment, the school's annual reports and audits, and information contained in reports produced after

interim site visits by the Department and the final renewal inspection visit. Academic success is also assessed by statistical comparisons with the sending district(s) to determine if the charter school is achieving at an equal or higher level. At the five year mark, charters may be renewed, non-renewed, renewed with conditions, or placed on probation, also with conditions. Revocation, as defined in the regulations, is possible at any time during the charter term.

Charter applications are denied when a combination of factors are unveiled through the review panel process and interview with the founding group. Factors may include poor quality of the proposed model for curriculum and instruction, or lack of capacity of the founding board to implement the proposal.

Lack of academic success was a major factor in the closure of three of the four charter schools closed in the past five years. The first school was closed at the five year renewal, primarily for academic and governance reasons. The second was renewed with stringent outcome conditions regarding academic success and meeting the terms of its charter; the conditions were not met and the charter was revoked. The third school's charter was revoked in the second year of operation for failure to meet accountability standards in all three areas, including implementation of the academic program, governance, and financial oversight and management. The fourth school's charter was revoked in May 2010 for fraud and gross mismanagement.

Table F3: Charter School Applications and Approvals, 2005–2010

School year	Charter prospectuses submitted	Final charter applications invited	Charter applications approved	Charter applications denied	Charter schools closed by the Board
2004–05	8	5	2	3	2
2005–06	14	4	3	1	0
2006–07	10	4	1	3	0
2007–08	10	5	3	2	0
2008–09	7	3	1	2	1
2009–10	14	7	6	1	1
Total	49	21	10	9	4

(F)(2)(iii)

The funding formula in the Massachusetts charter school statute ensures that charter schools receive equitable funding when compared to traditional district schools. The statute uses three components to calculate charter school tuition rates. The first is a per-pupil foundation rate, based on student demographic and enrollment factors and adjusted annually for inflation. The foundation rates are the same rates used to establish foundation budgets for traditional school districts. The second factor is the “above-foundation” adjustment. The foundation rates are adjusted upward to reflect the amount by which the sending districts’ spending on their own students exceeds their foundation budget. The third component is a per-pupil facilities component, which is discussed under F2iv.

In general, the charter tuition formula is designed to ensure that charter schools are receiving the same amount per pupil as is spent in the sending districts. The only differences result from adjustments for student demographics (for example, a charter school with a higher percentage of low income students than the sending district will receive relatively more funding per pupil) and exclusion of

certain cost elements not borne by charter schools. In fiscal year 2008, charter schools on average spent \$10,628 per student as compared with \$12,454 for districts, a difference of \$1,826 per student. This difference is mainly attributable to the fact that districts bear higher costs for special education than charter schools do. Massachusetts' disability rate is high (approximately 17 percent) relative to other states, as is the rate at which students with disabilities are educated out-of-district. Districts must pay tuition for students placed in private special education schools, while charter schools do not.

Charter school tuition is paid by the sending districts, and as a result draws from the same local and state revenue sources that fund traditional public schools. The state provides reimbursement to sending districts for the amount that their charter school tuition increases from one year to the next. Based on recently enacted legislation, in each fiscal year, districts are reimbursed for 100 percent of the increase in tuition over the prior year, and 25 percent of the difference in increased costs for the next five years. Reimbursement to districts for charter facilities costs is based on a statewide rate that is calculated annually (see description in section F2iv). Federal grants are distributed directly to charter schools by the Department in accordance with federal requirements.

(F)(2)(iv)

The funding formula for Massachusetts charter schools includes a facility component that is based on a set per-pupil amount, adjusted annually for inflation. In addition, the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency, a quasi-public agency, issues tax-exempt bonds to finance the acquisition, rehabilitation, or construction of charter schools through multiple vehicles, including Qualified Zone Academy Bonds for school renovations and upgrades; real estate loans of up to \$5,000,000 for facility acquisition, renovation, construction, and permanent financing; and charter school loan guarantees for a portion of a bank loan or tax-exempt bond for acquisition, construction, or renovation of owned and leased charter school facilities. The education legislation enacted by the state in January of 2010 offers incentives to districts to offer unused school buildings to charter schools. No facility requirements are placed on charter schools beyond the normal building code and accessibility requirement, and these same requirements apply to traditional district schools. Lastly, the state legislature passed a law in 2009 requiring the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to

oversee Massachusetts' allocation of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Qualified School Construction Bonds (ARRA QSCBs). (See text of Section 137 of Chapter 27 of the Acts of 2009 in the appendices.) The MSBA was authorized to use a portion of the state's allocation of ARRA QSCBs for charter schools.

(F)(2)(v)

Both the state and local districts enable the operation of innovative, autonomous schools other than charter schools.

The Innovation Schools initiative, a key component of the groundbreaking education legislation that Governor Patrick signed in January 2010, provides educators and other stakeholders across the state with the exciting opportunity to create new in-district schools that will leverage the lessons learned from the state's top performing charter schools while keeping school funding within districts. These unique schools—which may be established by superintendents, school committees, teachers, parents, colleges and universities, charter school operators and others—will operate with increased autonomy and flexibility in the areas of curriculum, budget, school schedule and calendar, staffing (including waivers from or exemptions to collective bargaining agreements), school district policies, and professional development. In exchange for greater authority to establish the school conditions that will lead to improved teaching and learning, the operators of Innovation Schools will be held accountable for meeting annual benchmarks for student achievement and school performance. There are no caps on the number of Innovation Schools, and new schools can be created or existing schools can be converted in every district in Massachusetts.

