State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
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Ken Wagner, Ph.D.
Commissioner

Enclosure 6a
August 21, 2018

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TO: Members of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education

FROM: Ken Wagner, Ph.D., Commissioner

RE: Endorsement of Rhode Island Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan

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Rhode Island's Every Student Succeeds Act, (ESSA) plan was approved by the US Department of Education in January of 2018. Included in that plan is Rhode Island's process to hold schools accountable and provide support and progressive intervention to schools identified as in need of improvement. The development and approval of the ESSA plan rendered the *Protocol for Interventions: Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools Regulations* in misalignment with new federal law and therefore they will be "repealed". The ESSA plan will replace these regulations and will need the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education's endorsement and direction to the Commissioner to implement the plan as designed.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education endorses the Rhode Island Every Student Succeeds Act Plan and directs the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education to implement the Plan as endorsed.

Creating Pathways to Opportunity in Rhode Island

A Companion Guide to Rhode Island's State Plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act

Rhode Island Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

DRAFT - June 1, 2017

RIDE Rhode Island Department of Education

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Background and Introduction

In December 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into law. ESSA is the seventh reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, a 1965 civil rights law. The Every Student Succeeds Act replaces the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). ESSA gives states additional flexibility and encourages states and schools to innovate, while maintaining an emphasis on ensuring equal opportunity and civil rights for *every* student - particularly groups of students who have historically been underserved.

Individual students, as well as Rhode Island collectively, will be better off when those closest to students are empowered to do what is best for **every student,** and when **every voice** is leveraged to help shape the path forward. To ensure that every student can be supported to meet high expectations, personalized student-centered learning requires that the system in which it operates be unified in four important ways:

1. That there is guaranteed and viable curriculum aligned to standards to ensure that students have a series of learning experiences that are planned and cohesive;

2. That high-quality materials and resources that are culturally relevant are used in support of the curriculum;

3. That districts and schools are committed to ongoing and relevant professional learning so that teachers know the content and instructional practices necessary to implement the curriculum; and

4. That there are protocols in place to continuously improve practice and curriculum based on reviews of student work, assessment data, and classroom observations.

Rhode Island aims to utilize the opportunity afforded by the ESSA state planning process to build on and actualize the 2020 Vision for Education in Rhode Island: Rhode Island's strategic plan for PK-12 education, and to refine our systems to enable all of us to share in the responsibility of educating every student in accordance with the concepts listed here.

This document outlines how the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) will support our schools, educators, and students, and describes how the ESSA State Plan[1] reinforces and supports our strategic direction.

[1] The ESSA State Plan will be in draft form until September 2017.

Rhode Island's Vision for Students and Schools

The 2020 Vision for Education in Rhode Island was developed with guidance from over 11,000 Rhode Islanders who completed surveys and attended feedback sessions. Multiple iterations were written and led by 28 community members, who worked together for six months to clarify the vision, values, and priorities for education in Rhode Island. Since the Rhode Island Council for Elementary and Secondary Education approved the plan, RIDE has worked to develop policy, guidance, tools, and resources to support Rhode Island educators and community members to meet the plan's vision and goals.

Rhode Island's vision for our graduates:

A Rhode Island graduate is one who is well prepared for postsecondary education, work, and life. He or she can think critically and collaboratively and can act as a creative, self-motivated, culturally competent learner and citizen.

We have had success in moving toward the state's vision for our students. Rhode Island's graduation rate is at an all-time high of 85 percent. Our students are scoring at the national level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for the first time, and we have one of the five highest rates of growth in Advanced Placement participation in the country. We have improved policies to ensure that a diploma demonstrates that a student is prepared. Students have increasing opportunities to engage in advanced coursework. Our standards have never been more demanding. Schools have new empowerment options to foster innovation and creativity and to establish models to guide continuous improvement efforts. In light of our successes and with the knowledge that there is more work to do, this is a moment to set our sights higher, to stretch our timeline further, and to dedicate ourselves to the specific accomplishments we set forth in our ESSA plan, as well as in this document.

Our standard for success:
Supporting anything that helps teachers teach and students learn. An investment in them is an investment in our future, because a highly-skilled workforce, a growing economy, and vibrant communities are all anchored in education.

Rhode Island's long-term aspirations are directed at the year 2025, which aligns to two full strategic planning cycles. These goals are thoughtfully framed based on what we believe can be accomplished when the entire education system is aligned and working to support every student. The goals are differentiated and require a heavier lift for groups of students who are historically underserved so that we will make strides in closing opportunity gaps.

Rhode Island's Aspirations for 2025

3 of 4 third graders are proficient readers

- Fundamental to a strong academic foundation for every student, reading on grade level by third grade makes it far more likely a student will successfully graduate from high school.

3 of 4 eigth graders are proficient in STEM

- A solid understanding of math and science by eighth grade prepares students to succeed through the transition to more abstract content in high school and beyond.

100% of graduates earn added credentials

- Students who earn post-secondary credentials and credits while in high school are more likely to persist and succeed in post-secondary education and work.

75% of students earn the Commissioner's Seal

- Students whose math and literacy skills earn them the Commissioner's Seal signal to colleges and employers that they have achieved accomplishments beyond the diploma requirements

20% of students score at the highest level of proficiency

- Rhode Island's Strategic Plan for 2015-2020 sets forth our commitment to academic excellence, one measure of which is students achieving the highest levels of proficiency on statewide assessments.

95% of students graduate high school in four, five, or six years

- As the diploma becomes more valuable, a record number of students must graduate from high school to pursue the post-secondary training they will need to participate in a 21st century workforce.

Opportunity gaps closed by half

- *Every* student's success is critical to Rhode Island's future. Different and intensified efforts for groups of students who have historically been underserved are needed to ensure every student has access to rigorous and relevant learning opportunities.

Significant increase in diversity of educators

- All students deserve access to high-quality educators who celebrate and reflect the diversity of Rhode Island's communities.

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Rhode Island's Approach to the ESSA State Plan

Every Student. Every Voice.
Guiding Principles for Our ESSA State Plan

We *all* have a stake in the outcomes for every Rhode Islander. As a community, we must support **every student** to be successful in school and encourage **every voice** from all aspects of our state to contribute to, participate in, and guide our public schools. Our state ESSA plan will align with the following guiding principles that are derived from our strategic plan, public input, and our leaders' direction, and reflect the aspirations we hold for every Rhode Island student.

Re-imagined Schools

We must place the student at the center of education. We must continue to develop student-centered pathways, and help schools and classrooms evolve to include innovative learning experiences designed to help students achieve proficiency in a broad set of standards in a sequence and format best suited for the student. At the same time, we must make available various learning opportunities that allow students to explore and learn deeply in topics that are of interest to them and through which students can set and meet ambitious personal learning goals.

High Expectations

We must set the same high expectations for every student. Students must be exposed to and gain proficiency in a broad base of content standards that prepare them for college, career, and life. We must specifically ensure a path forward that provides equity of opportunity for every student to achieve our high standards, especially students of color, English learners, transient students, and students with disabilities.

Empowerment

Our system must empower students, and those closest to them, to make the most timely and effective decisions for teaching and learning. We must increase the capacity and authority of our educators and school leaders to create conditions that will best support the students and families they serve.

Shared Responsibility

We must ensure that our state education system works on behalf of every student. We must move from compliant accountability to a coherent system of shared responsibility, in which a larger ecosystem of districts, schools, community members, organizations, institutions of higher education, and businesses are dedicated to our students. Entire communities must surround students with the support they need to achieve their goals, and every stakeholder will be part of a continuous improvement cycle.

Leveraging Every Voice for Our Students

Acting on the idea that every voice can be leveraged to serve every student in our state, RIDE has undergone a deliberate and iterative process to engage stakeholders from all across Rhode Island in the development of our ESSA State Plan. More than 800 Rhode Islanders – including educators, students, parents, community members, business leaders, and policy makers – have taken part in one or more of the opportunities available to give input and feedback on the plan. RIDE is incredibly grateful for and strongly values the particular expertise and perspectives of our partners in education across the state and has used all of the input to inform our State Plan.

> ***96%*** *of 2017 spring forum participants feel that they can be part of achieving Rhode Island's vision for education, and* ***all*** *of them would encourage others to attend similar forums.*

Who We Engaged

- **Committee of Practitioners**: A consistent group of 26 diverse community members that gathered monthly to give input on high-level questions concerning ESSA, to serve as liaisons to the community at large regarding our planning process, and to weigh in on multiple drafts of the ESSA State Plan.

- **Community Members**: Parents, students, community members, educators, and business leaders were invited on multiple occasions to weigh in on the ESSA State Plan, including input and feedback forums, online surveys, and a public comment period. Community engagement opportunities were offered in English and Spanish.

- **Critical Stakeholder Groups**: Affinity groups across the state were consulted at various points throughout the ESSA State Plan development process on specific topics that

pertain to them through individual engagements, group meetings, and web-based communication.

- **Policy Makers**: Elected and appointed officials at the state level were kept informed of the input from constituents across the state and asked to weigh in on a variety of topics throughout the planning process.

By the Numbers: An Iterative Planning Process

Phase 1: Seeking Input on Key Questions *(Aug. '16 - Jan. '17)*

- 5 public forums with 200+ participants
- Online input survey with 75+ participants
- 15+ stakeholder input meetings
- Monthly Committee of Practitioners meetings to give input on all topics

Phase 2: Gathering Feedback on Initial Recommendations *(Feb. '17 - May '17)*

- Public feedback survey on initial recommendations with 400+ responses
- 6 public forums with 85+ participants
- 15+ stakeholder group feedback meetings
- Monthly Committee of Practitioners meetings to discuss recommendations
- Meetings with the Rhode Island General Assembly

Phase 3: Attaining Approval on Full State Plan Draft *(Jun. '17 - Aug. '17)*

- 30 day open public comment period
- 30 day Governor's approval period
- Council on Elementary and Secondary Education review
- Committee of Practitioners suggest edits on full plan

Phase 4: Submit and Plan for Implementation *(Sep. '17 - Nov. '17)*

- Submit plan to U.S. Department of Education by September 18, 2017
- Work with field to implement
- Develop tools and guidance for implementation

Our Work Now and Beyond: Actualizing Our Guiding Principles

The work of the Strategic Plan is ongoing, and ESSA gives us a chance to elaborate on how we will create systems to realize our vision and aspirations. In each of the four areas described above, there is work that is well underway, as well as initiatives that are just beginning. The following pages highlight the key policies, initiatives, programs, and resources that RIDE has developed within each of these four principles, as well as decisions made in the ESSA State Plan that will help us realize them[2].

Reimagining Schools

At the heart of a reimagined school is the notion that the school should be organized to meet the teaching and learning needs of its students and educators, including challenging learning opportunities for all students; hands-on activities that leverage problem-solving and technology and are aligned to interests and career pathways; and empowered students, families, and educators. Student-centered or personalized learning is an approach to teaching and learning in which instruction is aligned to rigorous college- and career-ready standards and customized to allow each student to take ownership over their learning experience. According to the landmark report *How Students Learn*, published by the National Academy of Sciences (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999; National Research Council, 2005), personalized learning practices should include (1) engaging with students related to their prior knowledge, (2) working with them to set goals, (3) organizing learning focused on application beyond the classroom, and (4) supporting students to manage and choose their learning strategies, tactics, and goals. Emerging research by the RAND Corporation finds, "…overall positive and large student achievement gains from personalized learning exposure. These results are robust to most of our sensitivity analyses, especially for mathematics. The results are substantially heterogeneous across schools" (Pane, Steiner, Baird, & Hamilton, 2015, p. 36).

[2] The ESSA State Plan will be in draft form until September 2017.

Every Voice: What Rhode Islanders Are Saying

Stakeholders across the state have voiced their support for reimagined learning environments for every student. Many reiterated the need to bolster the use of the Individualized Learning Plan in schools to ensure that students had planned and ongoing opportunities to set goals and determine how they would achieve them. Stakeholders were primarily concerned with school and system capacity to utilize these plans across grade spans and across districts, particularly for transient students. Further, stakeholders stressed the need for a well-rounded curriculum, including the arts, STEM, environmental education, and industry training, and particularly a curriculum that is culturally relevant to students.

> ***"[What I want for my son is a] school that assists students in identifying goals and crafts a path for success in partnership with the parent and student."***
> *– Fall ESSA Forum participant*

Finally, stakeholders supported the development of "Pathway Endorsements" – a construct that would indicate that a student has been supported to pursue an area of individual interest through their academic coursework and career connected learning experiences. Pathway Endorsements were seen as a culminating indicator of whether personalized learning has taken hold in a school system. However, some stakeholders voiced concern about equity of access to the opportunities needed to earn a Pathway Endorsement.

Every Student: What Rhode Islanders Deserve

Rhode Island is currently working on a number of initiatives that support reimagined schools and have included incentives for such in our ESSA plan:

- Enhancing the **Individual Learning Plan** process to ensure that every student has an opportunity to express their goals and to plan a path to meet them with the support of a responsible adult
- Recognizing students for pursuing pathway opportunities aligned with their passions, interests, and unique abilities, as well as holding schools accountable for helping students receive **Pathway Endorsements**
- Allowing high school students to earn college credit through **dual-enrollment or concurrent enrollment** courses
- Increasing funding for **English learners and dual language programs** that promote 21st century multi-literacy skills for all students

- Celebrating language diversity by including the **Seal of Biliteracy** in the state's accountability index

- Extending access for middle and high school students across the state to a broader, more challenging curriculum through **Advanced Placement courses and the Advanced Course Network**

- Expanding **work-based learning opportunities**, including more than 130 career-focused programs that are aligned with economic trends, through PrepareRI powered by the New Skills for Youth Grant

- Adding more **P-TECH** programs that graduate students with a high school diploma, associate's degree, and a first-in-line job opportunity

- Integrating blended, project-based, and proficiency-based approaches to coursework, and creating flexibility for these courses to be applied to **graduation requirements**

Reimagined Schools in Action:

Advanced Course Network

Rhode Island strives to connect each student with opportunities tailored to their needs, interests, and ambitions. To push past the limits of any single building's offerings, RIDE has established the Advanced Course Network, a partnership which allows students across Rhode Island to enroll in advanced courses which would otherwise be unavailable. Through partnerships with higher education institutions, many of these offerings allow for dual or concurrent enrollment and the simultaneous earning of college credit. Beginning in sixth grade, parents and students can sign up directly, and partner providers and districts will work to accommodate the offering into the student's schedule. This empowers students and their families to craft their own path through school.

- Bringing computer science and coding training to every school through the **Computer Science for Rhode Island** (CS4RI) initiative

- Extending learning beyond the school day with high quality **after-school and summer programming**, including through 21st Century Community Learning Center grants

- Providing supports for all students to **graduate from high school** in four, five, or six years, or earn credentials through adult education opportunities

- Leveraging **federal funds** to support well-rounded education; safe, healthy, and supportive schools; and more effective use of technology in schools

- Innovative **school improvement redesign models** that address student needs and support student achievement.

High Expectations

Not every student will attend college, but each student should be prepared to have that option, if they so choose. To prepare every student for the opportunities available to them, we must hold each one to the same rigorous standards and support them in any way they need to meet those expectations. We have long known that teachers who set high expectations for their students positively influence their performance (Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1968). In a 2016 report, the Center on Education and the Economy also found that the world's top-performing education systems "have well-developed, highly coherent and very demanding instructional systems for all students (Tucker, 2016, p. 5). From the individual to the system level, setting high expectations will best prepare our students for their future.

Make no mistake.
Rhode Island's commitment
to raising the achievement of its most vulnerable students is front and center.

Every Voice: What Rhode Islanders Are Saying

Rhode Islanders fervently believe that every student can and should reach high expectations in our school system. To accomplish that, a wide range of individuals spoke passionately and effectively about the unique needs of particular groups of students, and the majority agree that serving the most vulnerable among our student population will improve our system overall.

For example, many stakeholders were highly supportive of the idea that students in foster care, students experiencing homelessness, and other transient students would benefit greatly from the normalcy that comes with staying in their school of origin. Many stakeholders strongly encouraged partnerships between state and local agencies to ensure that transient students' educational needs would be actively considered in placement decisions.

"Rhode Island needs to make sure that we are really looking at EVERY student in our implementation of ESSA."
– Spring Feedback Survey Participant

Further, many Rhode Island stakeholders emphasized the need for us, as a state, to celebrate and support those who can communicate in more than one language and those who are learning English. Suggestions for this kind of recognition included integrating the Seal of Biliteracy and English proficiency progress into the school accountability system.

Finally, stakeholders often noted that the expectations for academic proficiency need to be expanded to include cross-curricular applied learning skills and additional subject areas. A majority of stakeholders also believe that students should be supported to finish high school graduation requirements in whatever timeframe or path is best for them so that they may earn a diploma.

Every Student: What Rhode Islanders Deserve

Rhode Island is currently working on a number of initiatives that support every student to meet high expectations. This issue is given significant weight in our ESSA State Plan in multiple ways:

- Expanding strong **early childhood education** with statewide full-day kindergarten and additional pre-K classrooms
- Taking action to meet Governor Raimondo's **Third Grade Reading Challenge** of having 3 out of 4 Rhode Island third graders reading proficiently by 2025
- Putting strategies in place to close the achievement gap for **4th grade math students with disabilities** – one of the largest gaps
- Supporting teachers to equitably deliver **guaranteed and viable curriculum** and high quality instruction
- Aligning all instruction, materials, and assessments with Common Core State Standards in ELA and math, Next Generation Science Standards, and other state-adopted, nationally-recognized **standards that ensure students are prepared for college and career**

High Expectations in Action:

Celebrating Language Diversity in Rhode Island

Rhode Island's students reflect an increasingly diverse population. RIDE recognizes that speaking, reading, writing, and understanding multiple languages are important 21st century skills that our students will need for an increasingly global society. The benefits of knowing two languages are many and carry with them educational, economic, cognitive, and socio-cultural advantages. As a result, RIDE has established the Seal of Biliteracy which recognizes students for mastering two languages, as well as encouraged the expansion of Dual Language Programs, in which students are taught literacy and content in two languages. RIDE will also be including growth in English proficiency in its accountability system for the first time to ensure that English learners are staying on track to being college and career ready. Finally, RIDE is developing incentives for more teachers and potential teachers to be trained in strategies for teaching English learners.

- Transitioning to the Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS) for students in grades 3-8 and administering the PSAT and SAT to students in high school to further **align state testing** with measures that are meaningful to students and that are trusted indicators of post-secondary readiness

- Centering graduation eligibility around **proficiency-based expectations** in the core content areas and applied learning skills

- Gathering educators from around the state as Learning Champions to develop a **common set of proficiency expectations** for Rhode Island graduates and articulate performance indicators for all students PK-12

- Recognizing student proficiency in math and literacy through the **Commissioner's Seal**, and holding schools accountable for student accomplishments

- Reporting on the distribution of inexperienced, ineffective, or out-of-field teachers between communities and among student subgroups, and working to **improve inequities in teacher access**

- Partnering closely with state agencies to ensure that students who are homeless or in foster care experience **fewer educational transitions**

- Publicizing the achievement of all students and disaggregating by **subgroup categories** to inform the public of areas of need and support

- Recognizing **student graduation** at 4, 5, and 6 years within the accountability index, and reviewing an additional measure following students 18 months after graduation

Empowerment

Educators are our state's most critical resource in education. We need to give principals and teachers more opportunities and pathways to meet the needs of their students since they know them best. We need to build a robust talent management system to increase the capacity of our teachers and leaders; create systems that harness the power of shared leadership in our schools; and change the rules on how those closest to the students can make decisions on behalf of learning.

In a recent survey of Rhode Island educators, *more than 1,600 teachers surveyed characterized their professional development as irrelevant, ineffective, and "not connected to their core work of helping students learn."*

Research has found that selecting and retaining highly effective principals positively impacts schools and boosts growth in student achievement (Branch, Hanushek, & Rivkin, 2013). Further, research has found that when teachers are part of a school's decision-making process in a meaningful way, it has a positive effect on student achievement (Eells, 2011). Empowering our educators and school leaders will create conditions that will best support the students and families they serve.

RIDE will continue our commitment to ensuring every student has access to excellent educators through the creation and revision of our talent management policies and allocation of resources to support continued, career-long professional learning. Various studies have shown that the kind of sustained, content-rich, and practice-focused professional learning, which leads to better student outcomes, is not typical in U.S. schools and districts (Wei, Darling-Hammond, & Adamson, 2010), and Rhode Island is no exception. RIDE will lead and coordinate statewide partners to support and enhance site-based professional learning and leadership development that is relevant, personalized, and job-embedded. These opportunities will support teachers and school leaders to learn and apply new skills to ensure implementation that is aligned with research on effective practice.

Every Voice: What Rhode Islanders Are Saying

Rhode Islanders strongly believe in the power of a quality teacher and school leader to transform the educational experience of a student. When asked to weigh in on what would make our teaching force stronger, stakeholders across the state most frequently cited the need for Rhode Island to elevate the profession; attract more diversity into education; ensure more practice-based experiences during preparation; implement strong hiring practices; embed coaching, feedback loops, and more personalized learning opportunities for educators into local professional learning systems; and establish career pathways and strong leadership opportunities. Stakeholders also voiced a strong desire to support teacher and leader capacity in effectively addressing the various needs of the student body. In particular, stakeholders wanted to support the cultural competence of all educators and ensure that there are sufficient trained adults within each school system to provide holistic support for our most vulnerable students. Finally, many stakeholders acknowledged Rhode Island's early work in implementing new evaluation systems and supports for new educators, and want to ensure that the talent management system goes beyond initiatives already in place to include ongoing support and development for teachers throughout their career.

