

---

# ESEA Flexibility

## Renewal Request

---



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

For submission to the  
U.S. Department of Education  
Washington, DC 20202  
June 30, 2015

OMB Number: 1810-0581

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Insert page numbers prior to submitting the request, and place the table of contents in front of the SEA’s flexibility request.

CONTENTS		PAGE
Cover Sheet for ESEA Flexibility Request		5
Waivers		6
Assurances		9
Consultation		12
Evaluation		19
Overview of SEA’s Request for the ESEA Flexibility		19
<b>Principle 1: College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students</b>		<b>24</b>
1.A	Adopt college- and career-ready standards	24
1.B	Transition to college- and career-ready standards	24
1.C	Develop and administer annual, statewide, aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth	62
<b>Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support</b>		<b>66</b>
2.A	Develop and implement a State-based system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support	66
2.B	Set ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives	84
2.C	Reward schools	111
2.D	Priority schools	115
2.E	Focus schools	123
2.F	Provide incentives and supports for other Title I schools	129
2.G	Build SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning	132
<b>Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership</b>		<b>134</b>
3.A	Develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	134
3.B	Ensure LEAs implement teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	168

**TABLE OF CONTENTS, CONTINUED**

For each attachment included in the *ESEA Flexibility Request*, label the attachment with the corresponding number from the list of attachments below and indicate the page number where the attachment is located. If an attachment is not applicable to the SEA’s request, indicate “N/A” instead of a page number. Reference relevant attachments in the narrative portions of the request.

<b>LABEL</b>	<b>LIST OF ATTACHMENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1	Notice to LEAs	A-1
2	Comments on request received from LEAs (if applicable)	A-13
3	Notice and information provided to the public regarding the request	A-17
4	Evidence that the State has formally adopted college- and career-ready content standards consistent with the State’s standards adoption process	A-26
5	Memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs) certifying that meeting the State’s standards corresponds to being college- and career-ready without the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level (if applicable)	A-31
6	State’s Race to the Top Assessment Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (if applicable)	N/A
7	Evidence that the SEA has submitted high-quality assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review, or a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review (if applicable)	N/A
8	A copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups (if applicable)	N/A
9	Table 2: Reward, Priority, and Focus Schools	A-42
10	A copy of the guidelines that the SEA has developed and adopted for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems (if applicable)	A-47
11	Evidence that the SEA has adopted all of the guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	A-131

<b>LABEL</b>	<b>LIST OF APPENDICES</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
A	Agenda and Comment Form for Community Stakeholder Meetings	A-141
B	Education Accountability Act	A-144
C	Glossary of Acronyms	A-171
D	Principle 4: Reducing Duplication and Unnecessary Burden	A-179
E	Education and Economic Development Act	A-180
F	CCSS Comparison and Recommendations to Current State Standards	A-192
G	Informational Resource on Common Core State Standards (CCSS)	A-193
H	Timeline for Professional Development: Guide to Transitioning to CCSS	A-195
I	CCSS for Math and ELA Needs Assessment Survey	A-196
J	CCSS Professional Development Series	A-198
K	AMOs for English Language Arts and Mathematics	A-201
L	Proposed Comprehensive Needs Assessment Survey	A-204



M	Individualized Modifications/Accommodations Plan	A-211
N	ADEPT and InTASC Standards Crosswalk	A-213
O	Teacher Performance Rubrics	A-222
P	List of ESEA Flexibility Waiver Renewal Outreach Events and Handout	A-227

## Cover Sheet for ESEA Flexibility Request

Legal Name of Requester: South Carolina Department of Education	Requester's Mailing Address: 1429 Senate Street Room 1005 The Rutledge Building Columbia, SC 29201
State Contact for the ESEA Flexibility Request	
Name: Karla McLawhorn Hawkins	
Position and Office: Deputy General Counsel	
Contact's Mailing Address: 1429 Senate Street Room 1015 The Rutledge Building Columbia, SC 29201	
Telephone: (803) 734-8783	
Fax: (803) 734-4384	
Email address: khawkins@ed.sc.gov	
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Molly M. Spearman	Telephone: (803) 734-8491
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: X 	Date: June 30, 2015
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to meet all principles of ESEA flexibility.	