Unlike charter schools, which must be approved by the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the development and establishment of Innovation Schools is entirely locally based. An applicant works with the local superintendent, teachers' union, and school committee to develop and refine a plan that includes detailed information about the innovative strategies that will be implemented. The local school committee has the authority to approve the Innovation Schools.

To support the establishment of Innovation Schools, ESE is responsible for the provision of planning and implementation grants, technical assistance and support to eligible applicants; and the collection, publication, and dissemination of data, research, and best

practices in Innovation Schools that may be adopted by other public schools. ESE and the Executive Office of Education have supported early adopters of this model by issuing \$200,000 in planning grants to 16 districts in the summer of 2009, and by providing both statewide and site-based technical assistance to these districts to support the development of innovation plans and collaboration among stakeholders.

The first Innovation School—the Paul Revere Innovation School in the Revere Public Schools—was established by unanimous vote of the school committee on May 25, 2010. Additional schools are poised to open in September 2010, and many other applicants are engaged in the process of establishing schools that will open in September 2011. We have included funds to support further expansion of these schools in our Race to the Top budget proposal.

Additionally, the Boston Public Schools currently operate a total of 23 pilot schools: district-based schools with autonomy over staffing, budget, curriculum and assessment, governance and policies, and school calendar, and with greater accountability for results.

(See Appendix F3 for an excerpt from the legislation pertaining to Innovation Schools and Appendix F4 for a fact sheet on Innovation Schools.)

(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions (5 points)

The extent to which the State, in addition to information provided under other State Reform Conditions Criteria, has created, through law, regulation, or policy, other conditions favorable to education reform or innovation that have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes.

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

Evidence for (F)(3):

- A description of the State's other applicable key education laws, statutes, regulations, or relevant legal documents.

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

Massachusetts has a demonstrated history of establishing innovative conditions, policies, and programs favorable to education reform. Beyond those already mentioned elsewhere in the application (such as the Innovation Schools described in F2v), a key element of these conditions is the state legislature's funding priorities. (See Appendix F5 for complete statutory budget language.)

The state funds two programs that increase time for academics, in an effort to address the impact that additional time in school can have on outcomes for low performing students. First, we are the only state in the nation to support a statewide **Expanded Learning Time** program, funded at \$15.7 million in FY10 and serving 23 primarily high poverty schools. This program, currently in its fourth year, provides an additional 300 hours of time in participating schools to support additional time for academics, enrichment, and professional development. An independent evaluation by Abt Associates suggests that most participating schools are implementing the program effectively and that teachers feel they have more time to differentiate instruction and explore subjects in depth. Second, the legislature also funds **after-school and out-of-school time** grants (\$2 million in FY10) to improve the quality of after-school and

summer programs. In FY08, this program supported 48 programs in providing services to 6,750 students statewide, including 980 students with disabilities and 630 English language learners.

The state funds a variety of programs aimed at helping students meet high school graduation requirements and improve their college and career readiness. Largest is a set of programs supporting students in grades 8 and above in passing the required high school MCAS examinations. These programs, totaling \$9.3 million in FY10, have resulted in increases of 12 to 34 percentage points (depending on student grade of enrollment) in the share of students meeting the MCAS graduation requirement, relative to students eligible for but not served by the program (ESE 2009). The state also funds a **Connecting Activities** program (\$2 million in FY10) designed to link high school students to the world of work through internships, work-based learning, and an academic support component, with priority given to students scoring in *Needs Improvement* or *Warning/Failing* on MCAS test(s). A study of FY07 participants showed that 57 percent of students who participated in the Connecting Activities program met the MCAS graduation requirement, as compared to 43 percent who were eligible for but not served by the program. Finally, the state provides \$1.3 million each year to the **WPI School of Excellence**, a STEM-focused high school in Worcester affiliated with Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and \$1.5 million to Youth Build, an alternative education program serving over-age high school students and featuring GED or high school completion, job skill development, community service, and mentoring.

Our full-day kindergarten grant program, funded at \$25.9 million in FY10, supports districts to transition from half-day to full-day kindergarten and provides resources to improve the quality of full-day kindergarten programs. As a result of this program, between FY00 and FY09 the share of Massachusetts students attending full-day kindergarten rose from 29 to 77 percent. Currently 265 of the state's 280 non-charter school LEAs enrolling kindergarten-age students (89 percent) offer full-day kindergarten.

In FY10 the state legislature consolidated three separate early literacy programs into a single line item funded at \$4.2 million. As a result, the Department now more effectively targets districts with identified literacy proficiency gaps; has expanded its focus beyond K-3 to the equally important area of adolescent literacy; and provides professional development and resources statewide. The consolidated line item serves over 100,000 students in 380 high priority schools statewide.

Together with local school aid already provided through Chapter 70 and other fiscal programs outlined in section F2, these legislative investments signal Massachusetts' deep commitment to innovative supports designed to meet the needs of all students and to close achievement gaps statewide.