> ***"We need to support people excited about being educators."***
> *– Spring ESSA Forum Participant*

Every Student: What Rhode Islanders Deserve

Rhode Island is currently working on creating systems to empower our schools with the very best educators and leaders in place for every student, including:

- Creating **policies that empower** students, community members, teachers, schools, and districts with autonomy to design their own communities
- Improving **recruitment practices** to identify educators who are culturally diverse, willing to teach in hard-to-staff subject areas, and eager to work in our most challenging schools
- Creating a **Pathway Endorsement in Teaching** to recognize high school students who engage in aligned coursework, apply their learning, and investigate careers in teaching
- Forging stronger paths for educators who want to pursue or excel in leadership positions, and adopting systems for **shared leadership** in schools
- Designing relevant, ongoing **professional learning** opportunities to support educators at every level
- Recruiting **Learning Champions** from across the state to put teachers at the center of instructional decision-making
- Cultivating strong teaching skills from the start of their career by strengthening our **teacher preparation** programs
- Convening a state-wide **Leadership Advisory Council** comprised of superintendents, principals, preparation

Empowerment in Action:

Empowering Leaders

In response to the vision of the Strategic Plan, RIDE, with support from the Partnership for Rhode Island – a group of business leaders – has committed resources to develop the skills and knowledge of current and aspiring school and district leaders. A multi-year system of support is underway that provides coordinated growth and development opportunities to education leaders. An outgrowth of this work will cultivate instructional excellence, establish sustainable structures for leadership supports, foster site-based professional learning, develop models of distributed leadership, develop new strategies to engage and empower the educational community, and engage and leverage new roles of school-wide improvement. Rhode Island business leaders are also committing to deepen opportunities for principal leadership training. Several principals will have the opportunity to participate in the CVS Executive Leadership Program, and others will receive support from Bank of America, Hasbro, and other Rhode Island business leaders.

program leaders, teacher leaders, and union representatives to review national leadership standards and create Rhode Island Leadership Competencies

- Updating our **certification system** to support educators' continuous improvement
- Learning together with the members of the **Partnership for Rhode Island**, including CVS, Bank of America, and Hasbro, and applying their leadership development strategies to the education community
- Offering every principal a scholarship to participate in a **year-long advanced study program on leadership**, funded by partner and state funds
- Revising the process for districts to access federal funds to allow greater flexibility and **stronger ties between goals and resources**
- Providing **leadership development mini-grants** to fund principals to engage in national coursework for principal leadership through a partnership between RIDE and the state's Principal Association (RIASP)
- Ensuring all families and students can participate in **quality educational opportunities of their choice** – inclusive of early childhood education, charter schools, advanced courses, and adult education providers.

Shared Responsibility

To continuously improve our schools, *we must move from a system of compliant accountability to one of shared responsibility.*

We are all dependent on the outcomes of our students. Therefore, we must create an environment where every voice has the opportunity to contribute and where we all have the responsibility to make our schools the best possible learning environment for every student. That environment needs to include transparency of information, purposeful engagement with a broad community of stakeholders, shared aspirational goals, and an expectation of continuous improvement.

In a large-scale leadership study, Seashore, Leithwood, Walstrom, and Anderson (2010) highlight that state and district leaders must find ways to work creatively and collaboratively to encourage authentic adherence to a direction and strategy. Their findings outline that distributed leadership has "among the most significant" effect on student achievement (p. 282). In other words, when many leaders take responsibility for the system, student achievement

> ***Our communities must be fully engaged*** *in continuous improvement through an ongoing review process that is public and transparent.*

rises. Further, one 2017 report (CCSSO & Results for America, 2017) took a closer look at leveraging a continuous improvement mindset to improve student outcomes. The report identifies the best practice of engaging stakeholders on an ongoing basis to analyze data, collect and understand feedback, reflect on outcomes, and identify challenges and solutions to pressing educational problems. RIDE, building off the input of our community, has built our ESSA plan to enable this kind of shared responsibility for continuous improvement in all schools, and particularly those schools that have been identified as not serving all students well.

Rhode Island's accountability system prioritizes transparency, supports shared responsibility, and focuses on long-term investments that are aligned with aspirational educational goals. The new accountability system will provide a range of information - including financial expenditure data, school learning environment survey information, and indicators that highlight the state of our school buildings - to round-out the profiles of our schools so that community involvement and continuous improvement is supported. Three components form this system: a set of measures, five levels of classification, and report cards for schools, districts, and the state. Each component, along with our strategies for school improvement, will be configured to support our communities in being collectively responsible for results.

Every Voice: What Rhode Islanders Are Saying

The majority of stakeholders expressed strong support for developing systems to incorporate the input and participation of a wider variety of community members when schools make decisions. Further, stakeholders overwhelmingly agree that our accountability system needs to account for data beyond state assessment results and recognize various aspects of what makes a strong school. They also voiced support for the idea that a wide array of data should be available to the public via the report cards. Data from student, parent, and teacher surveys were frequently mentioned as critical to make available to the public, along with expenditure data on specific assets, such as student support personnel, school facilities improvements, and instructional materials. Finally, stakeholders were not supportive of an accountability system that places undue judgement on schools. Specifically, many stakeholders noted that school classification labels

> ***"Supporting schools to continually improve is an ongoing conversation and journey [that requires] the right inspiration to want to meet kids' needs, build on their strengths, and engage the community in a meaningful way."***
> *– Fall ESSA Forum Participant*

should use non-judgmental language, should be transparently calculated, account for student growth, and be accompanied by differentiated support for schools.

Every Student: What Rhode Islanders Deserve

To promote and value shared responsibility for continuous improvement, RIDE and our partners across the state have made positive progress on a number of initiatives, including:

- **Coordinating supports** for all, especially our most vulnerable students, by utilizing the power of multiple state and local agencies to ensure every student has what they need
- Supporting low-performing schools by allowing **districts to lead the school improvement process**, in partnership with the community
- Compiling and making available evidence-based tools, resources, and ideas to schools and communities for school improvement through RIDE's "**school improvement hub**"
- Revising Rhode Island's school **accountability index** to include a small number of metrics that are easily understood by our communities, and removing the unclear index score
- Removing judgmental language from the **classification system** and providing descriptors of schools in all five categories that give stakeholders a sense of the school's performance at a glance
- Providing a wide-ranging set of data in an accessible format for school, district, and state **report cards**

Shared Responsibility in Action:

SurveyWorks

To increase family engagement and elevate the voices of students, parents, and the broader community, RIDE embarked on a campaign in 2017 to drive more schools and families to participate in the SurveyWorks school culture survey. Schools encouraged participation with creative efforts, including a principal who penned a rap to encourage parents to fill out the survey. With the help of the Parent Outreach Design Team and leadership at the district and school levels, participation numbers rose. More than 85,200 students, 15,500 parents, and 10,300 staff completed SurveyWorks – over 110,000 responses overall. This survey will provide valuable information to help provide school teams, parents, and the community with a 360-degree view of critical areas for school success. Results will be featured in school report cards coming soon. The success of this year's campaign was highlighted in a national webinar hosted by Education Week.

- Including measures on the state and district report cards that inform the public of how each is progressing on their **unique responsibilities**
- Setting **clear aspirational goals** with a variety of milestones to ensure everyone is included in our vision for 2025
- Promoting **meaningful family partnerships** by utilizing SurveyWorks to learn about family impressions of schools
- Encouraging partnerships between districts and schools through "**Dissemination Grants**" that allow districts that are excelling in a particular area to partner with those that are struggling in that area
- Requiring all districts with schools identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement to assemble a **Community Advisory Board** to ensure that more stakeholders are able to give input on key improvement decisions
- Prioritizing **partnerships between after-school providers and schools** that serve the same students through the 21st Century Community Learning Center grants
- Balancing student **academic growth and proficiency** when identifying schools in need of improvement
- Including information on **school facilities** and the capacity of cities to improve them on school and district report cards

Looking Forward

This is an exciting time for education in Rhode Island. ESSA provides an opportunity for our state to set ambitious goals, implement thoughtful policy, and establish a clear vision for the future that includes the perspectives and priorities of Rhode Island students, educators, and the community-at-large. Through our ESSA State Plan, Rhode Island can align its accountability system, goals, and resources around a common vision and theory of action; develop new models of supports for our most vulnerable students; and put the state on a path of continuous improvement so that we achieve our bold 2025 aspirations. ESSA also offers a chance for Rhode Island to be more creative and strategic in ensuring that federal funding advances our state's equity agenda. Every student matters; every voice matters.

RIDE is creating a cohesive system of support to achieve our aspirational goals and ensure equitable access to the promised opportunities and outcomes for all students. Rhode Island's entire system of education, from State House to classroom, needs to work in ways that are nimble, responsive, data-informed, and well-communicated. Great individual efforts will not have the impact imagined in this plan if each acts independently and is uninformed about other strong programs and strategies. A coordinated state education system uses supportive and clear policy; resources that are student-centered and outcome-driven; and effective and efficient guidance and facilitation to ensure equity throughout the state. Central to developing this cohesive system of support is improved communications and networking across levels of the education system – two key concepts within Rhode Island's implementation framework.

By staying the course on core principles – reimagining schools, setting high expectations, empowering educators and students, and sharing responsibility – Rhode Island will see achievement levels rise, students succeed, and the economy expand. Rhode Island's accountability plan will incentivize these core principles within the guardrails of equity and opportunity, and ensure that every Rhode Island graduate is well prepared for postsecondary education, work, and life.

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Rhode Island's Every Student Succeeds Act State Plan

For Submission to U.S. Department of Education

September 14, 2017

Based on and in response to the US Department of Education's Revised State Template for the Consolidated State Plan (Issued: March 2017)

Paperwork Burden Statement According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810-0576. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 249 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this collection, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4537. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this collection, write directly to: Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20202-3118.

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Introduction

Section 8302 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA),[1] requires the Secretary to establish procedures and criteria under which, after consultation with the Governor, a State educational agency (SEA) may submit a consolidated State plan designed to simplify the application requirements and reduce burden for SEAs. ESEA section 8302 also requires the Secretary to establish the descriptions, information, assurances, and other material required to be included in a consolidated State plan. Even though an SEA submits only the required information in its consolidated State plan, an SEA must still meet all ESEA requirements for each

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

included program. In its consolidated State plan, each SEA may, but is not required to, include supplemental information such as its overall vision for improving outcomes for all students and its efforts to consult with and engage stakeholders when developing its consolidated State plan.

Completing and Submitting a Consolidated State Plan

Each SEA must address all of the requirements identified below for the programs that it chooses to include in its consolidated State plan. An SEA must use this template or a format that includes the required elements and that the State has developed working with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

Each SEA must submit to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) its consolidated State plan by one of the following two deadlines of the SEA's choice:

- **April 3, 2017**; or
- **September 18, 2017**.

Any plan that is received after April 3, but on or before September 18, 2017, will be considered to be submitted on September 18, 2017.

Alternative Template

If an SEA does not use this template, it must:

1) Include the information on the Cover Sheet;
2) Include a table of contents or guide that clearly indicates where the SEA has addressed each requirement in its consolidated State plan;
3) Indicate that the SEA worked through CCSSO in developing its own template; and
4) Include the required information regarding equitable access to, and participation in, the programs included in its consolidated State plan as required by section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act. See Appendix B.

Individual Program State Plan

An SEA may submit an individual program State plan that meets all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements for any program that it chooses not to include in a consolidated State plan. If an SEA intends to submit an individual program plan for any program, the SEA must submit the individual program plan by one of the dates above, in concert with its consolidated State plan, if applicable.

Consultation

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

Assurances

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

For Further Information: If you have any questions, please contact your Program Officer at OSS.[State]@ed.gov (e.g., OSS.Alabama@ed.gov).

Cover Page

Contact Information and Signatures	
SEA Contact (Name and Position): Mary Ann Snider, Deputy Commissioner	Telephone: (401) 222-8889
Mailing Address: Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education 255 Westminster Street Providence, RI 02903	Email Address: maryann.snider@ride.ri.gov
By signing this document, I assure that: To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information and data included in this plan are true and correct. The SEA will submit a comprehensive set of assurances at a date and time established by the Secretary, including the assurances in ESEA section 8304. Consistent with ESEA section 8302(b)(3), the SEA will meet the requirements of ESEA sections 1117 and 8501 regarding the participation of private school children and teachers.	
Authorized SEA Representative (Printed Name) Ken Wagner, Commissioner	Telephone: (401) 222-8700
Signature of Authorized SEA Representative	Date: 9/14/17
Governor (Printed Name) Gina M. Raimondo, Governor	Date SEA provided plan to the Governor under ESEA section 8540: August 1, 2017
Signature of Governor	Date: 9-13-2017

Programs Included in the Consolidated State Plan

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

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

or

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

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

☐ Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children

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

☐ Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction

☐ Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement

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

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

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

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

Instructions

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

Instructions

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

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

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

   No answer required

2. **Eighth Grade Math Exception** (*ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C) and 34 CFR § 200.5(b)(4)*):
   i. Does the State administer an end-of-course mathematics assessment to meet the requirements under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA?
      ☐ Yes
      ☒ No

   ii. If a State responds "yes" to question 2(i), does the State wish to exempt an eighth-grade student who takes the high school mathematics course associated with the end-of-course assessment from the mathematics assessment typically administered in eighth grade under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(aa) of the ESEA and ensure that:
      a. The student instead takes the end-of-course mathematics assessment the State administers to high school students under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA;
      b. The student's performance on the high school assessment is used in the year in which the student takes the assessment for purposes of measuring academic achievement under section 1111(c)(4)(B)(i) of the ESEA and participation in assessments under section 1111(c)(4)(E) of the ESEA;
      c. In high school:
         1. The student takes a State-administered end-of-course assessment or nationally recognized high school academic assessment as defined in 34 CFR § 200.3(d) in mathematics that is more advanced than the assessment the State administers under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA;
         2. The State provides for appropriate accommodations consistent with 34 CFR § 200.6(b) and (f); and
         3. The student's performance on the more advanced mathematics assessment is used for purposes of measuring academic achievement under section 1111(c)(4)(B)(i) of the ESEA and participation in assessments under section 1111(c)(4)(E) of the ESEA.

      ☐ Yes
      ☐ No

      Not applicable

[2] The Secretary anticipates collecting relevant information consistent with the assessment peer review process in 34 CFR § 200.2(d). An SEA need not submit any information regarding challenging State academic standards and assessments at this time.

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

Not applicable

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

i. Provide its definition for "languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating student population," and identify the specific languages that meet that definition.

In order to determine languages other than English present to a significant extent in the participating student population, Rhode Island is applying the Office of Civil Rights recommended threshold of a language group comprising five percent or more of the total tested population. As indicated in the table below, Spanish is currently the only language that is present to a significant extent.

Home Language	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Spanish	9353	6.6
Creoles & Pidgins, Portuguese-based	508	0.4
Portuguese	280	0.2
Arabic	225	0.2
Chinese	200	0.1
English	126	0.1
Khmer	112	0.1
French	84	0.1
Mayan languages	75	0.1

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

Rhode Island currently offers the PARCC mathematics assessments in Spanish for grades three through eight and high school.

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

Rhode Island does not provide a Spanish translation for its current science assessment or the English language arts

PARCC assessment. In addition, Rhode Island will be developing a new science assessment aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards in grades five, eight, and eleven. Furthermore, a Spanish version of the PSAT and SAT are currently unavailable. Rhode Island also does not provide Spanish translations of its alternate assessments. Although Rhode Island has not provided these assessments in languages other than English, a variety of accommodations and accessibility features are available for English learners. In addition to accessibility features available to all students, accommodations for English learners on the state assessments include extended time, general administration directions in the student's native language, and use of a word-to-word dictionary.

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

a. The State's plan and timeline for developing such assessments, including a description of how it met the requirements of 34 CFR § 200.6(f)(4);
b. A description of the process the State used to gather meaningful input on the need for assessments in languages other than English, collect and respond to public comment, and consult with educators; parents and families of English learners; students, as appropriate; and other stakeholders; and
c. As applicable, an explanation of the reasons the State has not been able to complete the development of such assessments despite making every effort.

Rhode Island will be transitioning to new state assessments in the 2017-2018 school year. Rhode Island will be administering the Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS) in English language arts and mathematics in grades three through eight, and the PSAT and SAT at the high school level.

Rhode Island will provide a Spanish translation of the mathematics assessment in grades three through eight beginning spring 2018. Additionally, Rhode Island will work with the College Board, the developer of the PSAT and SAT, and other states utilizing the College Board assessments to facilitate policy changes to enable the development of translated mathematics assessments. Rhode Island plans to provide a Spanish translation of its new science assessment for its spring 2019 administration.

Rhode Island will be transitioning to new alternate assessments as well. Beginning spring 2018, Rhode Island will be administering Dynamic Learning Map (DLM) assessments in mathematics, English language arts, and science. Although, DLM does not provide translated assessments, language translation is an allowable accommodation for students who are English learners.

Rhode Island's ESSA Committee of Practitioners, which includes parents; superintendents; principals; educators; education experts of students with disabilities and English learners; and other stakeholder organizations, discussed availability of assessments in other languages. Additionally, stakeholders from across the state had an opportunity to

weigh in on the language of assessments through online surveys, public forums, and targeted meetings. Some stakeholders expressed an interest in expanding the number of language translations to make the assessment accessible to more students.

Rhode Island will continue to evaluate the extent to which languages other than Spanish are the primary languages of Rhode Island students and will act appropriately to translate assessments into additional languages.

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

Section Context

Rhode Island's accountability system is structured to activate collective responsibility for continuous improvement at all levels of education – the state, LEA, and school. To empower Rhode Islanders to take on this responsibility, Rhode Island's accountability system includes three components:

1. *A prudent set of measures that differentiate school performance;*
2. *A classification system that places each school in one of five levels based on a set of rules that prioritizes proficiency and growth; and*
3. *A robust set of information within the state, LEA, and school report cards that will further inform needs assessments and improvement planning.*

The report card, rather than the school classification, is the primary means of communicating school success to parents and the broader community.

Each component of the accountability system is designed to be ***comprehensive, valid, reliable, accessible****, and* ***responsive.*** *Rhode Island's* ***comprehensive*** *accountability system includes measures that address the five categories inherent to a well-rounded education: Ambitious Expectations for Student Achievement, Safe and Supportive Learning Environment, Strategic and Flexible Use of Resources, Student-Centered Learning Experiences, and High Quality Educators. A smaller set of well-developed measures is used to determine school classifications to ensure the classifications are* ***valid*** *and* ***reliable****. While the smaller numbers of measures are strong indicators of a well-rounded education, they do not represent the full range of information necessary to support school improvement. A broader range of measures will be included in state, LEA, and school report cards. Through clear and transparent school classifications, as well as well-designed report cards, the system will be* ***accessible*** *and easily understood by school leaders, educators, and community members. The school, LEA, and state report cards will provide the information necessary to be* ***responsive*** *to the needs of students and schools. RIDE will revisit funding opportunities via federal and other funding sources based on the context and changing needs of the state as we revisit and update our plan on an annual basis.*

Ambitious Expectations for Student Achievement	Equitable access to high quality learning experiences that result in the achievement of academic skills and knowledge required to be career and college ready
Safe and Supportive Learning Environment	Healthy and safe environments where students are supported in achieving their goals
Strategic and Flexible Use of Resources	Sufficient, equitable, and thoughtful use of fiscal resources
Student Centered Learning Experiences	Expanded opportunities for every student to shape their own learning both broadly and deeply
High Quality Educators	Diverse educators who are well prepared and qualified to meet student needs

i. **Subgroups** *(ESEA section 1111(c)(2))*:

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

Rhode Island will continue to use the same racial and ethnic subgroups it has used previously for assessment and accountability reporting:

- American Indian or Alaska Native,
- Asian,
- Black or African American,
- Hispanic or Latino,
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander,
- Two or more races, and
- White.

Additionally, Rhode Island will include students with disabilities, English learners, and students who are economically disadvantaged. Although it is not required for the accountability determination, consistent with 200.16(a)(2), Rhode Island will also provide performance data in its report cards for the including following subgroups: students experiencing homelessness, students in foster care, students in the juvenile justice system, and military dependent students.

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

Not Applicable

c. Does the State intend to include in the English learner subgroup the results of students previously identified as English learners on the State assessments required under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I) for purposes of State accountability (ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(B))? Note that a student's results may be included in the English learner subgroup for not more than four years after the student ceases to be identified as an English learner.

☒ Yes
☐ No

d. If applicable, choose one of the following options for recently arrived English learners in the State:
☒ Applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(i); or
☐ Applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(ii); or
☐ Applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(i) or under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(ii). If this option is selected, describe how the State will choose which exception applies to a recently arrived English learner.

Rhode Island has selected the first option, which would continue our current flexibility to exclude recently arrived English learners from one administration of the English language arts test, and exclude math test results from accountability determinations, in the first year. This one-year waiver from required participation on the English language arts assessment allows for a minimum amount of time for a student to acquire academic English.

ii. **Minimum N-Size** *(ESEA section 1111(c)(3)(A))*:

a. Provide the minimum number of students that the State determines are necessary to be included to carry out the requirements of any provisions under Title I, Part A of the ESEA that require disaggregation of information by each subgroup of students for accountability purposes.

Rhode Island will continue to use a minimum number of 20 students for the purposes of accountability determinations. A minimum of 20 students allows for maximum accountability inclusion while still ensuring valid and reliable accountability determinations at the subgroup level.

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

Rhode Island's minimum number of students (n=20) for the purposes of school accountability is based on sound statistical methodology. The number is sufficient to yield statistically reliable information and to ensure the maximum number of subgroups of students is included at the school level. Rhode Island has applied this minimum n for many years and has ensured that this threshold reflects the optimal balance between reliability and representativeness by analyzing reliability data. While a lower n-size would include more students, it would also sacrifice year-to-year reliability.

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

Rhode Island has applied this minimum n for many years and has analyzed reliability data to ensure that this threshold reflects the optimal balance between reliability and representativeness. While a lower n-size would include more students, it would also sacrifice year-to-year reliability. The proposal for a minimum n was discussed at stakeholder meetings. Feedback included requests to lower the minimum n to five, however to ensure the year-to-year reliability and stability of accountability determinations, Rhode Island will maintain a minimum n of 20.

d. Describe how the State ensures that the minimum number is sufficient to not reveal any personally identifiable information.[3]

[3] Consistent with ESEA section1111(i), information collected or disseminated under ESEA section 1111 shall be collected and disseminated in a manner that protects the privacy of individuals consistent with section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g, commonly known as the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974"). When selecting a minimum n-size for reporting, States should consult the Institute for Education Sciences report "Best Practices for Determining Subgroup Size in Accountability Systems While Protecting Personally Identifiable Student Information" to identify appropriate statistical disclosure limitation strategies for protecting student privacy.

RIDE policy on minimum n-size for reporting data stipulates that if the number of students is less than ten or if 100% of students performed at the same level (e.g., all students were at Level 2), then data must be suppressed to ensure confidentiality of individual student results.

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

Rhode Island requires a minimum of ten students for the purposes of reporting.

iii. **Establishment of Long-Term Goals** *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A))*:

a. Academic Achievement. *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(i)(I)(aa))*

1. Describe the long-term goals for improved academic achievement, as measured by proficiency on the annual statewide reading/language arts and mathematics assessments, for all students and for each subgroup of students, including: (1) the timeline for meeting the long-term goals, for which the term must be the same multi-year length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students in the State, and (2) how the long-term goals are ambitious.