## WAIVERS

By submitting this updated ESEA flexibility request, the SEA renews its request for flexibility through waivers of the nine ESEA requirements listed below and their associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements, as well as any optional waivers the SEA has chosen to request under ESEA flexibility, by checking each of the boxes below. The provisions below represent the general areas of flexibility requested.

- 1. The requirements in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(E)-(H) that prescribe how an SEA must establish annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for determining adequate yearly progress (AYP) to ensure that all students meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement on the State's assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the end of the 2013–2014 school year. The SEA requests this waiver to develop new ambitious but achievable AMOs in reading/language arts and mathematics in order to provide meaningful goals that are used to guide support and improvement efforts for the State, LEAs, schools, and student subgroups.
- 2. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(b) for an LEA to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, a Title I school that fails, for two consecutive years or more, to make AYP, and for a school so identified and its LEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA and its Title I schools need not comply with these requirements.
- 3. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(c) for an SEA to identify for improvement or corrective action, as appropriate, an LEA that, for two consecutive years or more, fails to make AYP, and for an LEA so identified and its SEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that it need not comply with these requirements with respect to its LEAs.
- 4. The requirements in ESEA sections 6213(b) and 6224(e) that limit participation in, and use of funds under the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) and Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) programs based on whether an LEA has made AYP and is complying with the requirements in ESEA section 1116. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA that receives SRSA or RLIS funds may use those funds for any authorized purpose regardless of whether the LEA makes AYP.
- 5. The requirement in ESEA section 1114(a)(1) that a school have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more in order to operate a school-wide program. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA may implement interventions consistent with the turnaround principles or interventions that are based on the needs of the students in the school and designed to enhance the entire educational program in a school in any of its priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of “priority schools” and “focus schools,” respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, as appropriate, even if those schools do not have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more.
- 6. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs in order to serve any of the State's priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of “priority

schools” and “focus schools,” respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

7. The provision in ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) that authorizes an SEA to reserve Title I, Part A funds to reward a Title I school that (1) significantly closed the achievement gap between subgroups in the school; or (2) has exceeded AYP for two or more consecutive years. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may use funds reserved under ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) for any of the State’s reward schools that meet the definition of “reward schools” set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

8. The requirements in ESEA section 2141(a), (b), and (c) for an LEA and SEA to comply with certain requirements for improvement plans regarding highly qualified teachers. The SEA requests this waiver to allow the SEA and its LEAs to focus on developing and implementing more meaningful evaluation and support systems.

9. The limitations in ESEA section 6123 that limit the amount of funds an SEA or LEA may transfer from certain ESEA programs to other ESEA programs. The SEA requests this waiver so that it and its LEAs may transfer up to 100 percent of the funds it receives under the authorized programs among those programs and into Title I, Part A.

#### Optional Flexibilities:

If an SEA chooses to request waivers of any of the following requirements, it should check the corresponding box(es) below:

10. The requirements in ESEA sections 4201(b)(1)(A) and 4204(b)(2)(A) that restrict the activities provided by a community learning center under the Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program to activities provided only during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (*i.e.*, before and after school or during summer recess). The SEA requests this waiver so that 21st CCLC funds may be used to support expanded learning time during the school day in addition to activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session.

11. The requirements in ESEA sections 1116(a)(1)(A)-(B) and 1116(c)(1)(A) that require LEAs and SEAs to make determinations of adequate yearly progress (AYP) for schools and LEAs, respectively. The SEA requests this waiver because continuing to determine whether an LEA and its schools make AYP is inconsistent with the SEA’s State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system included in its ESEA flexibility request. The SEA and its LEAs must report on their report cards performance against the AMOs for all subgroups identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v), and use performance against the AMOs to support continuous improvement in Title I schools.

12. The requirements in ESEA section 1113(a)(3)-(4) and (c)(1) that require an LEA to serve eligible schools under Title I in rank order of poverty and to allocate Title I, Part A funds based on that rank ordering. The SEA requests this waiver in order to permit its LEAs to serve a Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate below 60 percent that the SEA has identified as a priority school even if that school does not otherwise rank sufficiently high to be served under ESEA section 1113.

13. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver in addition to waiver #6 so that, when it has remaining section 1003(a) funds after ensuring that all priority and focus schools have sufficient funds to carry out interventions, it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs to provide interventions and supports for low-achieving students in other Title I schools when one or more subgroups miss either AMOs or graduation rate targets or both over a number of years.

If the SEA is requesting waiver #13, the SEA must demonstrate in its renewal request that it has a process to ensure, on an annual basis, that all of its priority and focus schools will have sufficient funding to implement their required interventions prior to distributing ESEA section 1003(a) funds to other Title I schools.

Page 129

14. The requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(1)(B) and 1111(b)(3)(C)(i) that, respectively, require the SEA to apply the same academic content and academic achievement standards to all public schools and public school children in the State and to administer the same academic assessments to measure the achievement of all students. The SEA requests this waiver so that it is not required to double test a student who is not yet enrolled in high school but who takes advanced, high school level, mathematics coursework. The SEA would assess such a student with the corresponding advanced, high school level assessment in place of the mathematics assessment the SEA would otherwise administer to the student for the grade in which the student is enrolled. For Federal accountability purposes, the SEA will use the results of the advanced, high school level, mathematics assessment in the year in which the assessment is administered and will administer one or more additional advanced, high school level, mathematics assessments to such students in high school, consistent with the State's mathematics content standards, and use the results in high school accountability determinations.

If the SEA is requesting waiver #14, the SEA must demonstrate in its renewal request how it will ensure that every student in the State has the opportunity to be prepared for and take courses at an advanced level prior to high school.

N/A

## ASSURANCES

By submitting this request, the SEA assures that:

- 1. It requests waivers of the above-referenced requirements based on its agreement to meet Principles 1 through 4 of ESEA flexibility, as described throughout the remainder of this request.
- 2. It has adopted English language proficiency (ELP) standards that correspond to the State's college- and career-ready standards, consistent with the requirement in ESEA section 3113(b)(2), and that reflect the academic language skills necessary to access and meet the State's college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)
- 3. It will administer no later than the 2014–2015 school year alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that are consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2) and are aligned with the State's college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)
- 4. It will develop and administer ELP assessments aligned with the State's ELP standards, consistent with the requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(7), 3113(b)(2), and 3122(a)(3)(A)(ii) no later than the 2015–2016 school year. (Principle 1)
- 5. It will report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each LEA and each public high school in the State. (Principle 1)
- 6. If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and uses achievement on those assessments to identify priority and focus schools, it has technical documentation, which can be made available to the Department upon request, demonstrating that the assessments are administered statewide; include all students, including by providing appropriate accommodations for English Learners and students with disabilities, as well as alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2); and are valid and reliable for use in the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. (Principle 2)
- 7. It will annually make public its lists of reward schools, priority schools, and focus schools prior to the start of the school year as well as publicly recognize its reward schools, and will update its lists of priority and focus schools at least every three years. (Principle 2)

**If the SEA is not submitting with its renewal request its updated list of priority and focus schools, based on the most recent available data, for implementation beginning in the 2015–2016 school year, it must also assure that:**

- 8. It will provide to the Department, no later than January 31, 2016, an updated list of priority and focus schools, identified based on school year 2014–2015 data, for implementation beginning in the 2016–2017 school year.

9. It will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. (Principle 4)
10. It has consulted with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in its ESEA flexibility request.
11. Prior to submitting this request, it provided all LEAs with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on the request and has attached a copy of that notice (Attachment 1) as well as copies of any comments it received from LEAs. (Attachment 2)
12. Prior to submitting this request, it provided notice and information regarding the request to the public in the manner in which the SEA customarily provides such notice and information to the public (*e.g.*, by publishing a notice in the newspaper; by posting information on its website) and has attached a copy of, or link to, that notice. (Attachment 3)
13. It will provide to the Department, in a timely manner, all required reports, data, and evidence regarding its progress in implementing the plans contained throughout its ESEA flexibility request, and will ensure that all such reports, data, and evidence are accurate, reliable, and complete or, if it is aware of issues related to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of its reports, data, or evidence, it will disclose those issues.
14. It will report annually on its State report card and will ensure that its LEAs annually report on their local report cards, for the “all students” group, each subgroup described in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II), and for any combined subgroup (as applicable): information on student achievement at each proficiency level; data comparing actual achievement levels to the State’s annual measurable objectives; the percentage of students not tested; performance on the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools; and graduation rates for high schools. In addition, it will annually report, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report, all other information and data required by ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C) and 1111(h)(2)(B), respectively. It will ensure that all reporting is consistent with *State and Local Report Cards Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended Non-Regulatory Guidance* (February 8, 2013).