II. COMPETITION PRIORITIES

Priority 1: Absolute Priority -- Comprehensive Approach to Education Reform

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address all of the four education reform areas specified in the ARRA as well as the State Success Factors Criteria in order to demonstrate that the State and its participating LEAs are taking a systemic approach to education reform. The State must demonstrate in its application sufficient LEA participation and commitment to successfully implement and achieve the goals in its plans; and it must describe how the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs, will use Race to the Top and other funds to increase student achievement, decrease the achievement gaps across student subgroups, and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.

The absolute priority cuts across the entire application and should not be addressed separately. It is assessed, after the proposal has been fully reviewed and evaluated, to ensure that the application has met the priority.

Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority -- Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). (15 points, all or nothing)

To meet this priority, the State's application must have a high-quality plan to address the need to (i) offer a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology, and engineering; (ii) cooperate with industry experts, museums, universities, research centers, or other STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines, in promoting effective and relevant instruction, and in offering applied learning opportunities for students; and (iii) prepare more students for advanced study and careers in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including by addressing the needs of underrepresented groups and of women and girls in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The competitive preference priority will be evaluated in the context of the State's entire application. Therefore, a State that is responding to this priority should address it throughout the application, as appropriate, and provide a summary of its approach to addressing the priority in the text box below. The reviewers will assess the priority as part of their review of a State's application and determine whether it has been met.

Recommended maximum response length, if any: One page

Investment in STEM is a critical component of Massachusetts' overall reform agenda and is integrated throughout our RTTT proposal. As noted in section A3, we have made a rigorous commitment to high standards in STEM, leading to striking results: Our fourth- and eighth-grade students lead the nation in mathematics achievement and are ranked internationally in both science and mathematics.

This success belies the fact that too few of our students are reaching their full potential. Large achievement gaps in science and mathematics persist, and too few of our students are interested in pursuing STEM careers. According to the College Board, 20.5% of Massachusetts students who took the 2008 SAT indicated an interest in pursuing a career in the STEM fields, substantially below the national average of 26.3%. This is particularly troubling given our high tech economy, where 10% of our state's job vacancies in 2008 were in STEM fields (DWD 2008). Dramatically changing these trends is critical for the future of our students and the continued prosperity of our state. We will use RTTT funds to make targeted STEM investments that address key challenges:

Individualize STEM instruction (see sections B3 and D5): Massachusetts will incorporate STEM subjects into all aspects of the PreK–12 teaching and learning system, and we will prioritize formative and interim assessments for mathematics and science. Educators will have access to high quality curriculum materials, model units, and lesson plans, designed to model what an effective STEM classroom looks like, what engages and excites students in STEM, and how to better integrate courses.

Expand the supply of effective STEM educators (see sections B3, D3, and D5): Given critical shortages of STEM educators, Massachusetts will scale up proven intensive recruitment and preparation programs to prepare an additional 250 teachers in STEM fields. We will also invest in retention efforts, as every year we lose STEM teachers, particularly mid-career changers, because they do not receive sufficient classroom support. Finally, we will use RTTT funds to provide opportunities to participate in pre-AP teacher training in mathematics and science and in other professional development for science and K–8 mathematics instruction (e.g., the Massachusetts Intel Mathematics Initiative).

Increase STEM college and career readiness among underrepresented groups (see section B3): The state will continue to emphasize STEM in MassCore, which will become the state's default high school curriculum and will include a minimum of four years of mathematics and three years of lab-based science. We will also provide supplemental funding to LEAs to scale two proven programs that embed rigorous STEM curricula in lower performing schools: pre-AP curricula to promote success on AP coursework in high school and STEM Early College High Schools.

In October 2009, Governor Patrick established a STEM Advisory Council that will serve as a central advisory body, convening public and private sector stakeholders to increase student interest in and preparation for careers in STEM fields. Working with educators, employers, and government leaders, the STEM Advisory Council seeks to promote STEM disciplines as important to all students' economic and

civic futures, to increase the number of students interested in and prepared for STEM fields, and to increase the number of individuals entering STEM careers. The Council will be leveraged to achieve rapid and effective implementation by our Race to the Top investments, along with several related channels including: a) seven existing regional PreK–16 STEM networks that connect districts, higher education, and industry with the purposes of increasing student interest in STEM careers, adding to the pool of qualified STEM teachers, and improving the quality of STEM offerings; b) a significant collection of leading-edge STEM institutions such as the Museum of Science; c) The Robert H. Goddard Council, comprised of high level representatives from industry, state government, and K–12 and higher education, which advises the Board of Higher Education and the legislature on STEM workforce development programs and policy; and d) the STEM-focused Greater Boston Readiness Center that provides targeted professional development and instructional services to educators and shares promising practices via the Readiness Center Network.

With our history of high standards, our commitments from our policymakers and STEM partners, and our deliberate use of Race to the Top investments in innovation and capacity-building, we are confident that Massachusetts will dramatically increase the STEM proficiency of our students and their successful pursuit of STEM-related careers.

Priority 3: Invitational Priority – Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (*not scored*)

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications that include practices, strategies, or programs to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (prekindergarten through third grade) by enhancing the quality of preschool programs. Of particular interest are proposals that support practices that (i) improve school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive); and (ii) improve the transition between preschool and kindergarten.