Rhode Islanders together demand an educational system that holds high expectations for all students, regardless of income or background; is responsive to students' individual needs; and pushes the boundaries of imagination and innovation to create better learning conditions for students and educators (Rhode Island Strategic Plan for K-12 Education, 2015). In support of this and in line with Governor Gina Raimondo's Reading by Grade Three plan, Rhode Island set its long-term goal at **75% of students attaining proficiency on the state assessments in English language arts and mathematics by 2025**.

We understand that academic success in early education is key to persistence through secondary and postsecondary years. The Reading by Grade Three plan is aligned with Governor Gina Raimondo's higher education attainment goal, **70 by 25**. The goal of 70% of Rhode Islanders attaining a postsecondary certification, degree or credential by 2025, while ambitious, reflects the statewide priority of expanding opportunities for all students. Rhode Island is committed to ensuring that students are prepared for college and careers and to making postsecondary opportunities more accessible and affordable through statewide partnerships such as our dual and concurrent enrollment programs, P-Tech and work-based learning opportunities. We are building a seamless PK-20 system that not only supports a strong Rhode Island economy, but also strengthens communities and families.

Rhode Island's companion guide to this ESSA state plan, Creating Pathways to Opportunity in Rhode Island, sets forth our collective aspirations for Rhode Island's students and schools, including and beyond the long-term goals set forth in this plan. This document provides context for this plan, sets forth our values and priorities in more detail, and documents our ongoing commitment to stakeholder engagement.

Based on the spring 2016 results of the state assessments, 38% of students in grades three through eight and high school are proficient in English language arts and 31% are proficient in mathematics. These ambitious goals require a 12% annual decrease in the gap to 75% mathematics proficiency and a 10.7% annual decrease in the gap to 75% English language arts proficiency for all students and for each subgroup of students in the state.

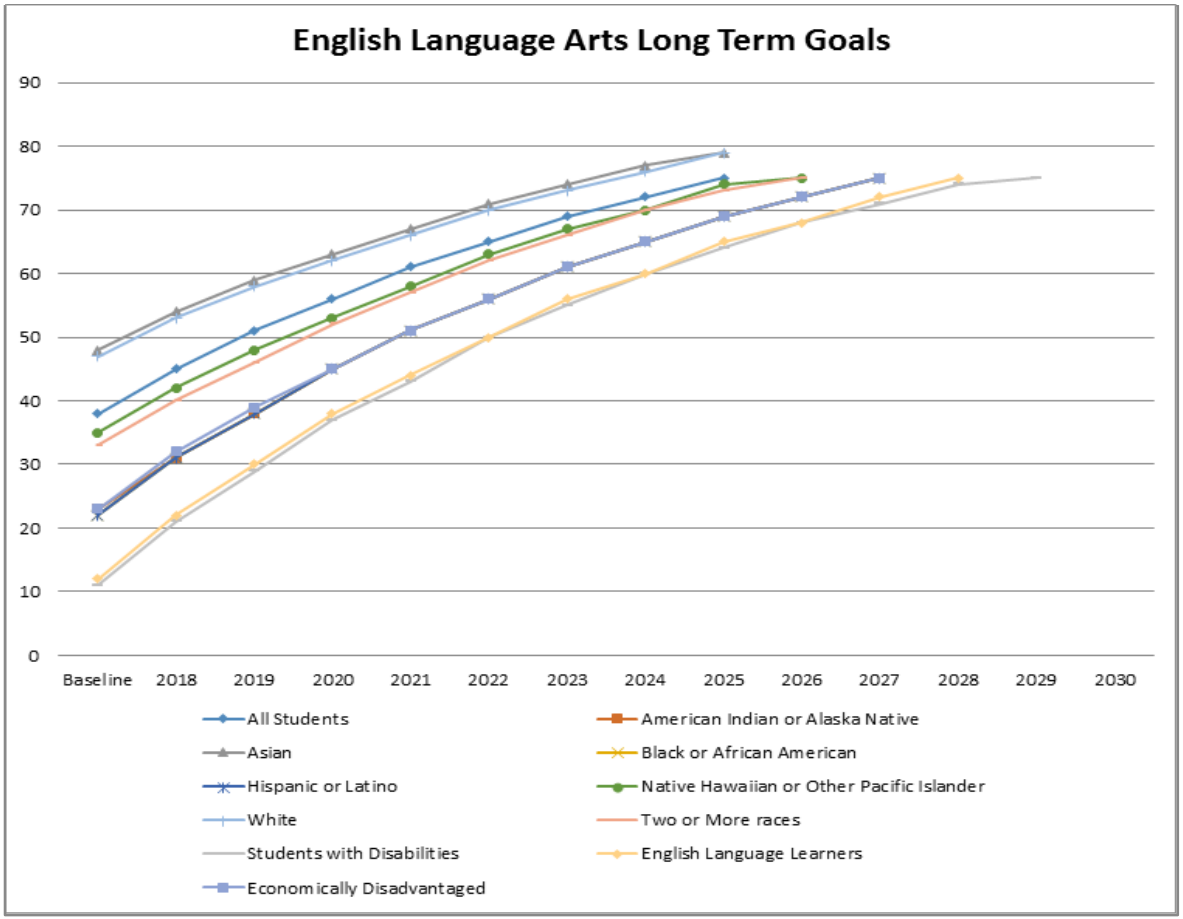
When examining historical assessment results with previous state assessments as well as NAEP, it is evident that these ambitious goals call for a larger increase in proficiency rates than Rhode Island has previously achieved in the same number of years. As these goals have been set using the 2016 state assessment results as baseline data, Rhode Island will re-evaluate its goals after the first year of implementation of its new assessments to be implemented during the 2017-2018 school year.

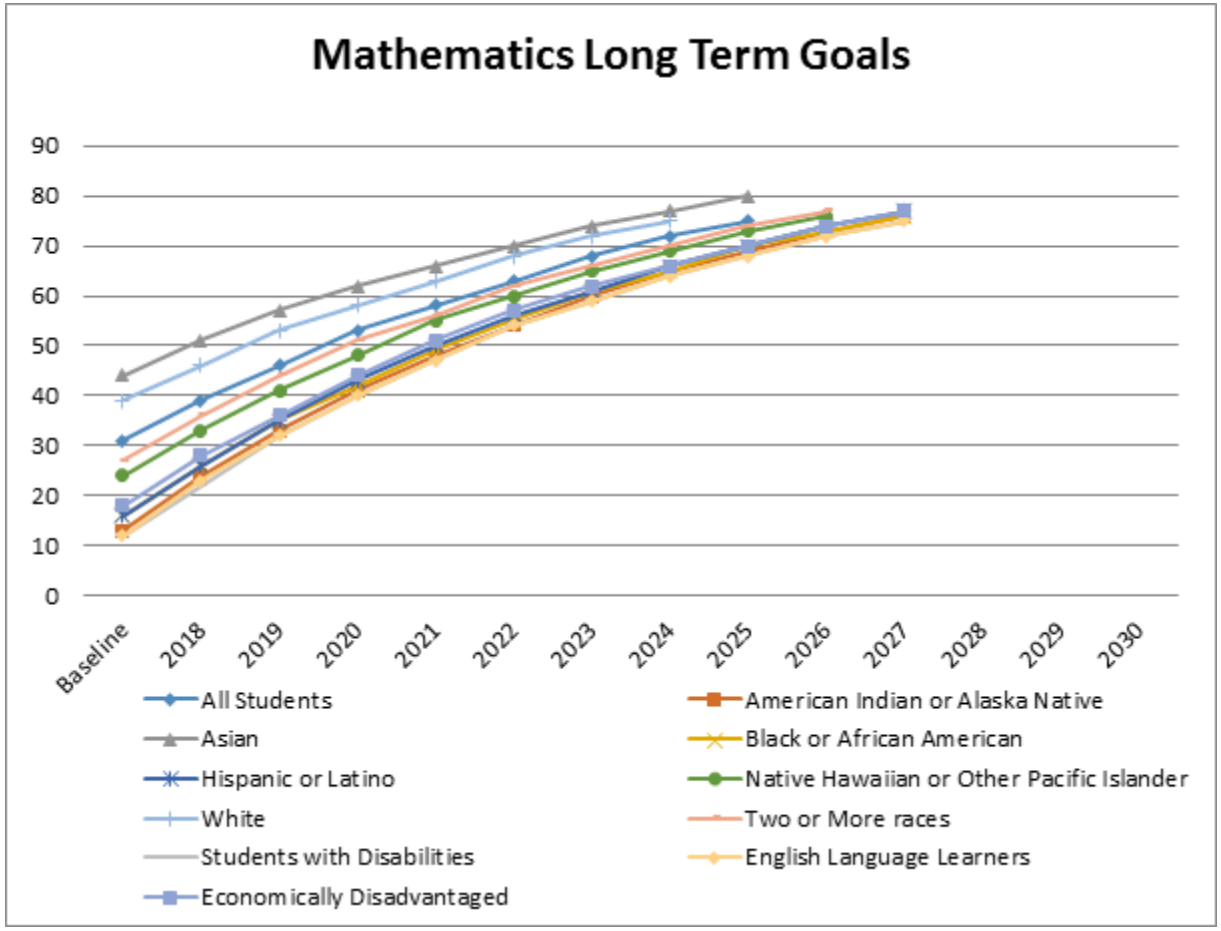
2. Provide the measurements of interim progress toward meeting the long-term goals for academic achievement in Appendix A.

   Answer in appendix

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

   Rhode Island set ambitious goals by requiring an annual percentage decrease in the gap to 75% proficiency each year for all students and for each subgroup of students in the state. By requiring the same percentage decrease, subgroups with larger proficiency gaps are required to make larger increases in the percentage of students attaining proficiency each year than groups with smaller gaps. As illustrated in the graphs below, Rhode Island's goals required significant progress in closing statewide proficiency gaps in order for 75% of students to be proficient by 2025. In addition, using this methodology, some subgroups of students' progress will need to continue past 2025 to achieve a 75% proficiency rate.


English Language Arts Long Term Goals
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Baseline
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
2027
2028
2029
2030
All Students
American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian
Black or African American
Hispanic or Latino
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
White
Two or More races
Students with Disabilities
English Language Learners
Economically Disadvantaged

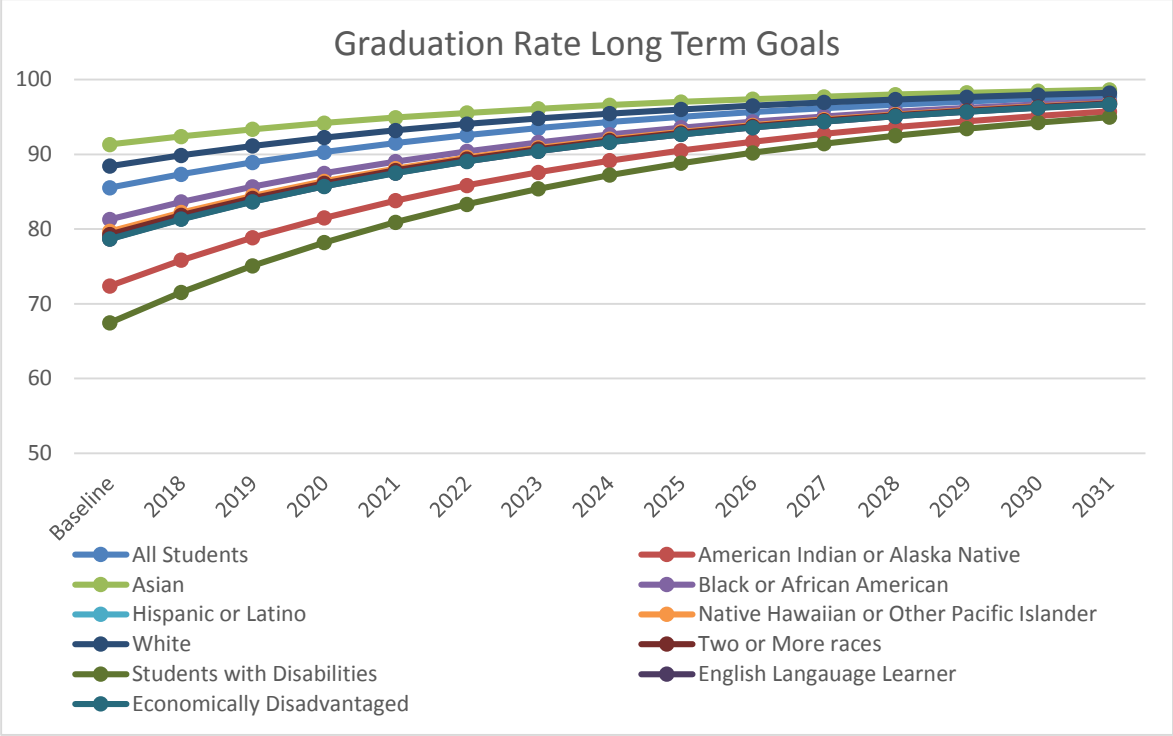


b. Graduation Rate. *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(i)(I)(bb))*

1. Describe the long-term goals for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for all students and for each subgroup of students, including: (1) the timeline for meeting the long-term goals, for which the term must be the same multi-year length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students in the State, and (2) how the long-term goals are ambitious.

   To develop the long-term goals and measures of interim progress for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, Rhode Island examined historical graduation cohort data. Rhode Island has demonstrated

a nine-percentage point increase from 2008 to 2015. Given Rhode Island's baseline 2016 four-year graduation rate of 85% for all students, Rhode Island is setting its long-term goal at 95% of students graduating by 2025. Based on historical data, this goal is both rigorous and attainable, as it is a stretch from the previous year's increases. However, the goal is not out of reach given the statewide movement towards preparing students for post-secondary readiness, particularly by including obtaining meaningful credentials and the graduation rate in the accountability system.



2. If applicable, describe the long-term goals for each extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, including (1) the timeline for meeting the long-term goals, for which the term must be the same multi-year length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students in the State; (2) how the long-term goals are ambitious; and (3) how the long-term goals are more rigorous than the long-term goal set for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate.

Not Applicable

3. Provide the measurements of interim progress toward the long-term goals for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and any extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate in Appendix A.

   Answer in appendix

4. Describe how the long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and any extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate take into account the improvement necessary to make significant progress in closing statewide graduation rate gaps.

   Rhode Island set ambitious goals by requiring a 12.5% annual decrease in the gap to a 95% graduation rate each year for all students and for each subgroup of students in the state. By requiring the same percentage decrease, subgroups with larger graduation gaps are required to make larger increases in the percentage of students graduating each year than groups with smaller gaps. As illustrated in the graphs above, Rhode Island's goals require significant progress in closing statewide graduation gaps in order for 95% of students to be graduating in four years by 2025. In addition, using this methodology, some subgroups of students' progress will need to continue past 2025 to achieve a 95% graduation rate in as far in the future as 2031.

c. English Language Proficiency. *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(ii))*

1. Describe the long-term goals for English learners for increases in the percentage of such students making progress in achieving English language proficiency, as measured by the statewide English language proficiency assessment, including: (1) the State-determined timeline for such students to achieve English language proficiency and (2) how the long-term goals are ambitious.

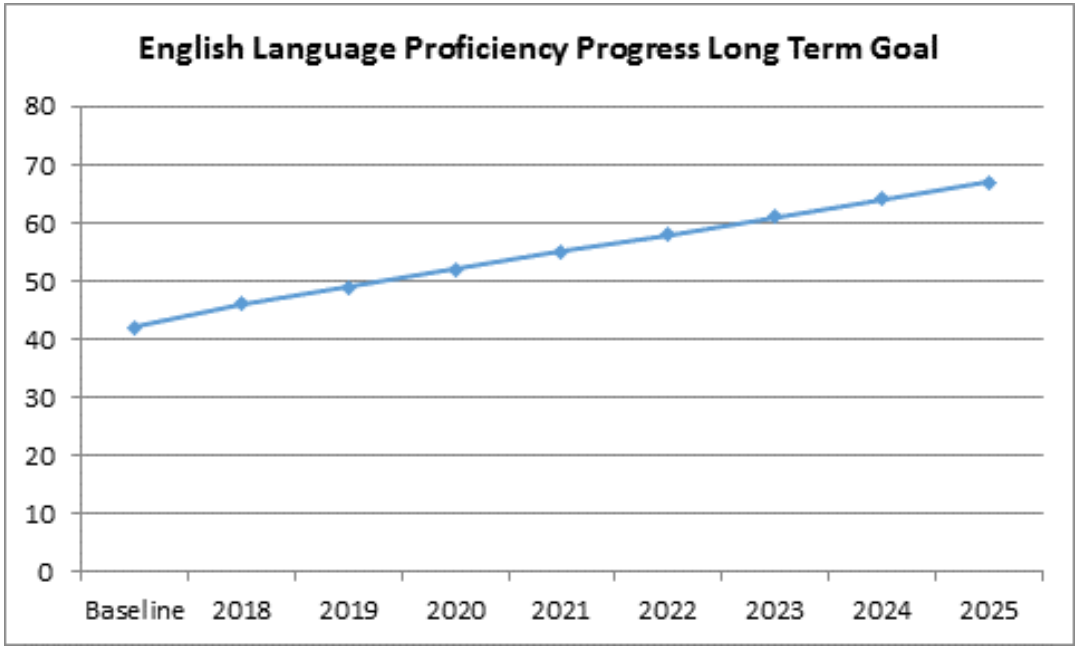
   Rhode Island's goal is to develop an English language proficiency model that reflects the true trajectory of language development in our students. This trajectory will be used to set our long-term goals for English learner progress in achieving English language proficiency. As such, we are adopting a progress model that takes into account starting language proficiency level and, eventually, other factors such as grade level.

   Rhode Island is a member of the WIDA Consortium and administers the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 as an annual measure of English language proficiency for students identified as English learners. The ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 measures proficiency in four domains – listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The levels include 1- Entering, 2- Emerging, 3- Developing, 4- Expanding, 5- Bridging, and 6- Reaching.

Students are considered proficient on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 when they achieve a composite score of 5.0 (Bridging) on the assessment. Student attainment of English language proficiency targets will be based on the student's initial overall composite proficiency level demonstrated on their first ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment. The maximum number of years to attain English language proficiency will be set at six years for students who achieve an initial ACCESS composite proficiency level of 1.0 and adjusted based on students attaining higher levels of proficiency.

Beginning with the 2017 ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment results, Rhode Island will determine the number of years that a student has to attain proficiency, and then set growth targets based on the entering grade-level scale-score accordingly. Annual progress targets will then be set for each student. The targets will be reset each year allowing the individual student's annual targets to reflect the amount of growth that the student had made in the previous year. This yearly reset acknowledges the nonlinear growth that students at varying proficiency levels make within a year's time. Student-level targets require that all students make appropriate progress based on that individual student's initial year ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment. All targets are ambitious while still taking into account language acquisition research and the learning differences within the English learner population.

Rhode Island's long-term goal will be set on the percentage of students meeting their annual growth targets. Since the first administration of the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment was during the 2015-2016 school year, only one year of growth data was available to establish a baseline and determine an appropriate long-term goal and measure of interim progress. Given Rhode Island's 2017 baseline of 41% for all English learners meeting their annual growth target, Rhode Island's long-term goal is 67% of English learners meeting their annual growth target by 2025. This goal is set at the 75th percentile of actual performance of schools in 2017. Given that Rhode Island does not yet have longitudinal data for student performance on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, Rhode Island will revisit these initial long-term goals when three years of data are available to determine whether the goals are still ambitious and achievable based on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0.



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

   Answer in appendix

iv. **Indicators** *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(B))*

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

Academic Proficiency Index: The long-term goals are based on annual academic achievement as measured by the Academic Proficiency Index. The annual academic achievement indicator will be comprised of two indexes

computed using Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS), Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM), PSAT, and SAT assessment results. English language arts and mathematics will be calculated as separate measures and points will be assigned based on student achievement level on the English language arts and mathematics state assessments. Both RICAS and DLM have four performance levels with level three indicating proficiency. Rhode Island will establish four performance levels for the PSAT and SAT with level three indicating proficiency. Student performance at level three and four on RICAS, PSAT, SAT, and DLM will be weighted one point. Student performance at level two on those assessments will receive a partial point. An Academic Proficiency Index will be calculated for all students and each subgroup within each school that meets the state's minimum n-size of 20 students. When calculating the Academic Proficiency Index, the denominator will be the greater of 95% of all students (or, when disaggregating data, 95% of all students in the subgroup) or the number of students participating in the assessments. Two years of data will be combined for calculation of each school's Academic Proficiency Index.

High School Growth*:* A Student Growth Index will be calculated using Student Growth Percentiles for eleventh grade students based on the PSAT and SAT. The Student Growth Percentile (SGP) methodology was developed by Damian Betebenner. An SGP describes a student's progress relative to their academic peers on the state assessment in mathematics and English language arts. Academic peers are students who have scored similarly on the state assessment in the past. Because all students' scores are compared only to those of their academic peers, students at every level of proficiency have the opportunity to demonstrate growth in their achievement. The Student Growth Index will include differential weights for low, typical, and high growth. Low growth is defined as an SGP below 35. Typical growth is defined as an SGP between 35 and 70. High growth is defined as an SGP greater than or equal to 70. Two years of data will be combined for calculation of each school's Student Growth Index.

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

Student Growth Index: A Student Growth Index will be calculated using Student Growth Percentiles for students in grades four through eight based on the RICAS assessment. The Student Growth Percentile (SGP) methodology was developed by Damian Betebenner. An SGP describes a student's progress relative to their academic peers on the state assessment in mathematics and English language arts. Academic peers are students who have scored similarly on the state assessment in the past. Because all students' scores are compared only to those of their academic peers, students at every level of proficiency have the opportunity to demonstrate growth in

their achievement. The Student Growth Index will include differential weights for low, typical, and high growth on the RICAS assessments for students in grades four through eight. Low growth is defined as an SGP below 35. Typical growth is defined as an SGP 35 or higher and below 70. High growth is defined as an SGP greater than or equal to 70.

A review of norm- and criterion-referenced growth and achievement charts for PARCC support these definitions. In general, students who meet expectations on PARCC assessments that consistently have growth below the 35th percentile will not be meeting expectations within a few years. For example, a student who starts at level four/ level five in grade three who continues to have growth at or below the 35 percentile will not be meeting expectations by grade eight. Conversely, a review of the PARCC data shows that an SGP of 70 of higher is generally needed to improve performance over time. For example, a student who starts at the level two/ level three cut score in grade three will need to consistently demonstrate growth above the 70th percentile to reach level four performance by grade eight in mathematics. Two years of data will be combined for calculation of each school's Student Growth Index.