### Principle 3 Assurances

Each SEA must select the appropriate option and, in doing so, assures that:

Option A	Option B	Option C
<p><input type="checkbox"/> 15.a. The SEA is on track to fully implementing Principle 3, including incorporation of student growth based on State assessments into educator ratings for teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals.</p>	<p>If an SEA that is administering new State assessments during the 2014–2015 school year is requesting one additional year to incorporate student growth based on these assessments, it will:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 15.b.i. Continue to ensure that its LEAs implement teacher and principal evaluation systems using multiple measures, and that the SEA or its LEAs will calculate student growth data based on State assessments administered during the 2014–2015 school year for all teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals; and</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 15.b.ii. Ensure that each teacher of a tested grade and subject and all principals will receive their student growth data based on State assessments administered during the 2014–2015 school year.</p>	<p>If the SEA is requesting modifications to its teacher and principal evaluation and support system guidelines or implementation timeline other than those described in Option B, which require additional flexibility from the guidance in the document titled <i>ESEA Flexibility</i> as well as the documents related to the additional flexibility offered by the Assistant Secretary in a letter dated August 2, 2013, it will:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 15.c. Provide a narrative response in its redlined ESEA flexibility request as described in Section II of the ESEA flexibility renewal guidance.</p>

## CONSULTATION

An SEA must meaningfully engage and solicit input from diverse stakeholders and communities in the development of its request. To demonstrate that an SEA has done so, the SEA must provide an assurance that it has consulted with the State’s Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in the request and provide the following:

1. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from teachers and their representatives.

### 2015 ESEA Flexibility Waiver Renewal

State Superintendent of Education Molly M. Spearman has been in the forefront of ensuring that the voices of South Carolina’s stakeholders are heard in the 2015 ESEA Flexibility Waiver renewal process. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) engaged in consultation with teachers, their representatives, and other stakeholders by reviewing its 2014 approved Waiver Extension, sharing its plan for the March 2015 Waiver Renewal, and soliciting input at more than 50 meetings, including a state-wide webinar on February 26, 2015 (see Appendix P). Stakeholders’ input was the catalyst for changes in this Renewal request with regard to the state’s accountability and educator evaluation systems. The SCDE will continue to engage its stakeholders after March 2015 as the success of South Carolina’s ESEA Flexibility depends on the knowledge and support of its stakeholders in implementation of the waiver.

In 2011 and 2012, the SCDE held two rounds of stakeholder meetings during which feedback was solicited from educators and interested community parties. The first round of targeted stakeholder meetings took place in November and December 2011, and the second round of open public forums (referred to as community stakeholder meetings) took place during January 2012. Both rounds of meetings addressed teachers and their representatives and other diverse communities. The SCDE continued its stakeholder engagement during the 2013–14 ESEA Flexibility Waiver extension process.

### Initial 2011–12 Stakeholder Meetings

The SCDE engaged teachers to solicit their input on South Carolina’s ESEA waiver request initially through a targeted stakeholder meeting on the morning of November 8, 2011; invitees included current and previous Teacher of the Year awardees, previous Milken Award winners, Honor Roll Teachers (the top five runners-up for the teacher of the year awards), Montessori, charter school, and virtual school teachers. State Superintendent Zais welcomed the participants to this three-hour working meeting and shared his vision for how the waivers can help schools and districts and build on reform activities already underway. Staff from SEDL (the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory) explained the ten waiver opportunities and led the work groups in discussion and reporting activities following presentations by SCDE staff on the state’s status regarding each of the four principles of the waiver request.