The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages

Massachusetts is deeply committed to developing and implementing innovative strategies to improve learning outcomes for young children, particularly those living in high need communities. We firmly believe that we cannot turn around our lowest performing schools unless we reach out to students before they enter the K–12 system. In 2005, Massachusetts became the first state in the nation to establish a single agency, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), to oversee both early education and care programs and after-school services. The agency was established in accordance with one primary principle—state resources must fundamentally be reorganized to better address the different needs of children and their families—and its primary purpose is to develop a more unified, coherent, and efficient system of early education and care.

The core priorities of EEC are as follows: 1) create a delivery system that will provide high quality services across the state; 2) increase and promote families’ access to affordable support services; 3) establish a system to build an effective and diverse educator workforce; 4) disseminate information to stakeholders to advocate for and convey the value of early education and care; and 5) develop the organizational infrastructure that is needed to achieve key goals. Governor Patrick’s Education Action Agenda (EAA), which was issued in June 2008, and a landmark early education bill (An Act Relative to Early Education and Care), which the Governor signed in July 2009, established the foundation for several key EEC initiatives: 1) the development of a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) to assess and improve the level of quality in early education and after-school programs (to date, this work has informed the development of a regulatory framework for kindergarten readiness and a statewide

assessment system to measure the developmental progress of young children ages 3 to 5); 2) the creation of the Birth to School Age Task Force to support the healthy development of children, particularly those from low income families; and 3) the expansion of universal pre-kindergarten to promote school readiness and inform the establishment of accessible, affordable, and high quality programs.

Massachusetts will focus its Race to the Top investments in early education around linking early education standards and K–3 curricula and assessments (see section B3). In partnership with EEC, ESE will make targeted investments in early education through the PreK–12 teaching and learning system, aligning PreK and K–3 standards, providing model curriculum through the Digital Library, and developing formative assessments and curriculum-embedded performance tasks in early grades. This will also support dissemination of the Common Core Standards in early grades.

The investment of Race to the Top funds in this project will strengthen our current efforts to provide children and families with high quality educational and development opportunities. In addition, the existence of a strong state-level organizational framework and robust collaboration among multiple partners will ensure that we can sustain the impact of these investments in the years to come.

Priority 4: Invitational Priority – Expansion and Adaptation of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems *(not scored)*

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State plans to expand statewide longitudinal data systems to include or integrate data from special education programs, English language learner programs, early childhood programs, at-risk and dropout prevention programs, and school climate and culture programs, as well as information on student mobility, human resources (*i.e.*, information on teachers, principals, and other staff), school finance, student health, postsecondary education, and other relevant areas, with the purpose of connecting and coordinating all parts of the system to allow important questions related to policy, practice, or overall effectiveness to be asked, answered, and incorporated into effective continuous improvement practices.

The Secretary is also particularly interested in applications in which States propose working together to adapt one State’s statewide longitudinal data system so that it may be used, in whole or in part, by one or more other States, rather than having each State build or continue building such systems independently.

The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages

Massachusetts is currently pursuing the development of a comprehensive longitudinal data system. Progress to date has been funded by the state and by supplemental funds secured through the 2008 and 2009 State Longitudinal Data Systems grants. ESE has already implemented the key data elements and the functionality described by this invitational priority in the state’s Education Data Warehouse (EDW). This includes integration of data related to the enrollment, attendance, and performance of students who are in special education, who are English language learners, and who are at risk of dropping out, as well as data on student mobility and human resources information for teachers, principals, and other staff.

Going forward, statewide longitudinal data systems will continue to be a critical component of the governor’s Education Action Agenda and are a priority in the state’s Race to the Top application. Governor Patrick strongly supports the development and implementation of a Readiness Passport: an integrated P–16 data tool for parents, guardians, and agencies to document key elements of a child’s educational experiences as well as to chronicle various services, interventions, supports, data, and performance evaluations related to that child (EOE 2008). The Passport is meant to ease transitions between schools and programs and to transform data into actionable information on policy, practice, and

program effectiveness. The governor has convened a Child and Youth Readiness Cabinet, composed of senior-level representatives of the Massachusetts public agencies that serve children, as well as a Readiness Passport Interagency Working Group to drive forward the development of this system. EOE also commissioned a report from Public Consulting Group to lay out the context, challenges, and opportunities related to increased data sharing across agencies, so we are prepared to take on this important work and have the governance structures in place to succeed.

Our goal with both our RTTT application and our recently approved 2010 State Longitudinal Data Systems grant proposal is to build out the remaining foundation of the Passport by pursuing four strategies:

Improving and integrating education data collection systems. We will assign a SASID (a unique student identifier) as soon as a student is touched by the public education system, whether in early, K–12, higher, or adult education, to facilitate linking data across systems. Our Education Personnel Information Management System (EPIMS) will expand to include information related to educator evaluation, and we will also begin assigning a MEPID (unique educator identifier) as soon as prospective educators take their first concrete step toward licensure (e.g., enrollment in a preparation program or registration for a state licensure exam). We will expand our Student Information Management System to include data related to participation and completion in college and career pathways (see section B3) and link this to National Student Clearinghouse data on college enrollment and completion patterns. We will also build tools to simplify the process of submitting data to the agency and implement an auditing system to improve data quality across all our systems.