Exceed Expectations Indicator: Rhode Island believes that it is important for schools to continue to support and encourage all learners to achieve at the highest level. The Exceed Expectations Indicator will measure the percent of students exceeding expectations on the Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS), Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM), PSAT, and SAT assessments. English language arts and mathematics are calculated as separate measures. Both RICAS and DLM have four performance levels with level four indicating a student has exceeded expectations. Rhode Island will establish four performance levels for the PSAT and SAT with level four indicating a student has exceeded expectations. Rhode Island will calculate the percentage of students at each school and in each subgroup within the school who exceed expectations (level 4) on the mathematics and English language arts assessments. Two years of data will be combined for calculation of each school's Exceed Expectations Indicator.

In order to determine if this indicator will allow for meaningful differentiation of schools, an analysis of data on the percentage of students exceeding expectations was conducted. The analysis demonstrates that there is modest range in percent of students who exceed expectations on state assessments among schools (0% to 26% in mathematics and 0% to 31% in English language arts). The percent of students who exceed expectations in mathematics at the 25th percentile of schools is one percent, and five percent at the 75th percentile of schools. The percent of students who exceed expectations in English language arts at the 25th percentile of schools is 1.5% and 7.5% at the 75th percentile of schools. Since Rhode Island is transitioning to new state assessments, Rhode Island will conduct similar analysis with data from the new assessments to ensure this indicator will meaningfully differentiate schools.

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

Composite Graduation Rate: An ideal Rhode Island graduate is one who is well prepared for post-secondary education, work, and life. He or she can think critically and collaboratively and can act as a creative, self-motivated, culturally competent learner and citizen. The Composite Graduation Rate indicates the degree to which schools are successful in preparing students to achieve this vision. Rhode Island values students graduating ready for the next phase of life, even if it requires longer than the traditional four-year timeline, which is why the Composite Graduation Rate includes four-, five-, and six-year graduation rates and why the cohort rates are weighted equally.

For each school or LEA, four different graduation rates are calculated based on different cohorts: The four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rates are each calculated. From these rates, a weighted graduation rate is calculated based on 33.33% of the four-year cohort rate, 33.33% of the five-year cohort rate, and 33.33% of the six-year cohort rate. This weighted rate is referred to as the Composite Graduation Rate.

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

The English Language Proficiency Progress Index will measure the percentage of English learners making adequate progress towards achieving English language proficiency. Through an analysis of Rhode Island English learner exit criteria and English learner success on the PARCC English language arts assessment, it was determined that a student's attainment target will be defined as a 5.0 composite proficiency level on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment. The maximum number of years to attain English language proficiency will be set at six years for students who achieve an initial ACCESS composite proficiency level of 1.0 and adjusted based on students attaining higher levels of proficiency. Beginning with the 2017 ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment results, Rhode Island will determine the number of years that a student has to attain proficiency, and then set growth targets based on the entering grade-level scale-score, accordingly. Students achieving a composite proficiency level of 5.0 or higher on their initial ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment (Year 1) have met their

growth target. Each student's attainment target will be set at the scale-score for composite proficiency level 5.0 at the grade level for the year they are expected to attain proficiency. The number of years a student has to reach the attainment target varies from three to six years depending on the student's initial composite proficiency level. Each student's annual growth targets are calculated by subtracting the student's previous year scale from the attainment scale-score and dividing the difference by the remaining number of years required to reach attainment. This method allows for a variable growth trajectory depending on each student's progress over time, while still requiring that the attainment target be reached within the required number of years. The annual reset of targets allows the individual student's annual scale-score targets to reflect the amount of growth that the student has made in one year. This yearly reset acknowledges the nonlinear growth that students at varying proficiency levels make within a year's time. The table below illustrates the development of annual student level growth targets.

	Annual Growth Target *(SS: Scale-Score; AT: Attainment Target)*				
Initial ACCESS Composite Proficiency Level	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
5.0 or Higher					
4.0 – 4.9	Initial scale-score (SS) plus SS progress to reach attainment target (AT) divided by two	AT: Scale-score for 5.0 two grades out			
3.0 – 3.9	Initial SS plus SS progress to reach to AT divided by three	Year 2 SS plus SS progress to reach AT divided by two	AT: Scale-score for 5.0 three grades out		
2.0 – 2.9	Initial SS plus SS progress to reach to AT divided by four	Year 2 SS plus SS progress to reach AT divided by three	Year 3 SS plus SS progress to reach AT divided by two	AT: Scale-score for 5.0 four grades out	
1.0 – 1.9	Initial SS plus SS progress to reach to AT divided by five	Year 2 SS plus SS progress to reach AT divided by four	Year 3 SS plus SS progress to reach AT divided by three	Year 4 SS plus SS progress to reach AT divided by two	AT: Scale-score for 5.0 five grades out

The English Language Proficiency Progress Index scores will range from 0.00 to 1.10 with zero points assigned to students who demonstrated no growth, 0.01 to 0.99 points will be assigned to students who demonstrated growth towards the target, and 1 to 1.1 points will be assigned to students who reached (1.0) or exceeded the target (1.01

to 1.09) with a bonus for exceeding the target by ten percent (1.10). Two years of data will be combined for calculation of each school's English Language Proficiency Progress Index.

The following tables illustrate how the index scores annual growth targets and the on-time attainment of English language proficiency will be calculated. The first table below summarizes the accountability rules for the years up to and including the year the student should attain English language proficiency. A bonus of ten percent will be awarded to the English learner student's score when English language proficiency is achieved prior to the required year of attainment. The second table describes the rules that apply if a student does not meet attainment within the designated timeframe.

Student Outcome *(SS: Scale-Score)*				
Year	**Did not participate in assessment**	**No progress toward target**	**Progress toward target but attainment target not met**	**Grade-level attainment target met or exceed**
Before designated attainment year	0.00	0.00	0.01 - 1.10 (Current Year SS – Previous Year SS) / (Growth Target SS - Previous Year SS)	1.10
Designated attainment year	0.00	0.00	0.01 - 0.99 (Current Year SS – Previous Year SS) / (Attainment Target SS – Previous Year SS)	1.00 - 1.10 (Current Year SS – Previous Year SS) / (Attainment Target SS – Previous Year SS)

Student Outcome *(SS: Scale-Score; AT: Attainment Target)*			
Year	**Did not participate in assessment**	**Grade-level attainment target not met**	**Grade-level attainment target met**
1 year late	0.00	0.00	0.75
2 years late	0.00	0.00	0.50
3+ years late	0.00	0.0	0.25

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

School quality or student success will be reflected through multiple measures. In 2018, the indicators will include Chronic Absenteeism and Student Suspensions. In 2019, Rhode Island will include two additional high school measures, High School Graduate Proficiency and Post-Secondary Success. In 2022, Rhode Island will transition the two high school measures to align with the state's high school graduation requirements and add a new Science Proficiency indicator.

The **Chronic Absenteeism Indicator** will examine the percentage of teachers and students who are chronically absent in grades PK-twelve. The definition of chronic absenteeism is a student absent more than ten percent of school days enrolled or a teacher absent more than 10% of school days in a year. Chronic absenteeism in students is a primary cause of low academic achievement and a powerful predictor of those students who may eventually drop out of school. Nationally and in Rhode Island, it is most prevalent among low-income students. In addition, our youngest students (pre-kindergarten and kindergarten) and oldest students (high school) tend to have the highest rates of chronic absenteeism. Research also shows that teacher absences have a negative impact on student learning.

In order to determine if this indicator will allow for meaningful differentiation of schools, an analysis of historical student chronic absenteeism data was conducted. The analysis demonstrates that there is large range in chronic absenteeism rates among schools (0% to over 60%). The chronic absenteeism rate at the 25th percentile of schools is 5.7% and 20.7% at the 75th percentile of schools.

Rhode Island is collecting teacher attendance data for the first time during the 2016-17 school year. Teacher absenteeism calculations will not include time for approved professional development or long-term excused absences. Similar analysis will be conducted on school level teacher chronic absenteeism data when that data is collected to ensure it will support meaningful differentiation of schools. Results will be calculated and reported annually for the all-student subgroup, as well as disaggregated for each major subgroup of students in the state for all schools.

The **Student Suspension Indicator** will measure the number of out of school suspensions per 100 students pre-kindergarten through grade twelve. The rate is calculated by dividing the total number of suspensions by the total number of students enrolled and multiplying this by 100. Students who are suspended have lower student achievement and are more likely to be retained and drop out of school. In Rhode Island, males, students of color, students with disabilities, and students who are economically disadvantaged are more likely to be suspended (InfoWorks! 2015).

In order to determine if this indicator will allow for meaningful differentiation of schools, an analysis of historical student out of school suspension data was conducted. The analysis demonstrates that there is a large range in suspensions per 100 students among schools (0 per 100 to over 600 per 100 students). The per-100 rate of student suspensions at the 25th percentile of schools is 3.7 and is 53.25 at the 75th percentile of schools. Additional analysis at the elementary, middle, and high school level reveals that there is differentiation at all levels, although more differentiation at the middle and high school levels. This indicator will be calculated and reported annually for the all-student subgroup, as well as disaggregated for each major subgroup of students in the state for all schools.

The **High School Graduate Proficiency (Commissioner's Seal) Indicator** will measure the percentage of high school graduates each year demonstrating proficiency on approved English language arts and mathematics assessments until 2021. Beginning in 2022, this indicator will transition to the Commissioner's Seal indicator that will measure the percentage of students awarded a Commissioner's Seal. Both indicators are measures of the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency on RIDE-approved assessments in English language arts and mathematics. Rhode Island will analyze data for this indicator after the 2016-17 school year. It is critical to the evaluation of this indicator that all students have the opportunity to participate in one or more RIDE-approved assessments in English language arts and mathematics. This data will be available at the end of the 2016-17 school year and analysis will be conducted on school level data to ensure it will support meaningful differentiation of schools.

As part of the Rhode Island Diploma System outlined in the Secondary School Regulations, Council Designations serve as enhancements to the high school diploma. Each Council Designation externally validates achievements of high school students to allow for public recognition of specific skills and to incentivize students to meet additional high standards, beyond those needed to earn a high school diploma, through flexible and personalized high school learning experiences. The Commissioner's Seal is one of three Council Designations. Commencing with the graduating class of 2021, the Commissioner's Seal will certify that a student is proficient in high school standards-aligned English language arts and mathematics content, as confirmed by RIDE-approved assessments. This indicator will be calculated and reported annually for the all-student subgroup, as well as disaggregated for each major subgroup of students in the state for all schools.

The **Post-Secondary Success Indicator** measures students' success in demonstrating achievements beyond those needed to earn a high school diploma. The Post-Secondary Success Indicator will measure the percent of students in each high school that graduate each year with one or more of the following: Career and Technical Education industry-approved credential, college credits through dual- or concurrent-enrollment, or successful completion of Advanced Placement tests. Rhode Island will analyze data for this indicator after the 2016-2017 school year when data has been collected and validated to ensure it will support meaningful differentiation of schools.

Commencing with the graduating class of 2021, this indicator will expand to include two Council Designations that are outlined in the Rhode Island Secondary School Regulations: the Seal of Biliteracy and the Pathway Endorsement. A Seal of Biliteracy certifies that a student has attained a specified level of proficiency in the English language and one or more other world languages. A Pathway Endorsement certifies that a student has accomplished deep learning in a chosen area of interest and is prepared for employment or further education in a career path. A Pathway Endorsement includes three components: (1) academic study, (2) career and interest engagement, and (3) application of skills. This indicator will be calculated and reported annually for the all-student subgroup, as well as disaggregated for each major subgroup of students in the state for all schools.

The **Science Proficiency Indicator** will measure student proficiency on the state science assessment in grades 5, 8, and 11. Rhode Island will be field testing a new science assessment aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards in spring 2018 and will administer the first operational test in 2019. Rhode Island will analyze data for this indicator after the first few years of administration to ensure it will support meaningful differentiation of schools. In order to minimize the number of years the accountability system changes, Rhode Island will implement this new indicator along with the high school changes described above after the spring 2021 administration.

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

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

For many years, Rhode Island has used a Comprehensive Index Score (CIS) to make annual school accountability determinations. The CIS combined school performance on several indicators in an overall score. Based on the CIS, the school was provided with a school classification. While this index system served Rhode Island well for many years, there were some challenges with the system that will be addressed in the proposed accountability system. The index system was complex, making it difficult for educators and the community to understand and use the information for school improvement. Points earned through one indicator could compensate for low performance in another, masking performance that was in need of improvement. Finally, small fluctuations in the CIS from year to year were often misinterpreted as meaningful change. Rhode Island's proposed accountability system addresses these challenges using an accountability system based on classification rules as opposed to a CIS.

Rhode Island will utilize all indicators to meaningfully differentiate and classify schools into a five star system. Beyond providing a classification, the system will signal to communities what is important and incentivize positive change that will benefit students through collective responsibility. Schools will receive points for each indicator based on performance. Schools can earn one to four points on the English language arts and mathematics Proficiency Indexes, Composite Graduation Rate, and the English Language Proficiency Progress Index, with four points earned by achieving the associated 2025 state goal. Schools can earn one to three points on all other indicators. Based on classification rules, schools will receive a one to five star rating. The table below outlines the classification rules. Additional rules (e.g., Commissioner's Seal) will be introduced for the Class of 2021.

Schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement will receive one star with the additional label. Because the overall performance of schools identified for targeted support and improvement can vary, these schools may have a classification of one, two, three, or four stars with the additional label. English language arts and mathematics points were combined for the achievement and growth classification rules. The Exceeds Expectations for English language arts and mathematics, Chronic Absenteeism, and Suspension Indicators were also combined for classification rules. A school would need to meet all criteria in a row (see below) to earn the corresponding star rating.

School Classification Rules*						
Achievement: ELA and Math (Max. 8 points)	**Growth: ELA and Math (Max. 6 point)**	**English Language Proficiency (Max. 4 points)**	**Graduation Rate (HS Only) (Max 4 points)**	**Exceeds (ELA/Math) Absenteeism and Suspension (Max. 12 points)**	**Targeted Support and Improvement: Subgroups**	**School Rating**
6 or more points (3 or 4 points each)	4 or more points (2 or 3 points each)	3 or more points	3 or more points	10 or more points	None identified	★★★★★
5 or more points (2-4 points each)	4 or more points (2 or 3 points each)	2 or more points	3 or more points	8 or more points	1 identified subgroup maximum	★★★★
7 or more points * OR		NA	2 or more points	6 or more points	1 or more identified subgroup	★★★
9 or more points **						
5 or more points*				4 or more points		★★

School Classification Rules*						
Achievement: ELA and Math (Max. 8 points)	**Growth: ELA and Math (Max. 6 point)**	**English Language Proficiency (Max. 4 points)**	**Graduation Rate (HS Only) (Max 4 points)**	**Exceeds (ELA/Math) Absenteeism and Suspension (Max. 12 points)**	**Targeted Support and Improvement: Subgroups**	**School Rating**
OR		NA	1 or more points		1 or more identified subgroup	
7 or more points**						
2 points (1 point each)	2 points (1 point each)	1 or 2 points	1 or more points	4 or more points	1 or more identified subgroup	★

*Additional metrics in the accountability system will be added as they become available.

RIDE will conduct randomized visits to schools receiving 1- and 5-star ratings to validate the appropriateness of the ratings, as well as gather evidence for monitoring and future calibration of the system's consistency and accuracy. Through these visits, RIDE will learn about best practices taking place in these schools that can be disseminated and used to support other schools throughout the state.

In addition to a star rating, associated school performance descriptors and report cards will provide schools and the community rich information to support collective responsibility for continuous improvement and inform school improvement planning. Although the rich information on the report cards will include SurveyWorks data for aggregate student, teacher, and parent responses to the survey, it would compromise the intent and integrity of SurveyWorks to use it for accountability purposes. Schools and the community will be encouraged to use all report card data including and beyond accountability metrics to support and drive needed change. While the star rating provides easy-to-understand information on the performance of the school, the school performance descriptors, in the table below, will provide an overview of indicator-specific information on school performance at each star rating. The report cards will include detailed indicator-specific information including student performance data, indicator indexes where appropriate, indicator points, and graphic displays of student performance on the indicator (e.g., red, yellow, green symbols) for all students and subgroups. All federally required indicators will be included on the report cards in the first release; additional indicators and enhancements will be announced prior to future releases.

	School Performance Descriptors
5 Stars ★★★★★	Schools with five stars have strong overall performance on all indicators in the school accountability system. Overall achievement and growth in math and English language arts and the performance of subgroups of students is among the highest in the state. In addition, these schools have the highest percentage of English learners making sufficient progress towards attaining English language proficiency. High schools with this classification are graduating 90% or more of their students. Finally, these schools also demonstrate little or no chronic absenteeism among students and teachers, as well as low suspension rates.
4 Stars ★★★★	Schools with four stars generally perform consistently well on all indicators in the accountability system. Overall achievement and growth in math and English language arts and the performance is moderately high in comparison to all Rhode Island schools. In addition, these schools have a moderate to high percentage of English learners making sufficient progress towards attaining English language proficiency. High schools with this classification are graduating 85% or more of their students. Finally, these schools may have some weaknesses in chronic absenteeism among students and teachers and/or suspension rates.
3 Stars ★★★	Schools with three stars have some areas of weakness in school performance indicators in the school accountability system. Overall achievement and growth in math and English language arts as well as English language proficiency is average, but generally have at least one area of low performance in comparison to all Rhode Island schools. These schools may have one or more subgroups of students identified for targeted support and improvement. High schools with this classification are graduating 80% or more of their students. Finally, these schools often have some weaknesses in chronic absenteeism among students and teachers and/or suspension rates.
2 Stars ★★	Schools with two stars have weaknesses at the overall school level in several of the indicators included in the accountability system. Overall achievement and growth in math and English language arts as well as English language proficiency is low, but generally have at least one area of strength. Schools with two stars often have subgroups of students identified for targeted support and improvement. High schools with this classification may graduate less than 80% of their students. Finally, these schools often have weaknesses in chronic absenteeism among students and teachers and/or suspension rates.
1 Star ★	Schools with one star are the lowest performing schools in Rhode Island in terms of academic achievement growth in achievement in mathematics and English language arts. Schools with one star often have multiple subgroups of students identified for targeted support and assistance. High schools with this classification may graduate less than 80% of their students. Finally, these schools often have weaknesses in chronic absenteeism among students and teachers and/or suspension rates.

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

Rhode Island is applying a rule based methodology in its system of annual meaningful differentiation of all public schools in Rhode Island, which emphasizes the Academic Proficiency and Growth Indexes. Each star rating of the classification system requires schools to meet all the criteria associated with the star rating as illustrated in the school classification rules table above. This methodology does not assign specific weights or allow performance on one indicator to compensate for lower performance on another. Each star rating indicates minimum requirements for all indicators. If a school misses any one rule, they are not eligible for that star rating.

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

Rhode Island has several schools in the state that do not have students who participate in the state assessment (e.g., kindergarten to grade one and kindergarten to grade two only schools). A review of the enrollment patterns of these schools within their LEA was completed to determine the most appropriate method to include these schools in the accountability system. Based on this analysis, three different approaches will be utilized to attribute tested students to the non-tested schools for the purposes of the Academic Proficiency and Exceeds Expectations Indicators. The English Language Proficiency Progress, Chronic Absenteeism, and Student Suspension Indicators already include students in non-tested grades. The three approaches share the common feature of linking school accountability for the non-tested schools to the performance of their students on the grade three tests and are described below.

Approach 1 – Individual Student Mapping
Appropriate when students from a single non-tested school are distributed across many schools or when students from multiple non-tested schools are enrolled in a single grade three school.

Approach 2 – Feeder School Pairing
Appropriate when most of the students from the non-tested school enroll in the same grade three school and those students are a significant and representative portion of the grade three school's enrollment.

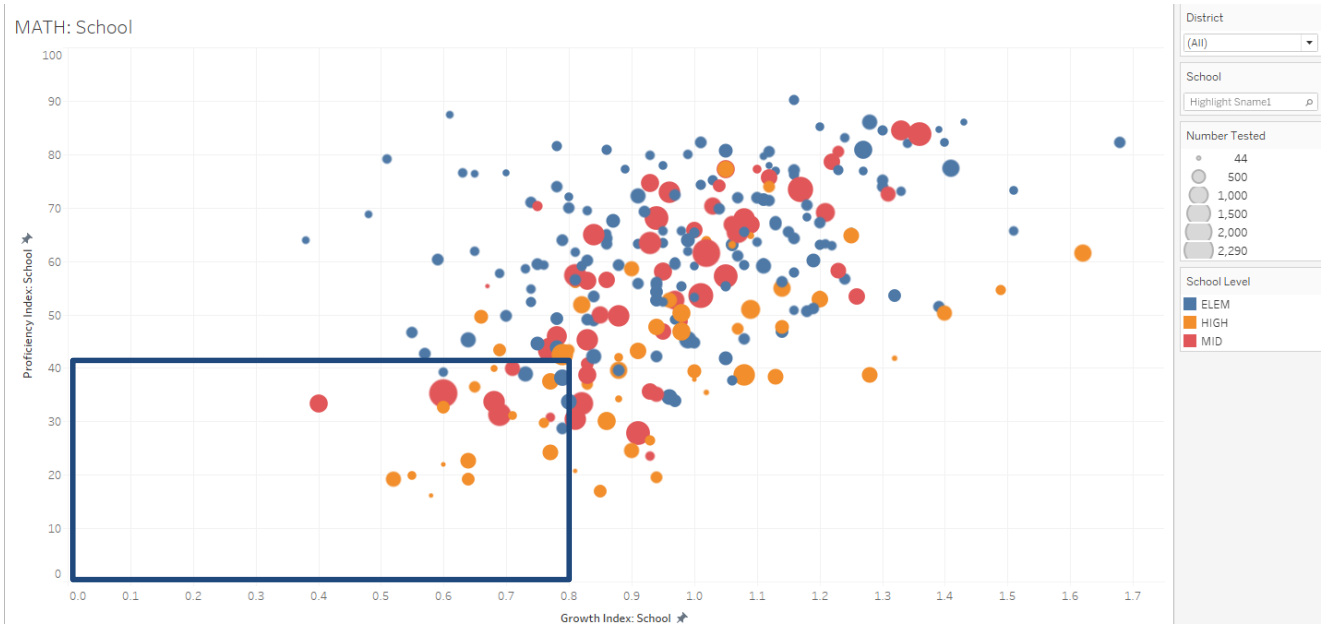
Approach 3 – Feeder LEA Pairing

Appropriate when most of the students from the non-tested school remain in the same LEA for grade three, but enroll in two or more schools.