Teachers participating in this stakeholder meeting provided valuable input that was incorporated into a draft ESEA waiver request document. They advocated for including the

content areas of science and social studies in the accountability system. They also expressed interest in exploring other methods of evaluating teacher performance, such as peer evaluations and student surveys, which we have included in the process that the Educator Evaluator Stakeholder Group will consider as we implement aspects of Principle 3. The SCDE also incorporated teacher input in providing and expediting the timeline for professional development and instructional materials that support the implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

In another targeted stakeholder meeting on the ESEA waiver request with principals from elementary, middle, and high schools on the afternoon of November 8, all attendees were asked to communicate the ESEA waiver plans to their teachers (see section 2 below for details on more of these stakeholder meetings).

South Carolina is a right-to-work state and, as such, does not have teacher unions. Representatives from SCASA (the South Carolina Association of School Administrators) and SCSBA (the South Carolina School Boards Association) were invited to and actively participated in a targeted stakeholder meeting on the ESEA waiver request on November 9, 2011. SCASA presented a webinar on the ESEA waiver request process and the state's draft request, which is posted with accompanying slides on its website ([www.scasa.org](http://www.scasa.org)). SCSBA posted a response to the state's draft request on its website ([www.scsba.org](http://www.scsba.org)) that indicated areas of concern.

### 2012 Community Stakeholder Meetings

Along with making a draft of the waiver request available for public comment, the SCDE held a series of 20 evening community stakeholder meetings across South Carolina from January 3–23, 2012 (schedule at <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/lpa/ESEAFlexibility.cfm>); eleven of these meetings were held at LEA and local school facilities. At each meeting, a team of three staff members, representing the SCDE's Office of Policy and Research, Division of School Accountability, and Division of School Effectiveness respectively, presented on the four principles of the ESEA waiver opportunity and details of the state's draft plan. After each principle, staff paused to invite questions from the audience. These question-and-answer exchanges provided useful feedback and allowed staff to provide additional information and ask questions of attendees. Reminders for every meeting were posted to both the Department Facebook page and Twitter account with the county, location, and time of that evening's meetings. Each post linked back to the SC ESEA webpage.

Teachers, administrators, and district personnel comprised a large majority of attendees. The large majority of questions asked came from teachers, superintendents, principals, and district accountability personnel. Based on the e-mail addresses provided with the online responses submitted, 699 LEA/school personnel, including teachers, submitted the online form to provide feedback on the draft ESEA flexibility request, and 16 provided their response via the e-mail address.

## Effects of the 2012 Community Stakeholder Meetings

During the public input process, stakeholders expressed strong concerns about the accountability system presented in the draft waiver request; the requests for simulations were compelling. To respond to this request before finalizing and submitting the state's ESEA waiver request, the SCDE's Office of Data Management and Analysis made changes to the system that was initially proposed in the draft waiver request and ran simulations for each school and LEA statewide. The SCDE invited two representatives from each LEA to a meeting on the morning of January 31, 2012, for division staff to explain the proposed methodology, which had been modified based on stakeholder feedback, and discuss the results of the simulations using the spring 2011 student assessment data.

The SCDE does not anticipate that the concerns raised by teachers will serve as an impediment to implementing the proposed changes to the state's educator evaluation system. School districts, with the exception of public charter schools, are required by state statute to use the SCDE's educator evaluation system. Public charter schools are given the option of using the system and many choose to use it.

Equally important as the state's statutory authority is the process that the state follows when making significant changes to the educator evaluation system. Previous changes to the educator evaluation system were open to the educator community and transparent to the public. State law, through the Administrative Procedures Act, requires this transparent process. The same process used in previous regulatory revisions to the statewide educator evaluation system will be used again to implement Principle 3. This includes but is not limited to public notice, public comment at State Board of Education (SBE) meetings, and public hearings to receive public testimony before legislative committees. Based upon the public comments received and the stakeholder meetings, there was little to no opposition to Principle 3.

In summary, there is a transparent process for receiving input from educators and legislative review prior to the full implementation of Principle 3.