Expanding access to the Education Data Warehouse (EDW). We will expand secure, differentiated EDW access to all K–12 educators, private special education schools, the Department of Youth Services (serving incarcerated students), researchers, and key stakeholders in early and higher education. We will also explore the feasibility of expanding access to parents and students for individual student-level data. Through the LDS grant we will expand the EDW to include early childhood and higher education students; an improved Early Warning Information System to support dropout prevention and recovery; and enhanced data and related reports on school climate. Race to the Top will allow us to add role-specific dashboards as well as student discipline and financial data and a district comparison tool.

Enhancing the Education Data Warehouse's usefulness. The EDW will serve as the information backbone of many of the projects in our Race to the Top proposal, most notably the PreK–12 teaching and learning system and the educator evaluation system. Beyond this, we will enhance the data and tools

available in the EDW to include the expanded data elements noted above. We will integrate ELAR, the Department's educator licensure transactional database, with EPIMS through the EDW. We will build reports and tools that help identify students at risk of dropout or ready for accelerated instruction and that measure college enrollment and completion outcomes. And we will increase the quality and timeliness of our data by implementing the Schools Interoperability Framework statewide.

Providing training on effective data use. For most educators, significant investment in training and job-embedded activities is required before data use becomes a regular component of their practice. To this end, we have built training activities throughout our RTTT and 2010 SLDS proposals to ensure that the data we are collecting and disseminating is effectively used for instructional decision making. These activities include classroom and online courses, supports for district- and school-based data teams, and other curricular materials.

By implementing these strategies, we will expand our state longitudinal data system to serve a much broader spectrum of users. We will be able to analyze the college enrollment and completion rates of our high school graduates even if they enroll outside the Massachusetts public higher education system, and we will be able to differentiate those outcomes for students participating in new program initiatives such as Early College High Schools. And we will be able to connect early learning experiences to student outcomes in the K–12 system, and to connect educator preparation, licensure, teaching assignment, and student outcomes. Together, we will successfully make a leap forward in achieving our long-term goal of a Readiness Passport connecting timely, relevant, and actionable information for all Massachusetts public agencies serving our children and communities.

Priority 5: Invitational Priority -- P-20 Coordination, Vertical and Horizontal Alignment (*not scored*)

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State plans to address how early childhood programs, K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, workforce development organizations, and other State agencies and community partners (*e.g.*, child welfare, juvenile justice, and criminal justice agencies) will coordinate to improve all parts of the education system and create a more seamless preschool-through-graduate school (P-20) route for students. Vertical alignment across P-20 is particularly critical at each point where a transition occurs (*e.g.*, between early childhood and K-12, or between K-12 and postsecondary/careers) to ensure that students exiting one level are prepared for success, without remediation, in the next. Horizontal alignment, that is, coordination of services across schools, State agencies, and community partners, is also important in ensuring that high-need students (as defined in this notice) have access to the broad array of opportunities and services they need and that are beyond the capacity of a school itself to provide.

The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages

Massachusetts is currently pursuing an ambitious plan to integrate the P–20 system and support our learners through every stage of their educational careers. The state has already established the governmental and organizational framework that is necessary to both promote and sustain P–20 coordination, and is pursuing additional policies and strategies that will increase both vertical and horizontal alignment across the state.

In 2008, the Massachusetts legislature overwhelmingly approved Governor Patrick’s proposal to establish the Executive Office of Education (EOE), the single and responsible authority to advance public education in the state. Under the leadership of a Secretary of Education, the primary function of the EOE is to create and sustain a truly seamless education system from birth through higher education. As described in section A1, EOE works in partnership with the Departments of Early Education and Care (EEC), Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), and Higher Education (DHE) and also with the University of Massachusetts (UMASS).

Our Race to the Top proposal was crafted with significant guidance and input from EOE and the three departments, and the success of the following strategies depends on the deliberate and continued coordination of these entities:

Standards and assessments. As described in section B3, Massachusetts will use RTTT funding to develop a unified and more coherent PreK–12 teaching and learning system. ESE’s ongoing partnership with EEC and DHE will ensure alignment between the early education and K–3 standards/assessments, inform a seamless PreK–12 model curriculum, strengthen the link between K–12 and higher education, and address strategies related to college and career readiness.

Data Systems. As described in section C, enhancements to the state’s Education Data Warehouse (EDW) and the expansion of existing databases will assist educators with the collection, transfer, usage, and application of data. ESE will continue to partner with the EOE, ESE, DHE, UMASS, and other state agencies to ensure that the collection and management of data supports the implementation of RTTT initiatives. RTTT funding will also support linking teacher and principal preparation and evaluation to measures of effectiveness, which will necessitate working across sectors.

Great Teachers and Leaders: The depth and breadth of the initiatives and strategies described in section D necessitate continued and consistent collaboration among ESE, EOE, DHE, UMASS, and other stakeholders, and ESE will coordinate these partnerships both during and beyond the four-year RTTT grant. For example, ESE will continue its partnership with DHE, institutions of higher education, and other partners to develop and embed measures of educator effectiveness into every component of the system; improve the content, quality, and structure of teacher preparation programs; and increase the diversity of the educator workforce. RTTT funding also will be allocated to the Readiness Centers to supplement the capacity of ESE to provide instructional and professional development services and to convene stakeholders to address cross-sector priorities.