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

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

Rhode Island's methodology for identifying the lowest performing five percent of all schools receiving Title I funds in the state will utilize all accountability indicators. Of the schools with a one star rating, the lowest performing five percent of all schools in terms of growth and achievement in English language arts and mathematics state assessments will be identified. With current data modeling, cuts have been determined, but will be revisited when data from the new assessments are available. The graphic below provides an illustration of how these schools will be identified.



RIDE will first identify schools for comprehensive support and improvement for the 2018-19 school year, based on student achievement and school quality results from the 2017-18 school year and graduation performance results from the 2016-17 school year. RIDE will subsequently continue to identify schools for comprehensive support and improvement on an annual basis.

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

Rhode Island will identify any public high school that does not graduate more than two thirds of its students in four years for comprehensive support and improvement. RIDE will first identify high schools for the 2018-19 school year based on graduation performance results from the 2016-17 school year. RIDE will subsequently continue to identify schools for comprehensive support and improvement on an annual basis.

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

Any school identified as in need of additional targeted support and improvement with a low performing subgroup (TSI-LPS) will be assessed for the following characteristics: 1) if the school has two or more populations causing the school to be identified as in need of targeted support and improvement; and, 2) if the school has any one subgroup, comprising at least 50% of the total school population, causing the school to be identified as in need of targeted support and improvement. If the answer to either question is yes for four consecutive years, this school will be considered as in need of comprehensive support and improvement.

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

Rhode Island will identify schools for comprehensive support and improvement on an annual basis. Schools will first be identified for comprehensive support and improvement for the 2018-19 school year, based on student achievement and school quality results from the 2017-18 school year and graduation performance results from the 2016-17 school year. Schools identified for additional targeted support and improvement that have not satisfied

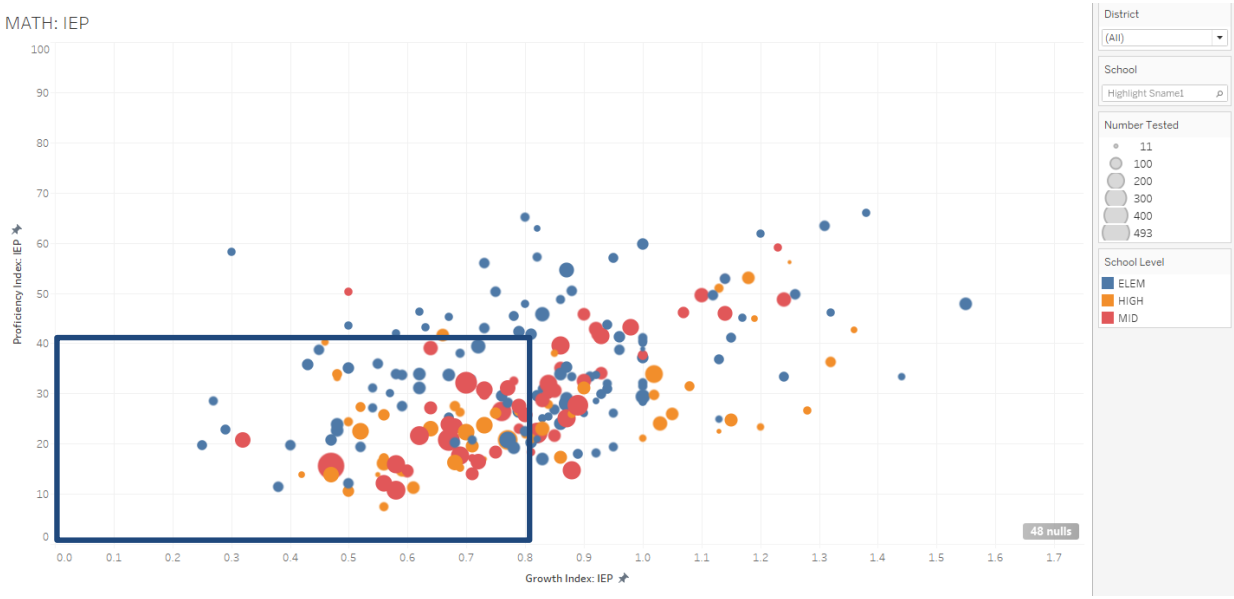
the statewide exit criteria for such schools for four consecutive years may be identified for comprehensive support and improvement for the first time for the school year 2021-22 and then on an annual basis.

e. Targeted Support and Improvement. Describe the State's methodology for annually identifying any school with one or more "consistently underperforming" subgroups of students, based on all indicators in the statewide system of annual meaningful differentiation, including the definition used by the State to determine consistent underperformance. *(ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(C)(iii))*

Beginning with the 2018-19 school year, schools will be identified for targeted support and improvement with a consistently underperforming subgroup (TSI-CUS) if one or more subgroups that meets the minimum n-size of 20 meets the criteria for a one star rating based on the statewide system of annual meaningful differentiation but does not fall into the range of performance for eligibility for additional targeted support and improvement with a low performing subgroup (TSI-LPS) described below in question f.

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

Rhode Island is identifying its lowest performing five percent of schools by identifying those one star-rated schools with the lowest achievement and growth in English language arts and mathematics on state assessments. Rhode Island will apply that same methodology to identify schools with targeted support and improvement for a low performing subgroup (TSI-LPS), as depicted in the graph below. Any school with a subgroup that meets the minimum n-size of 20 and whose performance for that subgroup would result in a one star rating and whose achievement and growth for English language arts and mathematics fall within the established range of performance for comprehensive support and improvement will be identified for TSI-LPS.



RIDE will start identifying TSI-LPS schools for the 2018-19 school year and continue to identify schools on an annual basis. For schools identified as TSI-LPS, the annual change in performance of all subgroups for which the school is targeted will be compared to the annual change in statewide performance for that subgroup. Schools may exit TSI-LPS status if the annual change in performance for any subgroup for which the school was identified exceeds the statewide change in performance for that subgroup.

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

Not Applicable

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

The Rhode Island school report cards will include clear and explicit reporting of student participation on the state assessments, and will clearly indicate on the school report card instances when the participation falls below 95 percent for

all students or any subgroup. If participation falls below 95 percent, LEAs will be required to submit a plan to engage their community to build understanding of and support for participating in state testing. In addition, schools will not be eligible to receive a five star classification rating if their "all-students" subgroup falls below 95 percent. Additionally, the denominator in calculating the Academic Proficiency Index (section 4.iv.a.) will be the number of students participating in the state assessments, or 95 percent of the full academic year enrollment, whichever is greater. This will penalize schools with less than 95 percent participation in their Academic Proficiency Index measure.

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

Section Context

Over the course of the last eight years of school improvement efforts, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and identified schools have learned from implementing a range of school improvement initiatives and policies. Based on our experiences of school improvement under No Child Left Behind and ESEA Flexibility, we are ascribing to several overarching principles that inform RIDE's belief in what is required for authentic, significant, and sustainable school improvement in our most challenged schools and LEAs. These principles include:

- *A belief that learning must be personalized to meet the needs of all students, and that a broad variety of pathways to college and career readiness must be made available, so that student and family choice can be a key driver in educational attainment.*
- *School improvement requires innovation, and that innovation cannot be achieved through coercion, but rather through empowerment of those closest to the students, namely families and educators.*
- *This empowerment must come through the form of greater flexibility and autonomy at the school level, while maintaining tight standards of accountability for outcomes, and taking appropriate action if needed if outcomes are not met.*
- *School improvement is the work of all members of the state community, meaning Rhode Island must emphasize shared responsibility for improving opportunities and outcomes for every Rhode Island student. This mutual responsibility acknowledges that all education partners in the state can and should play a role in improving access to high quality opportunities and educational outcomes for students.*
- *School improvement is not possible without authentically engaged communities and families at all stages of the planning and implementation of school improvement efforts.*

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

Rhode Island's methodology for identifying schools for comprehensive support and improvement is based on the lowest performing five percent of all schools in terms of growth and achievement in English language arts and

mathematics state assessments. The lowest performing five percent of schools will be identified when their performance on growth and proficiency fall within identified parameters. Schools may exit the comprehensive support and improvement identification once their growth and/or achievement fall above the designated parameters for either.

Schools will have four years to meet the exit criteria before additional state-determined action is required (see section 4.viii.c below), with the exception that any school previously identified as a "Priority" school for the 2017-18 school year will have two years to meet the exit criteria before additional state-determined action is required.

After the first year of implementation of a school improvement plan, any LEA, with consent from their Community Advisory Board (as discussed in question 4.viii.e below), may petition the Rhode Island Commissioner of Education for a one-year waiver from RIDE publicly labeling the school as a one star rated school. LEAs may seek a waiver if either of the following conditions are true: 1) The school has growth and /or proficiency index scores that, if maintained, will meet the state exit criteria at the next state accountability determination; or, 2) progress among implemented evidence-based strategies within the School's improvement plan indicates a trajectory of performance that, if maintained, will meet the base exit criteria. If the Commissioner grants the one-year waiver, then the school will be eligible to be publicly classified as a two star school or better while still being identified as a school in need of comprehensive support and improvement for federal reporting and funding purposes. The school still must meet the exit criteria within four years of originally being identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement or experience additional state determined interventions.

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

Annually, for schools identified as in need of additional targeted support and improvement, the change in performance of all subgroups for which the school is targeted will be compared to the annual change in statewide performance for that subgroup. Schools may exit identification and no longer be considered in need of additional targeted support and improvement if the annual improvement in performance for any subgroup for which the school was identified as in need of additional targeted support and improvement exceeds the statewide improvement in performance for that subgroup.

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

Rhode Island's experience with existing Priority and Focus schools has further illustrated the need to acknowledge and plan for the eventuality that schools are not able to successfully achieve transformational improvement in four years. Since 2009-10, RIDE has identified 33 schools as in need of improvement. In that time, two schools have met the designated exit criteria and one school closed. Rhode Island currently has 30 schools identified as Priority or Focus, the majority of which have been identified for at least four school years. Experience has taught us that successful schools require close coordination between LEAs and the school, strong buy-in from communities and partners, and innovative instructional models and supports for all students. LEA- and community-initiated intervention models are more effective and have a greater impact than prescriptive, compliance-driven state requirements. The importance of community engagement is clearly highlighted in a report from the Annenberg Institute for School Reform in 2012 by Sara McAlister.

To help, Rhode Island's ESSA State Plan will introduce the concept of **"School Redesign."** Through a School Redesign, LEAs will authentically engage with their educators and Community Advisory Boards (see below) to fundamentally redesign and relaunch the school as a model that will be best positioned to address student needs and promote student achievement.

Rhode Island will require any school identified for comprehensive support and improvement that has failed to meet exit criteria within four years of identification (excluding prior identification as a "Focus" or "Priority" school under No Child Left Behind) to undergo School Redesign. However, nothing prevents an LEA from initiating a School Redesign for a school identified for comprehensive support and improvement at an earlier year within the transformation process. RIDE encourages LEAs to have meaningful discussions with their Community Advisory Boards (described below) and educators about the progress their schools make throughout the school improvement process, and if applicable, have proactive, collaborative, and authentic discussions on what a School Redesign may look like to ensure the future success of the school.

LEAs may choose from one of the five following School Redesign models:

1. Empowerment: A school is redesigned pursuant to the Rhode Island General Law 16-3.2-1: *School and Families Empowerment Act*, with elements including alternative governance, an empowered leader, and a comprehensive list of autonomies and performance targets agreed upon by the school, the LEA, and RIDE. Success of similar approaches in Massachusetts was supported by a 2016 study conducted by the American Institute for Research.
2. Restart: A school is reopened under the management of a charter management organization, educational management organization, or other state-approved managing entity with a proven record of successfully operating schools.

3. Small Schools of Choice: An evidence-based whole school reform, where a school is reorganized into one or more "small schools" (roughly 100 students per grade) which emphasize student-centered personalized learning programs and relationships between students and adults; a rigorous and well-defined instructional program; long instructional blocks that promote interdisciplinary work; and a focus on post-secondary preparation. Evidence supporting Small Schools of Choice as an effective turnaround model can be found in MDRC's research study of NYC public schools in 2014.
4. LEA Proposed Redesign: An LEA designed alternative model, which meets the following criteria: a) a high quality school leader, b) a new school model, and c) significant school autonomy. This may include an alternative governance model for the school.
5. Closure: A school ceases all operations and students are relocated to schools that are not identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement.

The model selected by LEAs should be grounded in data accompanied by thoughtful analysis of why school improvement efforts thus far have been insufficient. LEAs' redesign plans will be subject to approval by the Rhode Island Council for Elementary and Secondary Education. Once approval is granted, LEAs engaged in School Redesign will be publicly classified as "New School Redesign" instead of a school identified for comprehensive support and improvement for up to two years, though they will still be treated as schools identified for comprehensive support and intervention for the purposes of state monitoring and federal funding.

LEAs must submit their School Redesign plans to the Rhode Island Council for Elementary and Secondary Education for approval. The School Redesign plan may use the first year of identification as a planning year prior to implementing the school redesign effort the following school year. If the LEA fails to submit a plan, or submits a plan that is not approved by the Council, the Council may elect to take additional state determined action pursuant to RIGL § 16-7.1-5.

In addition, if the LEA fails to meet the exit criteria for being identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement within three years of initiating a School Redesign effort (excluding a planning year), then the Council may elect to take additional state determined action pursuant to RIGL § 16-7.1-5.

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

Rhode Island will annually conduct a comprehensive review of local, state, and federal funding sources including Titles I, II, III, and IV funding for alignment to the LEA and/or identified school's plans for comprehensive support and improvement. This resource allocation review will supplement the needs assessment and inform the school improvement planning process and final plan, as well as the annual SEA report on school improvement.

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

School Improvement Resource Hub

Rhode Island recognizes that while LEAs are best positioned to select and implement strategies to improve their students' needs, not every LEA has the capacity to research and evaluate an exhaustive list of potential strategies nor may have the resources to successfully implement those strategies. To assist LEAs, RIDE will cultivate a centralized "School Improvement Resource Hub." This hub will consist of the following three types of resources:

- *Evidence-Based Strategies:* RIDE will identify evidenced-based strategies that have proven results in improving student achievement. These strategies will align to Rhode Island's vision of high quality teaching and learning. Where applicable, RIDE will identify other LEAs or partners in Rhode Island with a proven record of accomplishment of implementing the specific strategy. For the purposes of the Resource Hub, Rhode Island will classify each identified strategy as one of four tiers of evidence-based using the criteria for found in ESSA. LEAs will be encouraged, but not required, to assemble a coherent suite of school evidence-based school improvement strategies exclusively from the Resource Hub.
- *Tools and Resources:* RIDE will also cultivate tools and resources that LEAs may use to select "best-fit" strategies and implement those strategies in a sustainable manner. Tools and resources will include, but not be limited to: methods to conduct LEA-level and school-level comprehensive needs assessments (in-line with other needs assessments required under ESSA); guides to develop a rigorous, impactful school-improvement plan that identifies and leverages "best-fit" strategies; rubrics to review resource allocation and identifying strategies addressing resource inequities; and resources for how LEAs may analyze school-level data to hold schools accountable for reaching goals according to their school-improvement plan.
- *School Support Partners:* RIDE will release a Request for Information (RFI) to identify external third-party organizations with a proven record of accomplishment of collaborating with LEAs to help improve low-performing schools. Partners may include local organizations within Rhode Island, nationally recognized partners, and even LEAs within Rhode Island willing to help support Rhode Island's lowest performing schools.

During the 2017-18 school year, RIDE will conduct an RFI to help populate the three pillars of the School Improvement Resource Hub. RIDE will continuously update this hub as new strategies, resources, and partners are identified and results of existing strategies are proven throughout the school improvement process. In addition, RIDE will focus on helping build capacity of educators, LEAs, and members of Community Advisory Boards (see below) to leverage the resources identified in the hub.

Community Advisory Board

A key value of Rhode Island's ESSA State Plan focuses on collective responsibility among all stakeholders – including the community in which the school serves. However, while stakeholders provided positive feedback for this value, both community stakeholders and educators identified historic difficulties of systematically engaging community stakeholders on school improvement efforts without a dedicated "seat at the table."

To align to our priority of engaged communities and families, Rhode Island will require all LEAs with schools identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement to assemble a Community Advisory Board (CAB). LEAs will have flexibility in how they establish their CAB(s) oversight structures in ways that best support school improvement efforts, including having multiple CABs if appropriate for their local context and number of identified schools. Through the CAB, community stakeholders will possess a dedicated advisory "seat at the table" in which they can provide feedback and support to the LEA on both the initial development and ongoing progress of the LEA's school improvement plan. It is important to note that, unlike the local school board or committee, the role of the CAB is not to operate schools, but rather to provide community voice to guide school improvement efforts. Further, LEAs may leverage the CAB to help better identify direct roles that community stakeholders can play within the school improvement process. In addition, should school improvement efforts unfortunately prove unsuccessful, the CAB will serve as a critical resource for LEAs as they identify future strategies for the school, including any School Redesign effort. At minimum, the CAB will present a report on the status of school improvement efforts for each identified school once annually to the local school board or committee and to RIDE.

The Community Advisory Board should be representative of a broad range of community stakeholders from the communities served by the identified school(s). Such community members may include, but not be limited to: parents, students, educators, elected officials, business leaders, representatives of advocacy organizations, non-profit community-based organizations, community faith and cultural organizations, community early childhood and after school or summer programs, and other community-based interest groups, as appropriate. Ultimately, each LEA will be empowered to formalize members of the CAB that they feel best represent their community and will successfully leverage the broader community to help support and advise the school improvement process. LEAs may also request a waiver from the CAB requirement if they feel a different strategy to actively engage the community throughout the school improvement process will better benefit students and the community.

RIDE will provide technical assistance to LEAs to help support them throughout this process. LEAs will be required, as part of their school improvement planning, to describe how they will build the capacity of their CABs to oversee and guide school improvement efforts. In addition, RIDE will help support CABs by providing opportunities for CABs to develop their capacity to fulfill their responsibilities. RIDE will also identify

opportunities for the professional development for CABs, including potentially a cohort-style experience, to improve their capacity to advise and evaluate school improvement efforts among the appointed community members.

Needs Assessment

LEAs with identified schools will, in conjunction with representatives from each school and the CAB, conduct a comprehensive needs assessment. RIDE will provide potential frameworks for the needs assessment within the School Improvement Resource Hub, which will also align potential strategies and partners best suited to meet specific school needs. To the extent possible, this needs assessment will also be aligned with other needs assessments required by ESSA and state laws and regulations. The needs assessment should help evaluate the school's current state of teaching and learning (informed by RIDE's vision of excellence in teaching and learning). A needs assessment must also include an examination of resource allocation including time, talent, technology, money, and space against the improvement goals and chosen implementation strategies.

Plan Development

LEAs will design and implement a school improvement plan for all schools identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement in accordance with a framework identified by RIDE. RIDE will work with LEAs that wish to consolidate school improvement plans with other state and federally required reporting so that, if they wish, LEAs may use one single, comprehensive high-quality plan to drive their work and satisfy state and federal requirements for compliance. Plan development should happen with advisement from the LEA's Community Advisory Board.

Plans must include:

- Interventions and strategies, which adhere to one of top three tiers of evidence-based strategies as defined in ESSA regulatory guidance. Selected interventions and strategies must also align to the findings of the needs assessment.
- Clear performance metrics for how the LEA will evaluate the success of the plan. These performance metrics should include both annual measures, as well as interim measures that the LEA will use to evaluate the success of specific initiatives as part of the plan.
- Clear roles and responsibilities, including, but not limited to, roles for the school, LEA, and community partners.
- Identification of resource inequities and a plan to address these.
- A description of the capacity of the LEA to implement and sustain the plan.
- Articulation of the process the LEA will conduct to monitor and evaluate the school improvement effort.

- Identified actions that the LEA will take if school improvement efforts prove unsuccessful, such as altering school improvement strategies, adjusting resource allocation, or pursuing a School Redesign effort.

LEAs may elect to treat the year in which they are first identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement as a planning year prior to the full implementation of a school improvement effort, with the exception of any school identified as a Priority or Focus school during the 2017-18 school year; in such case, the 2017-18 school year will be considered the planning year.

Plan Approval
RIDE will develop a framework for plan approval and provide this framework for the LEAs to use or tailor to the specific schools developing and submitting plans for approval. All plans must be approved by the school, LEA, and RIDE. In addition, RIDE encourages LEAs to get a formal endorsement of the plan from their CAB.

Routine Monitoring and Reporting
Throughout the school year, LEAs will routinely monitor the status and quality of school improvement interventions. RIDE will provide resources for effective monitoring through the School Improvement Resource Hub, which LEAs can use and tailor to their specific schools' needs.

RIDE encourages LEAs to actively engage their CABs (on a suggested quarterly basis) to provide updates on the progress that LEAs are making with their school improvement plan. These updates should include progress against the performance metrics identified in the school improvement plan. These reporting sessions will also provide LEAs the opportunity to directly engage and solicit feedback from their CAB regarding the progress of school improvement efforts.

RIDE will monitor LEAs regarding the status and quality of their school improvement interventions. This monitoring will include informative meetings at the beginning, middle, and end of each school year. RIDE will annually provide a report to the public and the Rhode Island Council of Elementary and Secondary Education, including an assessment of progress against goals for all LEAs with identified schools. RIDE may also require LEAs to report annually on the status of school improvement efforts to the Council of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Funding to Support School Improvement
The current formula-based allocations and School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding is often interpreted as prescriptive and input-driven, and often requires LEAs to take on strategies that did not exactly meet their needs in order to receive funding. Rhode Island believes that those closest to the students are best positioned to make

decisions on behalf of those students, and therefore funding structures should serve needs, not prescribe particular action. Funding administered in such a way, however, must be tied to outcomes to ensure efficient, effective use of taxpayers' resources across many high-need communities.

A gradual shift away from input-driven, prescriptive funding to output-driven, flexible funding ought to allow more creativity and autonomy to LEAs, schools, and teachers, while fostering an environment where success is promoted and expanded upon. ESSA creates an exciting opportunity to enable Rhode Island to leverage future school improvement funding to support impactful school improvement efforts, while also spurring LEAs to try innovative school improvement strategies, and, when successful, share those best-practice strategies with other LEAs.

Of the seven percent of Title I funding reserved for school improvement activities, Rhode Island will allocate approximately 50% of these funds through a formulaic basis to support school improvement initiatives at all schools identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement, and will allocate the remaining 50% of school improvement funds through a competitive process to schools identified as in need of either comprehensive or targeted support and improvement to support a variety of innovative practices, School Redesign, and sharing of best-practices.