The SCDE recognizes that districts continue to raise concerns about the proposed school and district rating system, as well as technical matters related to the calculation of Annual Measureable Objectives in South Carolina's ESEA Flexibility request. The SCDE does not anticipate that these concerns will impede implementation of the state's plan. The Education Accountability Act of 1998 requires school districts and schools to implement a statewide system of academic standards and accountability measures; this Act also grants the SCDE significant legal authority to ensure compliance. Public charter schools must also follow these statutes. The reforms required in Principles 1 and 2 will be implemented because state law requires schools and school districts to implement them.

The state's request presents the opportunity for meaningful change in South Carolina. Many aspects of the request, including the rating system, are based on models that have already been approved by the USED for other states, districts, or schools. Like South Carolina, these states experienced tremendous opposition to the reforms they sought to implement. South Carolina has benefited from these trailblazers by being able to observe the impact a transparent,

fair, and easy-to-understand system of accountability can have in shifting priorities and resources to focus the full force of the education system on raising student achievement. Such reforms rarely receive praise when they are proposed or initially implemented; yet, given the opportunity, they yield a harvest that few can question. Like several other states, South Carolina seeks to create a system of accountability that serves students and parents with a clear message of how well schools are performing.

The SCDE will continue to meaningfully engage stakeholders in the implementation of the state's ESEA Flexibility request through an existing process that is transparent, draws on input from educators, and provides for legislative review prior to the full implementation.

Since the submission of the state's request, the SCDE has presented to the state's Instructional Leaders Roundtable during its April 2012 meeting at SCASA on the status of the waiver request. The SCDE participated in additional meetings and presentations following approval of South Carolina's waiver request to inform and engage teachers in the implementation plans and processes as the state transitioned to the Common Core State Standards, the updated accountability system, and the enhanced teacher and principal evaluation systems.

The SCDE values the input we solicited and received from teachers and their representatives. Throughout our waiver request we identify areas where we received and considered input from teachers or their representatives. We also indicate ways in which their input shaped our request or will shape aspects of our proposal that are planned and will develop over the implementation timeline.

2. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from other diverse communities, such as students, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations representing students with disabilities and English Learners, business organizations, and Indian tribes.

### 2015 ESEA Flexibility Waiver Renewal

During the 2015 ESEA Flexibility Waiver renewal process, the SCDE participated in more than 50 meetings with its stakeholders (see Appendix P). On February 13, 2015, the SCDE hosted a stakeholder meeting with select members of SCASA's Instructional Leaders and Testing and Accountability Roundtables, during which we received valuable input on the renewal process.

On February 26, 2015, the SCDE hosted a statewide virtual meeting, inviting more than 1,900 stakeholders representing students, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, business organizations, Indian tribes, and organizations representing students with disabilities and English language learners. Prior to this statewide virtual meeting, the SCDE posted a redline draft of South Carolina's ESEA Flexibility Waiver Renewal request for public comment. The statewide virtual meeting was publicized on the main page of the SCDE's website and advertised on Twitter and Facebook (see Attachment 3).

## 2011–12 Stakeholder Engagement

The SCDE held two rounds of stakeholder meetings during which feedback was solicited from educators and interested community parties. The first round of targeted stakeholder meetings took place in November and December 2011, and the second round of Community Stakeholder Meetings took place during January 2012. Both rounds of meetings addressed teachers and their representatives (see 1 above) and other diverse communities.

### Initial 2011–12 Stakeholder Meetings

In addition to the initial stakeholder meetings for teachers and their representatives (detailed in 1 above), the SCDE began engaging other diverse communities through the initial stakeholder meetings in November 2011. As he did for the teacher stakeholder meeting, State Superintendent Zais welcomed participants to each of these three-hour working meetings and shared his vision for how the waivers can help schools and districts and build on reform activities already underway. Staff from SEDL then explained the ten waiver opportunities. SCDE staff presented on the state’s status regarding each of the four principles of the waiver request. SEDL staff led the work groups in discussion and reporting activities following the presentations on each principle.

The SCDE gained valuable ideas and input through these stakeholder meetings, which included, in addition to the teacher stakeholder meeting already mentioned,

- principals from elementary schools, middle schools and high schools (12 participants) on November 8, 2011;
- superintendents and assessment personnel from LEAs across the state (22 participants) on November 9, 2011; and
- representatives from community groups, boards, and professional organizations (17 participants) on November 9, 2011. This meeting included representatives from the state council of the NAACP, the SC Hispanic Leadership Council, the South Carolina Commission on Minority Affairs, and the Special Education Advisory Council.