Turning Around Low Achieving Schools: Through RTTT we will build wraparound zones in seven districts to coordinate community and social services across the public sector—including the education agencies but also health and human services, child welfare, juvenile justice, and others. This is a top priority of the governor’s Cabinet on Child and Youth Development.

Massachusetts has already made great strides in building a more unified and cohesive public education system. We have the statewide architecture necessary to promote P–20 coordination and alignment; we are building capacity at multiple levels to develop, implement, and sustain efforts over time; we have increased policy and programmatic coherence; and we are actively leveraging existing partnerships between education agencies and other organizations and building new ones. With support from RTTT, the state can accelerate this critical work and realize Governor Patrick’s vision of creating an outstanding

public education system that truly promotes growth and success from birth through higher education—for all students.

Priority 6: Invitational Priority -- School-Level Conditions for Reform, Innovation, and Learning
(not scored)

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State's participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) seek to create the conditions for reform and innovation as well as the conditions for learning by providing schools with flexibility and autonomy in such areas as—

- (i) Selecting staff;
- (ii) Implementing new structures and formats for the school day or year that result in increased learning time (as defined in this notice);
- (iii) Controlling the school's budget;
- (iv) Awarding credit to students based on student performance instead of instructional time;
- (v) Providing comprehensive services to high-need students (as defined in this notice) (e.g., by mentors and other caring adults; through local partnerships with community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and other providers);
- (vi) Creating school climates and cultures that remove obstacles to, and actively support, student engagement and achievement; and
- (vii) Implementing strategies to effectively engage families and communities in supporting the academic success of their students.

The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages

Over the past 15 years, Massachusetts LEAs have led the way in establishing innovative, semi-autonomous public schools that feature high degrees of flexibility and autonomy. In 1995 Boston began the successful Pilot Schools initiative, which has resulted in the creation of 23 innovative, semi-autonomous schools, some of which are now among the most successful and highly sought-after schools in the city. Seeking to build on this success, Governor Patrick's Education Action Agenda (released in July 2008) proposed the creation of up to 40 semi-autonomous Readiness Schools by 2013. In 2009 ESE, working with the Executive Office of Education (EOE), awarded planning grants to 16 urban, suburban, and rural LEAs across the state to facilitate the establishment of 22 such schools, most of which are scheduled to open in fall 2010 or fall 2011.

With final passage of major education legislation reform legislation in January 2010, Massachusetts is now positioned to dramatically expand these existing initiatives by giving all of our LEAs the ability to establish schools with greater flexibility and autonomy. The law authorizes the creation of Innovation Schools—in-district public schools with increased autonomy in the areas of curriculum, budget, school

schedule and calendar, staffing (including waivers from collective bargaining agreements), and school district policies. Innovation Schools may be established as new schools or as conversions of existing schools, and can be proposed by a wide variety of eligible applicants, including superintendents, school boards, administrators, teachers, parents, colleges and universities, nonprofit organizations, charter school operators, and consortia of those groups.

Innovation Schools will be developed through an inclusive, locally based process that will involve the development of an innovation plan that will detail the areas of autonomy and flexibility the school seeks to incorporate, as well as a performance contract that will include annual measurable goals on core academic measures. In cases where an existing public school is being proposed for conversion, school faculty will vote to accept the innovation plan (including any collective bargaining waivers) on the basis of a two-thirds vote; in the case of new Innovation Schools, such waivers will be facilitated through an expedited collective bargaining process. All Innovation Schools will be subject to final authorization by the local school committee, with provisions for annual evaluation and renewal after the school's initial authorization period has expired.

Because the Governor's Readiness Schools concept largely overlaps with the Innovation Schools framework authorized in the new law, during the spring of 2010 the school districts that were awarded Readiness School planning grants will continue to be developed using the newly established statutory framework. As detailed in this application, RTTT will fund an additional \$1 million in planning and implementation grants for these schools and others who wish to pursue this model (see section F2v).

At present, many of the proposed Innovation Schools under development in the 16 LEAs plan to incorporate the specific type of autonomy and flexibility referenced in this Invitational Priority. For example, nearly all of the LEAs intend to establish schools that use unique curricular and student support models that remove obstacles to student engagement and actively support student engagement and achievement (especially for high needs populations such as low income students, English language learners, and students with disabilities). Many of the forthcoming Innovation Schools plan to feature enhanced budgetary autonomy and/or increased learning time, and several plan to use increased autonomy to arrange staffing in ways that differ from traditional processes.

In addition, the January 2010 education law also will support LEAs in using flexibility and autonomy to facilitate the turnaround of low performing schools in Massachusetts. As further detailed in section E of this application, the new law allows local superintendents and the commissioner to develop turnaround plans to promote the rapid improvement of schools that are designated by the state as underperforming or

chronically underperforming. In each case, the law mandates that these turnaround plans incorporate comprehensive services to high need students and their families, such as health services, social services, and workforce development services for students and families. Moreover, these turnaround plans will also include strategies to effectively engage families and communities in supporting the academic success of their students through a variety of statutorily mandated and optional components. Finally, the new law gives local superintendents and the commissioner the ability to include other turnaround plan components that will enhance flexibility in low performing schools, such as budgetary flexibility, increased planning time for teachers, and provisions to authorize bonuses and other awards to attract and retain high quality educators.