Formulaic School Improvement Funds (50% of Title I School Improvement Funds)

School Improvement: Transformation Support Grants
Rhode Island will reserve at least 50% of the Title I school improvement set-aside to directly support LEAs' school improvement plans for schools identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement. Each year, Rhode Island will initially reserve School Improvement: Transformation Support Grant funds to LEAs on a formulaic basis (consistent with previous §1003(a) funding). Per student funding levels for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement will be approximate to the average per-pupil funding to what Priority and Focus schools previously received under §1003(a) funding, to the extent possible.

Compared to previous federal school improvement funding, Rhode Island will not prescribe that LEAs select from a pre-determined, prescriptive transformation model in order to receive these transformation support grants. Rhode Island will enable LEAs with flexibility to leverage their school improvement funding to support the school improvement plan that they feel will best impact student achievement.

Rhode Island will prioritize funding school improvement efforts that leverage evidence-based strategies and, once implemented, have a clear track record of successfully improving student outcomes at the specific LEA. RIDE will evaluate each application for these transformation support grants against rigorous criteria, including, but not

limited to: the rigor of the school improvement plan – including the use of evidence-based strategies; evidence of the track record of success of previous strategies and identified transformation partners; clear performance criteria to evaluate and monitor the implementation of selected strategies; and a plan to develop sustainable capacity at the LEA and school level to implement and sustain improvement efforts once funding expires.

To enhance efficiency for LEAs, Rhode Island will align the transformation support application to the submission of the actual school improvement plan for review. If an LEA submits an LEA-wide school improvement plan, the LEA may also submit an LEA-wide grant application for transformation support grants. If an application does not meet RIDE's rigorous criteria, then the LEA will not receive the transformation support grant funding. Rather, these funds will be re-allocated towards funds eligible for competitive school improvement grants.

LEAs may apply for two years of implementation funding from School Improvement: Transformation Support grants. LEAs may also request to include funding for a year of planning prior to implementation, as well as a year of sustainability after implementation. Successful implementation of the LEA's selected strategies and meeting identified performance criteria will be required for the LEA to continue to receive grant funding. Rhode Island also may eventually transition the School Improvement: Transformation Support Grants from being awarded on a formulaic basis to being awarded on a competitive basis.

Competitive School Improvement Funds (50% of Title I School Improvement Funds)

Rhode Island will reserve 50% of school improvement funding to support three additional types of school improvement efforts designed to grow partnerships and successful practices, spur innovation, and support bold School Redesign efforts across the state. RIDE will allocate these funds on a competitive basis. Schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement will be able to apply for these competitive funds. Rhode Island will not set aside a specific percentage amongst these different categories of competitive grants. Rather, Rhode Island will conduct a unified application and evaluation process, and select the competitive grants across each competitive grant type that will ultimately result in the greatest impact on student achievement. In addition, LEAs may submit multiple unique competitive grants, across competitive grant categories, in a single grant application cycle.

School Improvement: Innovation Grants
School Improvement: Innovation Grants will support the initiation of innovative strategies to improve student achievement at low-performing schools. Each year, RIDE will identify strategic priorities for which LEAs may submit innovation grants. As an example, such priorities for innovation grants may include: increasing student access to pathways and learning opportunities that prepare students for college and career success; proficiency-based student-centered learning strategies, including, but not limited to, leveraging technology to deliver

personalized instruction; empowering school-based decision making and leadership at one or across a cluster of schools; enhancing district-wide prekindergarten to grade three early learning programs aligned to best practices and development standards; and redesign of LEA-wide talent management strategies to align and support school improvement transformation grants, including, but not limited to, recruiting and providing professional development to educators to serve English learners. While nothing precludes LEAs from including these above strategies in their School Improvement: Transformation Support Grants, School Improvement: Innovation Grants should serve to augment an LEA's School Improvement: Transformation Support Grant and spur LEAs to initiate innovative school improvement strategies.

LEAs may submit more than one innovation grant in the same cycle for different innovative initiatives. LEAs may also apply to implement innovation grants at one or a cluster of schools. Innovation grants will be evaluated for outcomes. Ideally, innovation grant initiatives through research validation that prove to have an impact on student achievement will be added to the School Improvement Resource Hub.

School Improvement: School Redesign Planning & Implementation Grants
School Redesign Grants are reserved for LEAs that wish to take bold action with their schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement by initiating a School Redesign effort. LEAs may apply for two phases of a School Redesign effort: Planning (to support the year prior to the initiation of a School Redesign effort) and Implementation (to support the first two years of a School Redesign effort). LEAs may apply for both phases together, or apply for either phase independently. School Redesign Planning Grants may cover a wide array of activities that enable LEAs to strategically investigate and plan for School Redesign efforts.

Example of School Redesign Planning Grant activities may include (but not limited to): a planning year for school leadership team to design a new school model; site visits for school leadership teams and CABs to visit high-performing schools; the incubation of a future school leader as an apprentice at a high-performing school; partnerships with a school support organization to help lead the design and implementation efforts; and professional development for school staff to help prepare them for the launch of a new school model.

It is important to note that LEAs are not required to initiate a School Redesign effort to apply for a School Redesign Planning Grant. Rather, LEAs may choose to use School Redesign Planning Grants to help investigate and better understand potential School Redesign efforts prior to actually electing to implement the effort. School Redesign Launch Grants will directly help support the first two years of implementation of a School Redesign effort. LEAs may use these grants to augment the School Improvement: Transformation Support grants to ensure the successful implementation of the school design. Any application for these funds must include a plan regarding how the School Redesign effort will be sustained after the expiration of the grant. LEAs with multiple schools can bundle applications for launch grants into a single grant application.

School Improvement: Dissemination Grants
Rhode Island recognizes that all Rhode Island students improve when we work together to share best practices. To that end, Rhode Island will leverage School Improvement: Dissemination Grants to spur any LEA to share best practices with and help support Rhode Island's lowest performing schools. Rhode Island will award School Improvement: Dissemination Grants on a competitive basis. Any LEA with a proven record of accomplishment of implementing a particular strategy may apply to RIDE for a School Improvement: Dissemination Grant. Priority will be given to LEAs using evidence-based strategies and that have similar characteristics of schools identified as in need of comprehensive or targeted support and improvement. For the purposes of reviewing dissemination grants, RIDE will use the four tiers of evidence-based strategies as defined in ESSA.

If awarded, the LEA would use these grant funds to partner with at least one LEA with a minimum of one school identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement. This partnership would include sharing of best practices and supporting implementation of the particular strategy. LEAs may apply independently or as a consortium, including identified LEAs with schools identified for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement and other educational external partners.

LEAs may apply for two years of implementation funding for School Improvement: Innovation Grants. RIDE will notify all identified schools of the selected LEAs and post the dissemination projects in the School Improvement Resource Hub. From there, LEAs with identified schools will reach out to the selected LEAs to formalize a dissemination project (if it was not already formalized as part of the grant application). Once a project has been finalized, RIDE will allocate the school improvement funding to the LEA with identified schools, who would then contract as agreed upon with the initially awarded LEA. Successful implementation of the LEA's selected strategies and meeting identified performance criteria will be required for the LEA to continue to receive grant funding. Resources produced through this process will also be shared via RIDE's School Improvement Resource Hub.

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

LEAs with significant numbers of schools identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement will be permitted to develop and submit a single improvement plan to the SEA if it fulfills the minimum requirements

of comprehensive support and improvement plans. This plan may strategically direct resources for school improvement across the LEA and within specific schools as necessary and appropriate to best support the LEAs school improvement efforts.

Further, LEAs with a significant number of schools identified as in need of comprehensive support and improvement that choose to pursue a School Redesign effort for more than one school may choose to pursue one School Redesign effort inclusive of multiple schools. The above provisions are also applicable to School Redesign efforts initiated by RIDE if the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education elects to take additional state determined action pursuant to RIGL § 16-7.1-5.

5. **Disproportionate Rates of Access to Educators** (*ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(B)):* Describe how low-income and minority children enrolled in schools assisted under Title I, Part A are not served at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers, and the measures the SEA agency will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the State educational agency with respect to such description.[4]

The Rhode Island Equitable Access Planning process provided an opportunity to assess the current status of Rhode Island schools related to disproportionate access. The root cause analysis that was conducted during the development of Rhode Island's Equity Plan showed three primary areas to address:

- Highest poverty and highest minority schools are more likely to have inexperienced teachers, support professionals, and leaders compared to the lower poverty/lowest minority schools
- Middle schools have a greater percentage of inexperienced teachers, support professionals, and leaders compared to elementary and high schools.
- Highest poverty and minority schools are more likely to have unqualified and out-of-field teachers and administrators than lowest poverty/lowest minority schools.

Rhode Island is using the following definitions in reviewing equity data:

- **Inexperienced**: Any teacher who has zero to three years of prior working experience in a public school.
- **Out of Field**: Any teacher who does not hold the appropriate Initial, Professional, or Advanced Certificate for his/her assignment.
- **Ineffective**: Any teacher who is not performing at a consistently high level as evidenced by a Final Effectiveness Rating of Ineffective within the last three years.
- **Chronically Absent Teacher**: Any teacher who is absent more than ten percent of the school year.

[4] Consistent with ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(B), this description should not be construed as requiring a State to develop or implement a teacher, principal or other school leader evaluation system.

Root causes identified by stakeholders fell into four areas:

- Educator preparation and identification;
- Teacher and leader support;
- Recruitment, hiring, assignment, and compensation; and
- Teaching and learning conditions.

Another issue that has arisen during stakeholder review of root cause data is the idea that these systems are currently managed by different funding streams, and can be difficult to address in a strategic way. During ESSA's stakeholder engagement process, each of these causes was revisited and confirmed. The following list shows original key root causes by category:

Educator Preparation and Certification	• Lack of preparation to work in high poverty and high minority schools • Confusing certificate requirements • Lack of a diverse cohort of educators
Teacher and Leader Supports	• Insufficient professional learning, induction, and coaching
Recruitment, Hiring, Assignment, and Compensation	• Ineffective recruitment, hiring, and staff management practices • Unfavorable perceptions of high poverty and high minority schools • Limited career paths and opportunities • Lack of competitive compensation
Teaching and Learning Conditions	• Poor teaching and learning conditions and insufficient resources

RIDE is in the process of developing a common framework for a talent management system to guide SEA and LEA work that addresses these identified focus areas within one coherent system. RIDE is also identifying key issues related to support at high poverty, high minority schools to ensure long-term equitable access. Rhode Island's talent management system will engage all levels of the educational system to attract, prepare, recruit, develop, and retain teachers and leaders, with focused support at high-poverty, high-need schools and LEAs.

Examples of planned work in this area include:

- **Attract**: Enhance current systems to ensure educators have clear information about obtaining a teaching credential, including multiple pathways that support entry into the field.

- **Prepare**: Work with institutions of higher education to develop new models for teacher preparation that deepen field experiences prior to entry into the profession.
- **Recruit**: Disseminate guidance about best practices in teacher recruitment and hiring.
- **Develop**: Support and extend opportunities for site-based teacher induction programs, and develop policies to enhance site-based professional learning for teachers.
- **Retain**: Develop programs and supports to establish career pathways for teachers and leaders.

Rhode Island is committed to address equity issues, and plans to report on key equity plan indicators in the school, LEA, and state report cards. Aligned data and reporting will support feedback loops to inform RIDE and LEA leaders to identify and resolve areas of need including teacher/student assignments. Additionally, RIDE will coordinate to ensure talent management strategies are integrated as part of our overall school improvement strategy with LEAs. Other examples of related initiatives can be found in our Companion Guide to this ESSA State Plan.

6. **School Conditions** (*ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(C)):* Describe how the SEA agency will support LEAs receiving assistance under Title I, Part A to improve school conditions for student learning, including through reducing: (i) incidences of bullying and harassment; (ii) the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom; and (iii) the use of aversive behavioral interventions that compromise student health and safety.

Rhode Island has adopted many approaches over the years to address the non-academic conditions in schools that contribute to a safe and nurturing environment for students. The foundation for this work has been the Rhode Island Basic Education Plan (BEP), which was adopted in 2009. The BEP includes a specific chapter (Chapter 14: Safe, Healthy and Supportive Learning Environment) devoted to the creation and practice of supporting safe learning environments for students. The activities of RIDE in this arena have been driven by the BEP.

Additionally, Rhode Island's 2015-20 Strategic Plan for Public Education reinforces the commitments of the BEP. In the area of Social and Emotional Learning and Wellness, the Strategic Plan described the following outcomes:

> *Rhode Island graduates possess the social and emotional skills necessary to persevere through challenging circumstances, to work in partnership with others, and to develop a growth mindset. Increase the percentage of students and families who describe their school and their educators as welcoming and culturally respectful.*

With the BEP and the Strategic Plan as guideposts, Rhode Island is implementing several strategies to address health and safety:

- RIDE is currently in the process of developing standards for social emotional learning (SEL). Rhode Island has joined the Collaborative States Initiative of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) to support the development and implementation of these standards. A portion of two state agency salaries is used to support the internal

organization of this work in developing SEL standards or grade level expectations. Rhode Island LEAs and schools will be able to use the new expectations to align and organize programs to reduce incidences of bullying and harassment, and reduce the need for and use of all discipline practices, including those that remove students from class and those that compromise student health and safety.

- Since the initiation of the SEL initiative, nearly 300 professionals committed to improving conditions in schools for the emergence of SEL, to share best practices, and to shape resources to improve school climate. The SEL Community of Practice meets three times annually, to share emerging practices and support strategies to reduce incidences of bullying and harassment while expanding the comprehensive practices of SEL.
- RIDE has developed a resource for schools to reduce the need for disciplinary actions including suspension.
- RIDE has developed a number of data opportunities to track improvements in school climate through statewide data repositories. RIDE has built an out-of-school suspension Advanced Reports function, which allows users to compare schools on multiple related measures including: the types of infractions that resulted in suspensions; the type of disciplinary response (in-school or out-of-school suspensions); the relationship between the number of students enrolled and the number of suspensions; and rates of suspensions (per 100 students) by race. More information on the Advanced Reports may be found at on the InfoWorks site.
- In the 2016-17 school year, RIDE relaunched SurveyWorks, the state's learning environment survey. The new learning environment survey is administered in a more family-friendly manner allowing students, parents, and educators to access the survey via electronic means, including completing the survey on mobile devices. This has led to a substantial increase in participation rates. The results of the 2016-17 SurveyWorks surveys were released on May 18, 2017. RIDE has built tools into the SurveyWorks results platform to assist schools and communities in analyzing the data for a number of school safety and climate indicators. Interactive reports may be viewed on the SurveyWorks platform.
- RIDE continues to support the adoption of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) in schools as a methodology for addressing both the academic and social/emotional needs of students. In 2012, RIDE embarked on an effort to better integrate the practices of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and Response to Intervention (RTI) into a unified system where schools utilize academic and behavioral data to inform Data Based Individualization (DBI) practices in schools. Through multiple projects and affiliations, RIDE has substantially increased the capacity and commitment of schools in the state that are adopting school-wide practices using the DBI model. This practice not only affects careful analysis of academic measures, but includes the DBI practices applied to social and emotional performance as well.
- Additional policies that have helped RIDE address issues of bullying and harassment include the statewide bullying policy which was adopted in 2012. Through this policy and accompanying tools, Rhode Island is developing a consistent and unified approach to supporting all Rhode Island schools in reducing bullying, which impairs student health and impedes learning. The Rhode Island Bullying Policy may be viewed on RIDE's Bullying and School Violence webpage.
- In June 2016, RIDE released *Guidance for Rhode Island Schools on Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students - Creating Safe and Supportive School Environments* in an effort to support students and reinforce Rhode Island's commitment to ensure safe and supportive learning environments for all youth.

- RIDE has a state policy on the use of Physical Restraint and has developed tools for schools to use to limit the use of physical restraint. The policy and tools may be viewed on RIDE's Limiting Physical Restraint webpage.

RIDE continues to support LEAs through the timely update of these policies and the provision of tools and resources to increase student safety.

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

RIDE has created the regulation and policy framework, as well as associated guidance and resources, so that LEAs are encouraged to support students through school transitions. Transitions occur at naturally occurring milestones, such as pre-K to K, elementary school to junior high or middle school, middle grades to high school, and high school to post-graduate opportunities (e.g., employment, postsecondary study, military). RIDE will work with its LEAs to ensure that there are protocols, communications, and supports for students and their families as they reach each milestone.

Some students experience unexpected transitions based on life circumstances. A Memorandum of Agreement between RIDE and the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) serves as a foundational document in support of these transitions. This agreement preserves a student's rights to remain in their school of origin, unless this is not in the best interest of the child, should the student be in state care through the foster care system or otherwise (see Exhibit A at the end of this document). RIDE and DCYF have committed to address all of the foster care requirements for school stability in ESSA and to review all current state laws and regulations for consistency with the requirements in ESSA. Areas of review include: transportation, identification and coordination with the LEA point of contact, best interest determination protocols, students opportunity to access to all school programs and services, coordination with support programs for students including the surrogate parent program, data sharing agreements, and funding issues.

To increase the retention rates and decrease the risk of students dropping out, Rhode Island has implemented an Early Warning System. This involves looking at school-wide and individual indicators from grade six through grade twelve. Parents are notified when a student is off track, and individual and small group supports are put in place to support each student's progress towards graduation.

Accompanying the Early Warning System is an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for every student in grades six through twelve. This serves as the cornerstone and driving force for personalization as a meaningful and intentional facilitator and connector of academic study and career exploration throughout a student's middle and high school experience. The ILP is a student directed planning and monitoring tool that customizes learning opportunities throughout the secondary school experience, broadens student perspectives, and supports attainment of goals. The ILP documents students' interests, needs, and supports; course selections;

transition placements; and in- and out-of-school learning experiences to address the three domains included in regulation: Academic, Career, and Social/Personal Planning. As a central repository of student goals and supports, the ILP supports changes in instructional placements and key transitions including middle level to high school and high school to post-secondary placement. The ILP can also support continuity for highly transient students – including students in foster care, homeless students, and students in the juvenile justice system. The ILP process engages all students in a way that advances goal setting, decision-making, and self-advocacy skills that support their lifelong learning. This process promotes responsibility and accountability for student learning that contribute to a thoughtful path toward college and career readiness for every student.

These two strategies sit inside the full support system supporting school transitions in Rhode Island. A full description is in the Secondary School Regulations Reference Guide. RIDE will be providing guidance for school counselors and student support personnel to implement the ILP and Early Warning Systems, and to use these tools to support student transitions in their schools.

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

1. **Supporting Needs of Migratory Children** *(ESEA section 1304(b)(1))*: Describe how, in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs and projects assisted under Title I, Part C, the State and its local operating agencies will ensure that the unique educational needs of migratory children, including preschool migratory children and migratory children who have dropped out of school, are identified and addressed through:
   i. The full range of services that are available for migratory children from appropriate local, State, and Federal educational programs;
   ii. Joint planning among local, State, and Federal educational programs serving migratory children, including language instruction educational programs under Title III, Part A;
   iii. The integration of services available under Title I, Part C with services provided by those other programs; and
   iv. Measurable program objectives and outcomes.

   Rhode Island has not participated in this program since 2004 and the state continues to experience very low numbers of migrant students. There were less than ten students reported as migrant for the past three years. This conclusion is confirmed utilizing RIDE data and recent reports from the Rhode Island Department of Labor & Training, which reports low numbers of migrant workers and migrant workers with families entering the state. As such, Rhode Island will not be participating in Title I, Part C.

2. **Promote Coordination of Services** (*ESEA section 1304(b)(3)*): Describe how the State will use Title I, Part C funds received under this part to promote interstate and intrastate coordination of services for migratory children, including how the State will provide for educational continuity through the timely transfer of pertinent school records, including information on health, when children move from one school to another, whether or not such move occurs during the regular school year.

   Not Applicable

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

   Not Applicable

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

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

   Rhode Island's administration of Title I, Part D, Subpart I supports state agencies that are responsible for providing free public education for children and youth in institutions for neglected or delinquent children and youth, attending community day programs for neglected or delinquent children and youth; or in adult correctional institutions. Rhode Island uses Title I, Part D funds to design programs that: (1) improve educational services so these students have the opportunity to meet challenging State academic content and achievement standards; (2) provide them with services to successfully transition from institutionalization to further schooling or employment; and (3) prevent at-risk youth from dropping out of school. Title I, Part D programs also are used to provide dropouts and children and youth returning from correctional facilities a support system to ensure their continued education.

   The state of Rhode Island has four correctional facilities: two juvenile corrections facilities and one juvenile detention facility that are run through the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), and one adult corrections facility that is run by the Rhode Island Department of Corrections. Rhode Island law requires that the state's juvenile justice facilities have procedures in place to ensure that students are transitioned effectively into the juvenile justice system, and, that plans are in place as students exit the juvenile justice facility and return to their LEA. ESSA requirements reinforce the current practices of Rhode Island's juvenile corrections facilities.

   Juvenile Corrections
   Students who are placed in the juvenile justice system are given opportunities to earn high school credits through the educational programs of the DCYF. At least fifteen percent of funding for these programs is used to support transition and re-entry into high school or the successful re-entry of youth offenders who are aged 20 or under and have received a regular high school diploma or its equivalent.

   Students attending the state's juvenile corrections facilities are generally still enrolled in a school at the time of incarceration. For these students, the procedure is for the LEA to send records to the juvenile facility, and for students to do coursework that aligns with their current educational goals.

   At the Rhode Island Training School, according to the 2015-16 Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR) data, the average length of stay was 120 days. The average length of stay for the juvenile detention center was eleven days. Therefore, it is a shared responsibility between the sending LEA and the juvenile corrections facility to ensure that the student stays on track with

their educational program. This typically begins with a review of the student's Individual Learning Plan (a required element of secondary programs in Rhode Island that support development of current and future student academic, career, and personal/social goals) by the Rhode Island Training School and school counselors from the student's school of origin. Topics addressed in the initial planning consider timely enrollment, participation in credit-bearing coursework, and ensuring that students are on a path to high school graduation. Exit planning takes place between the school of origin and the correctional facility to ensure immediate re-enrollment and appropriate course placement.

To improve program options at the juvenile justice facilities, this year RIDE made available the "Advanced Course Network" to students attending the Rhode Island Training School, the state's largest juvenile justice facility. This network allows students to begin courses while incarcerated, and continue those courses once they are back in their school of origin, thus ensuring continuation of high-quality academic coursework, and improved chances at earning high school credit during transition.