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

ONE ASHBURTON PLACE, SUITE 1403, BOSTON, MA 02108

617-979-8340

PAUL REVILLE
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

May 28, 2010

The Honorable Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

On behalf of the educators of our Commonwealth, I'm pleased to enthusiastically endorse Massachusetts' Phase 2 proposal for the Race to the Top Fund.

As you know, Massachusetts is a national leader with regard to student achievement and reform because we have a history of boldly addressing challenging issues in education. Nearly a generation ago, our state was among the first to institute a rigorous system of standards coupled with high-quality assessments, allowing Massachusetts to vault from the middle ranks of the states in terms of academic achievement to the very top. More recently, we enacted a landmark education reform bill, *An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap*, that includes groundbreaking provisions to intervene more decisively and effectively in our lowest-performing schools, establish new Innovation Schools that will operate with greater autonomy and flexibility, and lift charter caps in our neediest school districts.

We are proud of our achievements to date, but in Massachusetts, doing well is simply not good enough. Now we are setting a new goal: we want Massachusetts to become the international leader in student achievement, and close – once and for all – the pernicious achievement gaps that are disproportionately affecting our lower-income students, students of color, and students receiving special education services.

Our Race to the Top proposal represents the blueprint for addressing this goal and other education priorities of Governor Deval Patrick, including enhancing the quality of our educator workforce, increasing college and career readiness, and providing targeted support to students, their families, and educators in our lowest-performing schools. The proposal is deeply responsive to your four reform assurances and other priorities, and also highlights unique characteristics of our state: a more unified and coherent public education system from birth

through higher education; increased capacity at multiple levels to sustain successful initiatives over time; and a long history of rich collaboration with multiple stakeholders.

This blueprint is the foundation for the second phase of reform in Massachusetts, and we are already moving forward with several key initiatives. In keeping with our commitment to working with educators to implement reform with – and not to – the field, we have established a task force that includes educators, union representatives, and other partners to develop a robust educator evaluation system by the spring of 2011. As a result of the legislation that was enacted in January, we are establishing new Innovation Schools that will open in September and are implementing strategies that will finally address the educational and social conditions that contribute to chronic underperformance in schools.

We will continue to advance our agenda, and hope that Race to the Top funding will accelerate progress toward our ambitious goals. We deeply appreciate your leadership, and the opportunity to continue our partnership with you and President Obama to do what is right for our students. Thank you in advance for your consideration of our proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Reville". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "P" and "R".

Paul Reville
Massachusetts Secretary of Education

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

June 1, 2010

The Honorable Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

As members of the Massachusetts congressional delegation, we are writing to offer our enthusiastic support for Massachusetts' Phase 2 application to the Race to the Top Fund.

Massachusetts has been recognized as a national leader in education reform and improvement since the passage of the landmark 1993 Education Reform Act, and our students consistently rank among the highest performers on U.S. and international measures of reading, mathematics and science achievement. At the same time, the Commonwealth recognizes that more needs to be done to close persistent achievement gaps and ensure that each and every one of our students receives a world-class public education. Massachusetts' Phase 2 application builds on our state's commitment to education reform by leveraging the provisions of a groundbreaking state law passed in January 2010 that expands high-performing charter schools in struggling school districts, increases state authority to turn around low-performing schools, and promotes the establishment of flexible and autonomous "Innovation Schools" statewide. We are confident that the new reforms enacted by the state will push student achievement to new heights. Support from the Race to the Top Fund will allow our students to reach those heights faster.

Massachusetts' Phase 2 application emphasizes four ambitious yet achievable goals. First, the Commonwealth will attract, develop, and retain an effective, diverse, and culturally competent educator workforce by developing a new statewide framework for teacher and principal evaluation in which impact on student growth will be a significant factor. Second, the state will provide curricular and instructional resources that support teacher effectiveness and success for all students by building a statewide teaching and learning system aligned with the Common Core Standards, which Massachusetts has played a major role in shaping. Third, Massachusetts will concentrate effective instruction and supports for educators, students, and families in its lowest performing schools by developing a specialized corps of educators prepared to tackle the challenges of low achieving schools, and by building district and state capacity to prevent low achievement and sustain progress. Finally, Massachusetts will substantially increase the number of students who graduate from high school ready for college and career by exposing more students to rigorous curricula and college-level work, particularly in STEM fields, and by better aligning high school curricula with college entrance requirements.

We believe that these initiatives will not only be a powerful impetus for dramatic change in Massachusetts, but they will also allow our state to continue to serve as a national model for educational improvement and reform. In shaping the Phase 2 application, our state's education

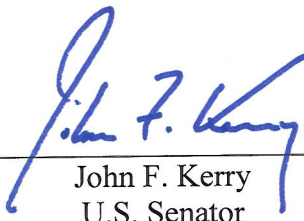
The Honorable Arne Duncan
June 1, 2010
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leaders have taken great care to retain the elements of the Phase 1 proposal that were highly-rated, while also strengthening proposals related to teacher evaluation, the use of data systems to monitor student progress, and the timeline for considering adoption of the Common Core Standards.