Adult Corrections

The adult correction facility is not directly connected to the LEAs in the same manner as the juvenile corrections system. Students who are placed in the adult correctional system are given opportunities to earn their ABE and GED credits through the educational programs of the DOC. At least fifteen percent of funding for these programs is used to support transition and the successful re-entry of youth offenders who are aged 20 or under and have received a regular high school diploma or its equivalent. Those students who are of school age generally have dropped-out of their LEA of origin and have had no connection with a school for a period of time prior to incarceration. To support academic development, the adult correctional facility provides adult education and coursework towards obtaining a General Equivalency Diploma. Transition plans include placement into community-based GED programs upon release.

The State has implemented a range of strategies to reduce the number of youth incarcerated in Rhode Island. Enrollment at State agency facilities has decreased significantly over the past decade: from 1,882 in 2008 to 298 in 2015. Since fewer students are entering state correctional facilities, Rhode Island believes that ensuring the educational attainment of youth is more feasible through personalization strategies, including the frequent review of the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP). The ILP process provides meaningful opportunity to develop informed transition goals by reviewing assessments and activities in which students have participated in over the years that contribute to their current goals and necessary supports.

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

Title I, Part D program data is collected through the annual Consolidated State Performance Report. Data is returned to the corresponding juvenile justice facilities each spring, at which time RIDE meets with the staff from the Department of Children,

Youth, and Families (DCYF) and the Department of Corrections (DOC) to review the data and set annual benchmarks aligned with the needs of students currently enrolled. A meeting takes place each fall to provide technical assistance with data reporting. These twice-annual visits with the DCYF and DOC provide ongoing communication between RIDE and the State agency facilities.

RIDE intends to analyze reports of the progress of students affiliated with juvenile justice system as part of the State Report Card. As the number of students enrolled in the juvenile justice centers from one particular school or LEA is typically less than the reportable n-size, LEAs have not been able to review data on this population in a systemic manner. RIDE hopes to address the low n-size reporting challenge by collecting and reporting educational outcomes for children involved in the juvenile justice system at the state level through multi-level reporting mechanisms.

Although RIDE's focus is on student progress and achievement, the agency continues to provide annual monitoring for compliance with state and federal education laws and regulations. Annual data collection includes vocational outcomes, the number of students who have completed high school or earned a high school diploma, a description of the transition plan, the number of students with a transition plan, and the number of students who receive their GED or credits earned toward GED. In addition to annual desktop monitoring, RIDE conducts onsite visits with each State agency to review State agency plans once every three to five years. Meetings take place with DCYF and DOC each fall and spring to review program data and set annual benchmarks, and to offer technical assistance to meet program goals.

D. Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction

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

   Rhode Island will continue to use Title II, Part A funds to support academic content specialists at the state level. These RIDE staff members will work to improve student achievement by training teachers throughout the state on challenging academic standards in ELA, Math, and Science, including alignment of standards to instruction and improved instructional and assessment strategies to support students to learn challenging academic content. RIDE will also fund one education specialist (25%) for Educator Excellence whose role is to administer Title II programs and fund distribution to LEAs.

   Rhode Island will improve student achievement through several strategies, including developing, with educators, a common understanding of guaranteed and viable curriculum which will be consistent throughout the state but still allow for local flexibility. RIDE specialists will support educators in the development of curriculum aligned to standards through the construction, delivery, and use of curriculum toolkits. The toolkits will prepare teachers to review their current curricula and ensure alignment to standards and rigorous instruction. The toolkits will be offered as part of a continuous improvement process that schools and LEAs can use independently. Further, these staff members will lead work to produce a material review rubric that considers all the elements of high quality curricular materials and will develop plans to support professional learning on this rubric. A teaching and learning website will be created providing a collection of "trusted reviews" related to curricula support materials, which will make available a number of vetted resources for selection by teachers based on need. Intentional design connections will be made between school transformation strategies and the efforts to ensure high quality curriculum is implemented in every school.

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

   Rhode Island is addressing issues of equity through the strategies identified in the Title I (question 5) section, but RIDE is not using Title II, Part A funds to improve equitable access to effective teachers. However, RIDE completed a plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Effective Educators. The Rhode Island Equitable Access plan is currently being implemented and is designed to support improved talent management and policies through targeted supports for the state's highest poverty and highest minority schools; enhanced data collection and reporting practices to improve LEA-level decision-making; and the development of cross-LEA collaboration to improve recruitment and retention of qualified educators.

   Through ESSA stakeholder engagement, RIDE revisited priorities in the Equitable Access plan based on an updated analysis of the original root causes identified in the plan and the associated strategies. Based on this input, RIDE has prioritized a series of

strategies for the coming years to be funded at the state level as part of our overall talent management strategy. RIDE will include educator data regarding effectiveness, licensure, absenteeism, and other available data in its state, LEA, and school report cards.

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

Title II, Part A partially funds (25%) a staff positon serving as a certification specialist in the area of Educator Excellence. Among the responsibilities of the office of Educator Excellence is the maintenance of a system of certification and licensing. RIDE's process for prospective educators is designed to ensure that capable candidates who are attracted to teaching and leading in Rhode Island are able to successfully navigate the certification and licensure process.

Rhode Island's system of certification and licensing involves program approval of ten educator preparation programs, including nine traditional institutions of higher education models and one alternative preparation model. Between 2013 and 2016, programs graduated between 643 and 689 students per year, of which between 67% and 75% were certified to teach in Rhode Island, respectively.

Rhode Island expects that every educator who completes a Rhode Island educator preparation program will demonstrate a positive impact on Pre-K through grade twelve student learning, will be ready to succeed as teachers in Rhode Island schools, and will serve as leaders in the profession. These goals align with the Standards for Educator Preparation, adopted by RIDE in 2013, and provide the basis of the performance review process for all Rhode Island teacher preparation programs, entitled PREP-RI (see item 6 below for details).

Rhode Island also supports alternative pathways for certification, designed to support ease of entry into the profession for returning educators whose licenses have expired, reciprocity for educators with current out-of-state teaching certificates, and alternate routes designed to support high-need certification areas. RIDE collaborates with institutions of higher education to provide a credential review, for those ineligible for any of the certifications listed below, for those already certified in Rhode Island but who may want to add a certification area, and for those who possess substantial qualifications and/or experience to serve as an educator in Rhode Island.

RIDE has created a variety of certificates to support multiple pathways into the profession. The Temporary Initial Certificate is designed for individuals who are certified in other states but who have not met Rhode Island's assessment requirements for teachers. Teachers with Temporary Initial Certificates are able to work in Rhode Island's schools for one year, while they work to meet all of Rhode Island's assessment requirements for their particular area. Individuals who are enrolled in alternative preparation programs work in Rhode Island schools using an Alternate Route Certificate while they complete their program for full certification. Individuals who have particular content expertise, and can pass assessments related to that content without specific teacher training may be eligible for the Expert Residency Certificate, which allows them to teach in Rhode Island schools

while they complete teacher training. A Visiting Lecturer Certificate allows individuals from industry and specialized professions to work alongside expert educators to enhance learning experiences for students in particular fields.

In Career and Technical Education (CTE), the structure is different. The requirement for all teachers to obtain a bachelor's degree can be waived for a CTE Preliminary Certificate, which allows those with five years of recognized experience in the industry to serve in schools while pursuing a degree and teacher preparation. Rhode Island will also seek opportunities to support alternative certification preparation programs as a strategy to increase preparation opportunities for CTE teachers.

Rhode Island's path to full certification works on a tiered structure. Individuals start a career in Rhode Island with an Initial Certificate. After three years of successful teaching (based on evaluation results) individuals progress to a five year Professional Certificate. That certificate is renewable based on satisfactory evaluation results. Individuals who are performing consistently at the highest level are eligible for the seven year Advanced Certificate. A commitment to professional learning will also be recognized in the certification process, as participation in high-quality professional learning will be an expectation for certification renewal in the future.

Regarding certification for school and LEA leaders, RIDE is working with a multi-stakeholder advisory group to develop new leadership standards and competencies. Working with business leaders, preparation programs, educational leaders, and the Partnership for Rhode Island, the advisory group seeks to ensure a sustained approach to attract, develop, support, and grow educational leaders. The current design considerations include intensive supports to sitting principals, executive training for superintendents and RIDE leaders, identification and preparation of leadership coaches, and the advice and engagement of a statewide Leadership Advisory Group.

RIDE intends to use a portion of the additional three percent state set-aside allowable for professional development for principals/other school leaders for work related to instructional leadership. Planning is underway to build the capacity of school leaders by providing leadership coaching and support. Funding will be phased in at one percent in FY 2018, two percent in FY 2019, and three percent in FY 2020.

With this funding, RIDE will coordinate a series of leadership initiatives, including:

- The Rhode Island Partnership, a public-private partnership to develop the competencies necessary for educational leadership according to leadership role: central office, building level, or teacher leadership;
- A cadre of leadership facilitators will provide professional learning and guide school and LEA leaders through extended learning opportunities; and
- A vision supporting sustained, shared leadership and toolkits to support LEA development of shared leadership structures.

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

One way RIDE supports improving the skills of teachers is through the educator preparation program approval phase to ensure that new teachers have the training they need to support the students described. One of the Educator Preparation Standards, 1.6, addresses the need for educators to demonstrate cultural competence and culturally responsive skills that assure they can be effective with a diverse student population, parents, and the community. Further, Standard 1.1 encompasses the Rhode Island Professional Teaching Standards which describe the competencies necessary to serve the described students at a high level. See item three above for more on how these standards are used by RIDE staff to approve programs.

RIDE further supports improving the skills of educators by providing content-specific support for pedagogy through the aforementioned three content specialists. In the design of training and support, providing instruction for students with specific learning needs, English learners, students who are gifted and talented, and students with low literacy levels is prioritized.

All LEAs in Rhode Island have adopted a rubric defining effectiveness in teaching (Appendices 3 and 4 of the Rhode Island Model Evaluation and Support System Guidebook - Teacher). In each rubric, a description of serving the described students is included. Educators are evaluated based on their capacity to support students with their individual learning needs, particularly children with disabilities, English learners, and students with low literacy levels. Professional learning systems are aligned to the data generated by these rubrics. Educators set goals connected to areas identified in the rubrics after receiving feedback about their performance. Further, student learning is a part of the evaluation and goal setting process, and educators are responsible for meeting the needs of all student populations described to ensure student learning. (See additional materials on our Educator Evaluation webpages, including the Educator Evaluation Report.)

Finally, the Office of Student, Community, and Academic Supports contributes to improving the skills of teachers through a multi-year initiative focusing on Multi-Tiered Systems of Support. A new math intervention initiative specifically targeted to students with disabilities in grades 3-5 is also being implemented out of this office as part of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). Additionally, the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform Center (CEEDAR) is working with RIDE, Rhode Island educators, and two preparation programs to design tiered supports for students and align preparation program curriculum to LEA work. All of these initiatives focus on changing adult behavior toward data-based individualization of student intervention and support.

All of these initiatives focus on changing adult behavior toward databased individualization of student intervention and support.

5. **Data and Consultation** *(ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(K))*: Describe how the State will use data and ongoing consultation as described in ESEA section 2102(d)(3) to continually update and improve the activities supported under Title II, Part A.

There is an ongoing feedback loop that includes regular analysis of student achievement measures and educator quality data. The analysis informs the content specialists, funded by Title II, Part A, to determine focus areas for statewide professional development in standards implementation.

Several reports inform issues related to the educator talent pipeline in Rhode Island. Annual reports on shortage certification areas, newly hired educators, and newly certified educators are prepared to enable decisions to focus on areas of critical need. Further, all teacher preparation providers submit program data for an annual index of performance, which includes information about how program completers fare in terms of hiring and evaluation. This data is used to assess program completion, rate of certification of program completers, and number of teachers who ultimately teach in Rhode Island. Long-term data will also be tracked to determine length of time teachers from each program stay in the profession. This data has been used during program review, when appropriate, to provide evidence to support sites in considering next steps towards improvement. Data for the Annual Index comprised of certification, employment, and effectiveness data, is available on RIDE's educator preparation portal.

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

Through the PREP-RI process, RIDE leads an intensive on-site review process aimed to provide feedback, aligned with program standards, to guide improvement in program and provider quality. Based on this evaluation, the review team rates program and provider performance for each component of the Rhode Island Standards for Educator Preparation, designates a program classification, and assigns a provider approval term. To support continuous improvement, the review team also provides specific and actionable recommendations, suggestions, and commendations. PREP-RI reports are available on the RIDE website.

In addition to accountability, preparation programs in Rhode Island participate with RIDE in ongoing improvement based on key emerging topics. These topics include strengthening cultural competency practices for educators, strengthening the use of technology in instruction, and strengthening measurement systems to focus on candidate performance in the field. For example, small competitive grant programs are available to help support faculty in improving instructional technology skills of teacher candidates. RIDE also conducts a modified instructional rounds protocol with institutions of higher education to enable feedback from peers. These sessions are organized around Rhode Island's Educator Preparation Program standards.

RIDE also supports promoting a shift in how evaluation systems are perceived and used. Evaluation systems should help support teachers as they advance through their careers. Changes in certification will incorporate professional learning expectations to further signal the idea that preparation is not a discrete activity, but rather the beginning of a process which continues throughout one's time in the profession.

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

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

Rhode Island has existing practices in place to ensure that incoming students are evaluated for English learner status upon entry into school. Rhode Island's Regulations Governing the Education of English Language Learners, and accompanying state guidance for the identification and enrollment procedures for English learners, outline state law in these areas. The required procedures outlined in the state guidance were developed in consultation with LEAs and community groups from across the state, representing high- and low-incidence LEAs. State guidance outlines the required process that LEAs are to take to evaluate and enroll students whose native language is not English. State guidance requires the use of the Home Language Survey, a process for completing and reviewing the family interview form, a process to review student records to identify potential English learner (EL) needs, and criteria for reviewing the results of the WIDA W-APT (WIDA Access Placement Test) screening tool. Rhode Island also requires that students be screened for native language proficiency when screening tools are available to do so.

The procedures further articulate how to engage parents in discussion during the screening and review process, including a review providing detailed information about program placement for their child. When a student has an IEP, the review process **must** be conducted with representation from both Special Education and English learner personnel.

LEAs in Rhode Island are required to utilize the W-APT to screen the English language proficiency of newly enrolled students identified as potential ELs. This screening tool is aligned to the WIDA Summative English language proficiency standards and the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. It produces a proficiency score that helps schools provide EL students with the most appropriate instruction for their English proficiency level. Scoring criteria for different W-APT testing components are included in the state guidance. State guidance will be revised to recognize the new WIDA screening assessment (the WIDA Screener) that is replacing the W-APT.

The enrollment and placement process must be completed within 20 days of the student's enrollment in the school.

Exit criteria are defined in state guidance, through a memo entitled State-Defined Required English Language Instructional Program Exit Criteria. These criteria were developed by a committee of EL and bilingual education professionals from across Rhode Island in collaboration with the Office for Instruction, Assessment, and Accountability and the Office for Student, Community, and Academic Supports at the Rhode Island Department of Education. There are two required criteria for exit out of an English Language Learner Program:

- Proficient outcomes on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment (currently Composite Literacy Score above 4.5, and Composite Comprehension Score above 5.0)
- Meeting key academic criteria (including teacher recommendations, writing samples, and passing grades in all classes).

Specific exit criteria are also outlined for EL students who have an IEP. Exit criteria will be revised to meet the new WIDA ACCESS scaled scores, which have led to changes in English learner's exiting program status.

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

As a member of the WIDA Consortium, Rhode Island utilizes the ACCESS for ELLs to annually measure the English language proficiency (ELP) of ELs across the state. The ACCESS for ELLs is aligned to the WIDA Summative English Language Proficiency Standards and has been accepted by the United States Department of Education as a valid and reliable assessment of English proficiency. In 2016, WIDA transitioned to a revised assessment to align more closely with the Common Core State Standards, and Rhode Island adopted the revised assessment. Additionally, standard setting was revised and new cut scores will become available in the spring of 2017.

Rhode Island requires that the ELP of all English learners (ELs) be measured annually with the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. Prior to ESSA, Rhode Island's Title III accountability system assessed the ELP of all EL students in grades K through twelve as well as the academic achievement of ELs in grades three through eight and eleven. Rhode Island will maintain this process by embedding ELP into its Title I accountability system. Rhode Island has adopted the WIDA English Language Development Standards and has provided years of training to LEAs in the standards and the "Can Do Descriptors".

Rhode Island will be developing new timelines and measures of English proficiency based on the revised assessment and cut scores. The process for this will be addressed in section A.4.iii.c.1 above. Rhode Island is developing new accountability measures and state goals under ESSA, which are described in the same section above as well.

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

RIDE monitors the performance of English learners in two ways. First, during the annual online performance report process in the fall, RIDE reviews compliance with both state regulations and Title III funding requirements, including the types of direct services for students that are paid for with Title III funds, the plans in place to support family engagement of EL students, private school communications related to Title III, and the types of professional learning that have taken place in each LEA to support the academic achievement of English learners. In addition, RIDE reviews online applications from LEAs on the Consolidated Resource Plan each spring regarding use of Title III funds and private school consultation. Second, onsite monitoring is determined by an examination of the risk characteristics displayed through the performance reports and CRP application. Based on the risk characteristics, RIDE will conduct an onsite review of three to five LEAs per year.

Title III technical assistance takes place through a contract with the WIDA consortium. WIDA provides professional learning units that take place throughout the year. In addition, RIDE convenes a monthly meeting of the state's English learner services directors, at which professional learning takes place. Directors are surveyed each year to identify high-need learning topics. This year, the focus of professional learning is on long-term English learners.

Rhode Island has led additional strategies to develop educator skills in teaching English learners, both support of teachers of English learners as well as for teachers in inclusion classrooms.

- Increased opportunity for teachers to receive English Learner/ Dual Language Certification through a partnership between Title III LEAs, the Rhode Island Foundation, Rhode Island College, and the University of Rhode Island. Sixty teachers received certification at reduced rates, significantly reducing the out-of-pocket costs to teacher, while providing increased opportunity to staff dual language and EL programs.
- RIDE, working with the Northeast Comprehensive Center, developed a five-module course that was made publicly available to all schools and LEAs in Rhode Island. The course is entitled Building Capacity for a Collaborative EL and General Education Model. The course is designed to help schools build capacity for general education teachers to integrate effective EL instruction into their general instruction.
- Rhode Island has adopted and is promoting the use of the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) English Learner Toolkits to assist Rhode Island educators to support English learners in accessing the core curriculum in the general education setting.
- Rhode Island has made a commitment to expanding dual language programs in the state as both a method to create college and career pathways in a multi-lingual and multi-cultural international environment and to embrace the assets of non-native English speakers. Rhode Island has adopted Dual Language Program Standards and has had a number of LEAs establish new dual language programs.
- Rhode Island will establish a State Seal of Biliteracy beginning with the graduating class of 2021. Several LEAs have established local Seal of Biliteracy programs in anticipation of the emerging statewide system. More information is available on RIDE's Dual Language Education webpage.

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

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

   RIDE will utilize the SEA funds received under Title IV(A) to develop and administer an application and award/approval process; review LEA applications for allowable fund uses and innovative practices; monitor the application of the funds with the LEAs; and publicize the innovative LEA practices that emerge from the use of the funds. The number of RIDE FTEs necessary to complete this work is yet to be determined. RIDE anticipates reserving the full five percent allowable amount for the SEA administration of the Title IV(A) program.

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

   RIDE administers all of the federal program formula funds through a Consolidated Resource Plan submitted annually for each LEA. RIDE will build the application for the Title IV(A) funds into this same platform. The funds, once allocated, will be allotted to each eligible LEA who will apply for the use of funds in accordance with the allowable uses under Title IV(A) and the General Provisions of ESSA.

   Recent developments with the FY 2017 Department of Education Appropriations Act may allow SEAs to develop a competitive grant opportunity for the Title IV (a) funds. RIDE will manage this award to LEAs as a formula grant program with clear expectations that the funds will be aligned to State Priorities and the State ESSA Plan, RIDE will reserve at least 95 percent of its Title IV(A) program allocation for subgrants to LEAs and follow the categorical percentage requirements provided in the law or allowable under SEA determination.

   RIDE will use the percentages prescribed by the US ED for the required components of the Title IV(A) program, (i.e. LEAs that receive $30,000 or more must use at least twenty percent of their allocation on activities to support well-rounded educational opportunities, at least twenty percent of their allocation on activities to support safe and healthy students, and some of their allocation on activities to support the effective use of technology). RIDE will share the allowable uses of the Title IV(A) funds illustrated in ESSA and include emerging innovative practices in the state in the allowable list, as illustrated below. A final list of allowable uses of the funds will be provided to the LEAs with the complete application package.

   Activities to support well-rounded educational opportunities, including (but not limited to):

   - College and career guidance and counseling programs
   - College and career preparation and curriculum
   - Music and arts programs

- Career preparation and work-based learning opportunities
- STEM subjects
- Accelerated learning opportunities - including dual-enrollment and AP exam fees
- History, civics, or economics education
- World languages
- Environmental education
- Cross-curricular programs
- Early learning opportunities

Activities to support safe and healthy students, such as (but not limited to):

- Drug abuse and violence prevention programs
- School-based mental health services
- Programs supporting health and active lifestyles
- Programs preventing bullying and harassment
- Social emotional learning and skill building programs
- Mentoring and school counseling
- School drop-out and re-entry programs
- School-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports
- Training for school personnel around student mental health and trauma
- Programs to reduce exclusionary discipline practices (e.g. suspensions)

Activities to support the effective use of technology such as (but not limited to):

- Building the capacity of school personnel to use data to support instruction
- Technological capacity and infrastructure
- Innovative strategies to deliver specialized or rigorous coursework through technology
- Blended learning programs
- Personalized learning strategies
- Professional development for educators in the use of technology in the classroom
- Supporting school-based media specialists

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

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

Providing targeted out-of-school time enrichment opportunities for students in high need communities provides an essential opportunity for disadvantaged youth to meet Rhode Island's challenging academic standards, develop social and emotional skills, and explore and deepen student's interests.

To ensure quality 21st century programming, RIDE has adopted the Rhode Island After-School Quality Standards and Indicators. All 21st CCLC programs are required to be aligned to these standards, which place emphasis on a positive youth development and a whole child approach. These standards promote social and emotional learning, health and safety, positive relationships, family engagement, skill building, and youth voice and choice. Information about the use of the Standards to guide and support program improvement appears below. The administration of the 21st CCLC program resides in the same office at RIDE as the Title I Part A, Title III, Title IV Part A, IDEA, and Comprehensive School Health programs. This provides a high degree of state level coordination of the 21st CCLC program with the other federal and state programs that support positive youth development and the administration of program resources in a unified approach.