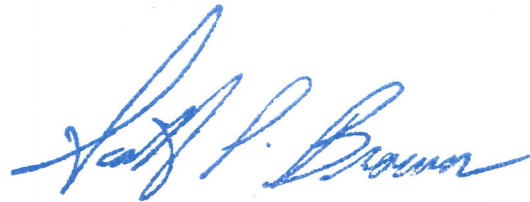
The Massachusetts Phase 2 application reflects the collaboration of a wide array of stakeholders, including superintendents, school boards, principals, advocates and the business community. Notably, the Commonwealth has also secured the endorsement of our state's largest teacher union, the Massachusetts Teachers Association, for its Race to the Top application. The Massachusetts application underscores its commitment to do education reform with the field, not to the field.

We encourage you to give Massachusetts' application your fullest consideration.

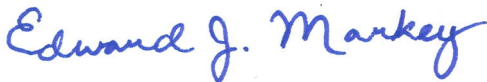
Sincerely,



John F. Kerry
U.S. Senator



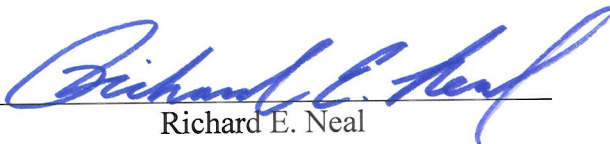
Scott P. Brown
U.S. Senator



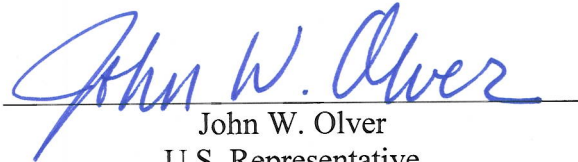
Edward J. Markey
U.S. Representative



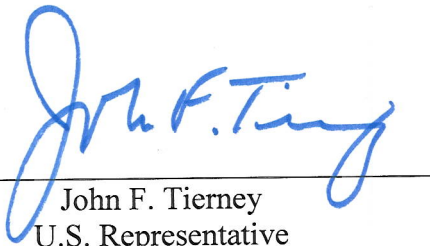
Barney Frank
U.S. Representative



Richard E. Neal
U.S. Representative



John W. Olver
U.S. Representative

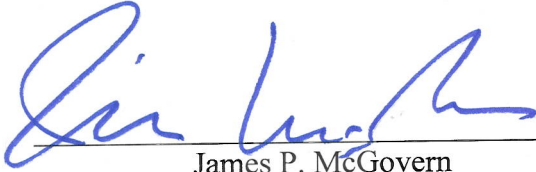


John F. Tierney
U.S. Representative



William Delahunt
U.S. Representative

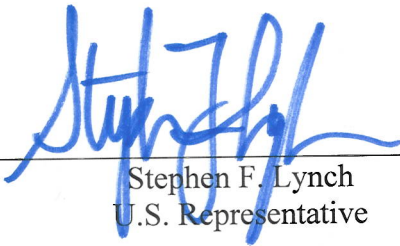
The Honorable Arne Duncan
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James P. McGovern
U.S. Representative



Michael Capuano
U.S. Representative



Stephen F. Lynch
U.S. Representative



Niki Tsongas
U.S. Representative



THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

May 27, 2010

The Honorable Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

On behalf of the Massachusetts General Court and the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, we are writing to express our enthusiastic support for Massachusetts' Phase 2 proposal to the Race to the Top Fund.

As you know, Massachusetts' students consistently outperform their national and international peers in the areas of reading, math, and science on multiple measures of assessment. We are extremely proud of our success to date, but also recognize that we have a tremendous amount of work to do to close persistent achievement gaps and ensure that each and every one of our students receives a high-quality education. In 1993, our General Court put in place a strong foundation through enactment of the landmark Education Reform Act, and this year our state legislature reaffirmed its support for education reform through groundbreaking legislation enacted in January 2010. The Legislature's support for *An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap* underscores our belief in providing meaningful intervention tools to address persistent underperformance in our schools, lifting charter school caps in our most challenged districts, and promoting innovation in all Massachusetts schools and districts. These are three essential steps Massachusetts is taking to achieve our educational goals and close achievement gaps.

The Commonwealth's Race to the Top proposal, coupled with the passage of the Achievement Gap legislation, will allow us to catalyze an ambitious second phase of education reform in Massachusetts. Our proposal emphasizes four ambitious and achievable goals: 1) attract, develop, and retain an effective, academically capable, diverse, and culturally competent educator workforce; 2) provide curricular and instructional resources that support teacher effectiveness and success for all students; 3) concentrate great instruction and support for educators, students, and families in our lowest performing schools and their districts; and 4) increase our focus on college and career readiness for all students.

The Commonwealth's proposal articulates a series of bold and innovative strategies to reach each of these goals that will not only be a powerful impetus for dramatic change in Massachusetts, but will also allow our state to continue to serve as a national model for educational improvement and reform.

We are grateful to you and President Obama for providing this opportunity to the Commonwealth, and we look forward to working to ensure *all* of our students receive a high-quality educational experience. On behalf of the Massachusetts General Court, we hope that you will grant your fullest consideration

to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Race to the Top proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,




Speaker Robert A. DeLeo
Massachusetts House of Representatives



President Therese Murray
Massachusetts State Senate



Representative Martha M. Walz
Chairwoman
Massachusetts Joint Committee on
Education



Senator Robert A. O'Leary
Chairman
Massachusetts Joint Committee on
Education