State-level Title IV(B) funding supports the implementation of community learning centers throughout the state, the contract for the statewide evaluation, and currently through a contract with the United Way of Rhode Island for quality improvement, technical assistance, and professional development. In addition, Title IV(B) state funds pay for a RIDE staff position to administer and manage the program, and one tenth of an administrative staff position. Awards made under the 21st CCLC program are not less than $50,000 and Rhode Island has not funded a program below this amount in the past.

Rhode Island awards the 21st CCLC grants on a competitive basis. In order to align 21st CCLC programming to state priorities and new federal regulations outlined in ESSA, RIDE conducted a statewide needs assessment to determine future weighting points awarded in the RFP process in late 2016. Based on stakeholder feedback, RIDE developed two new 21st Century competitive priorities. The first, Early Foundations, supports innovative Pre-K through grade three strategies, and aligns with Governor Raimondo's strategic goal of having 75% of third graders reading at grade level by 2025. The second competitive priority, Advanced Learning, aligns with and supports the state's recent revision of the Rhode Island Secondary School Regulations, and promotes the use of innovative strategies to support secondary students with personalized learning opportunities during out-of-school hours. Understanding that state level priorities may change over time, RIDE utilizes the program evaluation process to revisit the priorities periodically.

A new RFP process was developed in 2017 to introduce these two new state priorities, and ensure full compliance with federal criteria under ESSA. While the revised federal requirements were aligned with state expectations, this process offered an

opportunity for Rhode Island to refine proposal language that better reflects the federal language. The following requirements are included as core program elements in Rhode Island:

- Providing opportunities for academic enrichment to help students achieve challenging academic standards.
- Offering access to additional services, programs, and activities that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students.
- Offering families of participating students an opportunity to meaningfully engage with their child(ren)'s education.
- Serving students from high-need, high-poverty schools. Schools must be eligible to be a school-wide Title I school to be eligible for funding. RIDE also gives competitive priority to programs that serve students enrolled in schools identified in the state accountability system for targeted or comprehensive support or identified by the local educational agency to be in need of intervention and support.
- Alignment with the Rhode Island After-School Quality Standards and Indicators.
- An articulated partnership agreement between the LEA, school, or schools of participating students, and the community partner organization.
- A variety of engaging academic and non-academic opportunities to explore possible interests, passions, and careers.

Beyond these required elements, program selection criteria include program need, design, staff quality, program management, evaluation methods, quality improvement, school and partner support, and sustainability. The state gives priority to schools identified as needing support and to schools with a high concentration of low-income families.

In addition to enhancing the program selection process, RIDE added additional assurances, to ensure that the partnership applications are submitted jointly, and are representative of the strategies that organizations will use to align afterschool activities with the students' in-school academic activities.

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

Rhode Island has implemented accountability, monitoring, evaluation, and support structures to enhance outcomes for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC). Full information is available on the Rhode Island 21st CCLC website.

Accountability Measures

- At the national level, accountability for the 21st Century Community Learning Center is based on ten Federal Grant Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Measures.
- All grantees are monitored by RIDE to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements, to ensure that programs are

of high quality, and to identify technical assistance needs. This is done through various mechanisms, as outlined in the Rhode Island 21st CCLC Monitoring and Risk Response Protocol.

- All grantees receive on-site monitoring visits at least once every three years.
- All grantees use data collection systems to track such things as attendance, grades, homework completion, classroom behavior, state assessment scores, etc., and submit data on an annual basis to the federal 21APR reporting system (formerly PPICS).
- All grantees are required to participate in a state-directed monitoring process that assesses grantee and program compliance with state performance expectations and federal requirements, using the Quality Assurance Evidence Binder guidance and checklists.
- All grantees are required to submit an annual plan and a budget in the spring for the upcoming school year, as well as an annual progress report in the summer on the previous school year.

Quality Improvement Measures

- All programs align their programs to meet the Rhode Island After-School Quality Standards and Indicators.
- All programs participate in the Rhode Island Program Quality Assessment (RIPQA) process, a continuous quality improvement process. RIPQA includes nationally validated assessment tools, observations, action planning, and technical assistance. Please see the RIPQA projected schedule.

Technical Assistance and Support through Rhode Island Intermediary Organizations

- Rhode Island's 21st CCLC initiative collaborates and partners with our state's two out-of-school-time intermediary organizations for program improvement efforts.
- United Way of Rhode Island Afterschool Leadership Circle (ALC, formerly RIASPA): advocacy, public engagement, professional development, research, resources.
- Providence After School Alliance (PASA): professional development, technical assistance, research, quality initiatives, advocacy, resources.

Use of Data Systems

All 21st CCLC sites are required to maintain a data system to track program activities, youth participants, program attendance, and other data. This may be the LEA's student information system (e.g. ASPEN, Skyward, etc.) or a third party system (e.g. Youth Services, Cayen, EZReports, etc.). Regardless of the system used, the data must be accessible to RIDE. RIDE matches the data with other records in its Data Warehouse and uses the data for mandated federal reporting (21APR), statewide evaluation, state reporting systems, and sharing with appropriate outside entities (e.g. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT).

Evaluation

A commitment to evaluation at both the state and local levels is central to Rhode Island's 21st Century Community Learning Center initiative. The evaluation process measures changes in student measures including attendance, disciplinary suspensions, and state assessment scores. Program evaluation results guide decisions about professional learning and technical assistance. State level evaluation activities include the analysis of program effectiveness and alignment with continued state level priorities for future 21st CCLC competitions. RIDE uses the evidence of effective programming to promote the expansion of extended school day/year programming in throughout the state and to inform school and LEA level continuous improvement.

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

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

   RIDE does not participate in the SEA administration of the Rural and Low-Income School Program. Eligible LEAs in the state receive their funds directly from the US Department of Education.

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

   Not Applicable

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

Section Context

Research and data, including surveys of homeless and formerly homeless youths, indicate that experiencing homelessness can have significant negative impacts on children academically, socially, and emotionally. Homeless students experience greater school mobility, chronic absenteeism, and gaps in high school graduation rates, compared to their non-homeless peers. Consistent with Rhode Island's commitment to equity for all students, Rhode Island takes meeting this responsibility seriously.

Rhode Island's Regulations for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth require that:*

- *Each homeless child or youth is provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school (e.g., compensatory education, special education, vocational education, English language proficiency instruction, gifted and talented, school meals, transportation, and before- and after-school care programs).*
- *Each LEA adopts policies and practices to ensure that homeless children and youth are not isolated or stigmatized.*
- *A homeless child or youth be given the option of continuation of enrollment in a school s/he attended when permanently housed, or the school in which s/he was last enrolled, or enrollment in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend, whichever is in his/her best interest.*
- *The choice regarding school enrollment be based on the wishes of the parent, legal guardian, natural guardian, or person acting in loco parentis to the child by an emancipated minor on his/her behalf, and with the child or youth's best interest in mind.*

**These regulations will be subject to revision based on changes in ESSA.*

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

   Rhode Island has established protocols for the identification and services for students who experience homelessness, based on the requirements outlined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Homeless children and youth are identified and reported through the statewide educational data system. The Rhode Island Department of Education, in regulation RIGL 16-64-2, has approved the following language to define Homeless Children and Youths:

   > Homeless Children and Youths means children and youths "who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence". This definition includes:
   >
   > 1. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to a lack of alternative

accommodations are abandoned in hospitals.

2. Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
4. Unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian);
5. Migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of the McKinney-Vento Act because they are living in circumstances described in clauses 1-4 above.

Every LEA has a designated staff person to serve as a liaison for homeless students. The Homeless Liaison ensures that homeless students enroll in and have full opportunity to succeed in schools in their LEA and to eliminate barriers to enrollment. According to Rhode Island statute, children and youth in homeless situations are identified by school personnel initially through a needs assessment with additional information that may be gathered through coordination activities with other agencies. The LEA informs the parent(s) or guardian(s) of homeless students of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and provides them with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children. The needs assessment identifies the academic and social emotional needs of children in order to identify and provide necessary supports and services.

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

Rhode Island General Law includes a dispute resolution procedure for prompt resolution of disputes regarding school enrollment. If the chosen LEA does not agree that the parent's choice of an LEA is in the best interests of the homeless child or youth, the LEA shall have the burden of proof to show that the parent's decision is not in the best interest of the child or youth. The State procedure ensures the continuance of a child's education during the review of any dispute, and the Commissioner of Education has authority to issue interim protective orders to ensure that a homeless student is allowed to continue to attend school.

When a dispute arises over any issue related to services or enrollment, including transportation, the LEA must immediately enroll the child or youth in the school in which the parent or guardian seeks enrollment, and immediately provide services, such as transportation, pending a resolution of the dispute by the Commissioner of Education. The LEA must provide to the parent or guardian a written statement of the school placement decision and appeal rights. The LEA must refer the child, youth, parent, or guardian to the LEA liaison, who is required to expeditiously carry out the dispute resolution process by filing an appeal with the Commissioner. Similar protections apply to unaccompanied youth.

3. **Support for School Personnel** *(722(g)(1)(D) of the McKinney-Vento Act)*: Describe programs for school personnel (including the LEA liaisons for homeless children and youth, principals and other school leaders, attendance officers, teachers, enrollment

personnel, and specialized instructional support personnel) to heighten the awareness of such school personnel of the specific needs of homeless children and youth, including runaway and homeless children and youth.

LEA Homeless Liaisons, in addition to supporting homeless students and families in their LEA, have the responsibility to educate their staff and to create a supportive environment where students experiencing homelessness have a high quality education.

To support this work, the Rhode Island Homeless Coordinator works closely with all Liaisons in a variety of ways. The State Homeless Coordinator:

- Leads an annual McKinney-Vento Clinic attended by all LEA Homeless Liaisons, focused on implementing key aspects of McKinney-Vento, and building state networks to support homeless students.
- Notifies LEA Homeless Liaisons of the requirement to train LEA staff, and provides turnkey training materials so that LEA Homeless Liaisons have access to current professional learning resources that they can deliver to their faculty and staff at LEA in-service professional development.
- Provides ongoing technical assistance to Homeless Liaisons via email and phone.
- Collaborates with the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) if there is an immediate need for specific problem-solving or resources
- Monitors the Consolidated Resource Plan (CRP) process for Rhode Island LEAs that receive Targeted Homeless Assistance grants and provides targeted technical assistance based on CRP data findings, when needed
- Participates in and disseminates information from NCHE webinars and other national training opportunities, and encourages LEA Homeless Liaisons to participate in and attend national conferences.

4. **Access to Services** *(722(g)(1)(F) of the McKinney-Vento Act)*: Describe procedures that ensure that:
   i. Homeless children have access to public preschool programs, administered by the SEA or LEA, as provided to other children in the State;
   ii. Homeless youth and youth separated from public schools are identified and accorded equal access to appropriate secondary education and support services, including by identifying and removing barriers that prevent youth described in this clause from receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school, in accordance with State, local, and school policies; and
   iii. Homeless children and youth who meet the relevant eligibility criteria do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs, if such programs are available at the State and local levels.

If a family loses their housing, homeless preschool children attending a state public pre-school receive the same services as are required for K-twelve students. Homeless preschool children also have access to the supports they are entitled to under

McKinney-Vento. RIDE's Homeless Coordinator provides technical assistance to ensure the most effective supports for this population.

The LEA Homeless Liaisons and appropriate school staff are responsible for ensuring that homeless students have equal access to extracurricular activities by assessing and developing a plan to meet the individual needs of each student. Homeless Liaisons collaborate with other federally funded programs, such as 21st Century Community Learning Centers and Title I, as well as other local extracurricular and academic-support programs, to enroll homeless students and ensure transportation, uniforms, registrations, or other necessary requirements to participate in these programs. School nutrition programs are available for homeless students, as they are eligible for free meals. Some schools have food pantry locations and ensure homeless families have access to food within and beyond the school day.

The Homeless Liaisons work closely with LEA and school staff to make sure secondary school students experiencing homelessness have equal access to education and support services. Liaisons support each student to meet their individual needs, and work closely with both the student and his/her family to ensure there are no barriers to full participation in school, credit accrual, or graduation. LEAs are responsible for ensuring that LEA and school policies address McKinney-Vento regulations. RIDE will be revising the Consolidated Reporting for Targeted Assistance Schools to more closely review these policies. There are currently three assurances in the Consolidated Resource Plan related to McKinney-Vento, and these are in the process of being revised to address policy review.

5. **Strategies to Address Other Problems** *(722(g)(1)(H) of the McKinney-Vento Act)*: Provide strategies to address other problems with respect to the education of homeless children and youth, including problems resulting from enrollment delays that are caused by—
   i. requirements of immunization and other required health records;
   ii. residency requirements;
   iii. lack of birth certificates, school records, or other documentation;
   iv. guardianship issues; or
   v. uniform or dress code requirements.

   Rhode Island regulations require that homeless students are enrolled immediately. Upon enrollment, the Homeless Liaison will coordinate with other LEA or school staff (counselor, social worker) to work with the family to obtain all necessary enrollment documents. When required documents are not obtained, they can work with the State Homeless Coordinator for technical assistance or to resolve the problem.

6. **Policies to Remove Barriers** (*722(g)(1)(I) of the McKinney-Vento Act)*: Demonstrate that the SEA and LEAs in the State have developed, and shall review and revise, policies to remove barriers to the identification of homeless children and youth, and the

enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth in schools in the State, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences.

The Rhode Island State Regulations outline the related activities of the State Homeless Coordinator, which involve a range of activities focused on ensuring that the state is addressing and removing barriers to students who experience homelessness. The State Homeless Coordinator supports Homeless Liaisons to monitor local policies that may create barriers to school enrollment of homeless children and youths. LEAs communicate with the Homeless Coordinator to identify impediments by local authority. Any barriers to enrollment or retention of children and youths are discussed with homeless service providers and children, youths, and families experiencing homelessness. As a result, policy revisions and remedial measures may be introduced to correct deficiencies or limitations in existing policies and procedures, and this is done on an ongoing basis. Policy review takes place during the Consolidated Resource Plan (CRP) process with the state's larger LEAs that receive Targeted Assistance Funding.

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

Homeless students are provided with equal access to college and career counseling, assistance in completing FASFA applications, and verification of their homelessness. Recently revised Rhode Island Secondary School Regulations provide options that support transition to post-secondary education. As a requirement in the state's secondary school regulations, students are required to have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), which documents their interests, skills, and abilities. These plans support students to explore career options and post-secondary planning, and as they travel with the student, they also provide a way for students to communicate and engage with school personnel about their current and future needs. Additionally, the ILP may serve as a communication tool for students to receive credit or partial credit for coursework while transitioning and engaging students in extracurricular activities, career and technical education, and similar preparations activities. The State Homeless Coordinator actively participates in several statewide organizations to address issues of homelessness and homeless youth. These organizations support and advocate for their networks to provide resources, such as counseling, to meet the needs of homeless youth. In larger communities in the state, the Homeless Liaisons work with dropout prevention counselors to support student ongoing engagement in school.

Appendix A: Measurements of interim progress

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

A. Academic Achievement

All Grades (3-8 and high school)	Baseline		English language arts												
	#	%	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	**2025**	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
All Students	80079	38	45	51	56	61	65	69	72	**75**	75+	75+	75+	75+	75+
American Indian or Alaska Native	507	23	31	38	45	51	56	61	65	**69**	72	75	75+	75+	75+
Asian	2455	48	54	59	63	67	71	74	77	**79**	75+	75+	75+	75+	75+
Black or African American	6472	22	31	38	45	51	56	61	65	**69**	72	75	75+	75+	75+
Hispanic or Latino	19280	22	31	38	45	51	56	61	65	**69**	72	75	75+	75+	75+
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	191	35	42	48	53	58	63	67	70	**74**	75+	75+	75+	75+	75+
White	48257	47	53	58	62	66	70	73	76	**79**	75+	75+	75+	75+	75+

Two or More races	2914	33	40	46	52	57	62	66	70	**73**	75+	75+	75+	75+	75+
Students with Disabilities	12948	11	21	29	37	43	50	55	60	**64**	68	71	74	75+	75+
English Learner	6837	12	22	30	38	44	50	56	60	**65**	68	72	75	75+	75+
Economically Disadvantaged	38832	23	32	39	45	51	56	61	65	**69**	72	75	75+	75+	75+

All Grades (3-8 and high school)	BASELINE		Mathematics												
	#	%	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	**2025**	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
All Students	68398	31	39	46	53	58	63	68	72	**75**	75+	75+	75+	75+	75+
American Indian or Alaska Native	431	13	24	33	41	48	54	60	65	**69**	73	75+	75+	75+	75+
Asian	2156	44	51	57	62	66	70	74	77	**80**	75+	75+	75+	75+	75+
Black or African American	5722	16	26	35	42	49	55	61	65	**70**	73	75+	75+	75+	75+
Hispanic or Latino	17180	16	26	35	43	50	56	61	66	**70**	74	75+	75+	75+	75+
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	189	24	33	41	48	55	60	65	69	**73**	75+	75+	75+	75+	75+
White	40182	39	46	53	58	63	68	72	75	**78**	75+	75+	75+	75+	75+

Two or More races	2535	27	36	44	51	56	62	66	70	**74**	75+	75+	75+	75+	75+
Students with Disabilities	11270	12	22	32	40	47	54	59	64	**68**	72	75	75+	75+	75+
English Learner	6818	12	23	32	40	47	54	59	64	**68**	72	75	75+	75+	75+
Economically Disadvantaged	34213	18	28	36	44	51	57	62	66	**70**	74	75+	75+	75+	75+

B. Graduation Rates

	BASELINE		Graduation Rate Long-term Goals & Measures of Interim Progress													
	#	**Baseline**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**	**2031**
All Students	10784	86	87	89	90	92	93	94	94	**95**	95+	95+	95+	95+	95+	95+
American Indian or Alaska Native	85	72	76	79	82	84	86	88	89	**91**	92	93	94	94	95	95+
Asian	310	91	92	93	94	95	96	96	97	**97**	95+	95+	95+	95+	95+	95+
Black or African American	936	81	84	86	87	89	90	92	93	**94**	94	95+	95+	95+	95+	95+
Hispanic or Latino	2390	79	82	84	86	88	89	91	92	**93**	94	95+	95+	95+	95+	95+
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	20	80	82	84	86	88	90	91	92	**93**	94	95+	95+	95+	95+	95+
White	6779	88	90	91	92	93	94	95	95	**96**	95+	95+	95+	95+	95+	95+

Two or More races	264	79	82	84	86	88	89	91	92	**93**	94	95+	95+	95+	95+	95+
Students with Disabilities	1676	67	72	75	78	81	83	85	87	**89**	90	91	93	93	94	95
English Learner	734	79	81	84	86	88	89	90	92	**93**	94	94	95	95+	95+	95+
Economically Disadvantaged	5700	79	81	84	86	88	89	90	92	**93**	94	94	95	95+	95+	95+

C. Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency

	BASELINE 2017		English Language Proficiency Long-term Goals & Measures of Interim Progress							
	#	%	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
English Learners	7586	42	46	49	52	55	58	61	64	67

Appendix B

OMB Control No. 1894-0005 (Exp. 03/31/2017)

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

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

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

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

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

What Does This Provision Require?

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

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

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

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

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

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

(3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

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

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

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005

Exhibit A:

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES REGARDING STUDENTS IN STATE CARE

See the following pages.

Memorandum of Agreement
Implementing the School Stability Provisions of ESSA

Memorandum of Agreement between
the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) and
the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE)
regarding implementation of the School Stability provisions of federal law

WHEREAS, ensuring school stability and academic success for students in foster care is an important joint responsibility of state and local education agencies and the state child welfare agency and;

WHEREAS, on October 7, 2008, the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, (Fostering Connections Act) went into effect and required states to ensure that child welfare and education agencies collaborate to guarantee school stability and school attendance for all children in foster care

WHEREAS, the Fostering Connections Act specifically required that a child's foster care case plan include assurances that a child remains in his current school or, if this is not in the child's best interest, that the child is immediately and appropriately enrolled in a new school with all school records;

WHEREAS, on December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law;

WHEREAS, ESSA aligns with the Fostering Connections Act to clarify the obligations of state and local education agencies, in collaboration with child welfare agencies, to ensure school stability with necessary transportation and immediate school enrollment in a new school when in a child's best interest;

WHEREAS, as of the signing of this document the RI Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) prepared a guidance document: *Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care* with feedback from The RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) to clarify obligations arising under ESSA in order to aid DCYF, RIDE, and the Local Education Agencies (LEA) in effectively implementing the education stability provisions of federal law.

THEREFORE, the undersigned the above named parties do hereby agree to the following:

1) DCYF shall revise its policies and protocols to meet the requirements of ESSA, emphasizing collaboration with the school of origin on making a best interest determination and ensuring that supports are in place to maintain school stability.

2) DCYF shall designate a point of contact for ESSA implementation.

3) RIDE shall create and publish guidance documents for the local education agencies that support the continued enrollment of children placed in foster care within his or her school of origin.

4) RIDE shall develop a statewide data collection and reporting plan on student achievement and graduation rates for children in foster care.

5) RIDE shall designate a point of contact for ESSA implementation and ensure that each local education agency has a point of contact for ESSA purposes.

6) DCYF and RIDE shall work collaboratively to ensure a child's continued enrollment within his or her school of origin unless the DCYF or the court determines, consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, that it is not in the best interest of the child to attend school in his or her school of origin. If such a determination is made, DCYF will consult with the school of origin prior to making the decision to move the child; will represent to the court the school of origin's perspective on the child's best interest; and will provide notice to the school of origin prior to moving the student to a new school location.

7) RIDE and DCYF shall develop transportation protocols to help support students in foster care remaining in his or her school of origin if it is in the child's best interest. The transportation protocols shall include:

   a. A model procedure for local education agencies to utilize for purpose of making and documenting transportation decisions and arrangements for children in foster care;

   b. Collaboration by and between local education agencies and DCYF in facilitating a plan to provide, arrange and fund transportation for children in state care.

8) RIDE and DCYF will work with Charter Schools to eliminate barriers to the enrollment of children in foster care.

9) RIDE and DCYF will convene a stakeholder work group to review existing State laws and regulations relating to school residency and funding for children in State care and to develop proposed statutory and regulatory language to ensure state statutes and regulations align with the school stability provisions of ESSA and Fostering Connections.

Agreed to in principal and substance:

Ken Wagner

Commissioner R.I. Department of Education

Date: 7/27/17

Trista Piccola

Director, R.I. Department of Children, Youth and Families

Date: 7/31/17