The SCDE conducted additional stakeholder meetings to engage

- representatives (27 participants) from Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) on December 1, 2011; and
- South Carolina’s Title I Committee of Practitioners (25 participants) on December 9, 2011.

The SCDE also briefed other stakeholders through presentations to

- 14 participants of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education’s DataSC meeting of public IHEs on November 29, 2011;
- the Education Professions Committee of the SBE on December 8, 2011; and
- the South Carolina SBE on January 11, 2012.

## 2011–12 Accessibility, Legislative Inclusion, and Media Outreach

On December 16, 2011, the SCDE posted a draft of the waiver request on its website ([www.ed.sc.gov](http://www.ed.sc.gov)) and announced a public comment period that was scheduled through January 21, 2012. State Superintendent Zais sent a memo notifying all LEA superintendents (see Attachment 1) and requesting that they inform all staff, including teachers, of the waiver draft and the public comment period. The ESEA waiver request news release was posted to the rotating display on the homepage, and a large button featured prominently on the homepage linked any visitor from [ed.sc.gov](http://ed.sc.gov) to the ESEA Waiver specific information.

To facilitate public response, the SCDE posted an online comment form on its ESEA Waiver request web page (<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/pi/ESEAFlexibility.cfm>) and provided an e-mail address ([ESEAWaiver@ed.sc.gov](mailto:ESEAWaiver@ed.sc.gov)). The SCDE’s Office of Legislative and Public Affairs notified media throughout the state (see Attachment 3) of the availability of the draft and the public comment period.

The Office of Legislative and Public Affairs also contacted each member of the legislative delegations for every county in which a meeting was held. For the meetings taking place before the legislature was back in session, SCDE staff members mailed letters to each senator and representative’s home address and followed up with a phone call inviting them to attend the stakeholder meeting in their county. For meetings taking place after the legislature returned to Columbia, letters were hand-delivered to the offices of each senator and representative.

Once the General Assembly reconvened, Dr. Zais testified in front of the Senate Education Committee on January 18, 2012. Amongst other areas of interest, he discussed the ESEA Flexibility Waiver application process and draft content with the committee members.

The Office of Legislative and Public Affairs sent out a press release to all members of the South Carolina media in December to announce the ESEA Waiver community stakeholder meeting locations and meeting times. South Carolina media were alerted to the upcoming NCLB Waiver event locations a week prior to the scheduled event, and media were notified the day of the event as well. A link to the full ESEA Waiver schedule, the comment form, and an updated draft of the ESEA Waiver request were included in each e-mail to the media. Overall, the Office of Legislative and Public Affairs sent a total of 14 e-mails to South Carolina media.

## 2012 Community Stakeholder Meetings

Along with the three presenters from their respective offices/divisions, a staff member from the SCDE’s Office of Legislative and Public Affairs attended each community stakeholder meeting to coordinate the presentation, greet attendees, administer a sign-in sheet, and distribute an “ESEA Community Stakeholder Meeting Comment Form” (Appendix A) to encourage attendees to provide their input at the meeting. Presenting staff also told attendees about the other methods for providing feedback—through the online comment form and the e-mail address.

For teachers and others unable to attend one of the community stakeholder meetings, the SCDE held a live webcast meeting on January 11, 2012. This presentation was recorded and posted to the SCDE's ESEA flexibility website (<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/pi/ESEAFlexibility.cfm>) to enable 24/7 access.

The regional community stakeholder meetings held statewide from January 3–23, 2012, gave local civil rights and other groups an opportunity to voice their concerns about the draft waiver request directly to SCDE staff. Participants in the January 3 meeting in Manning, South Carolina, included the leader of the local NAACP chapter, the mayor, and representatives from the Clarendon County Education Association. More than 20 members of 100 Black Men of Columbia, Inc. attended the January 17 meeting in Columbia, South Carolina, along with members of the Catalytic Leadership Initiative. Three legislators, including a vice chair and a member of the House Education Committee and the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee were present at the Anderson County meeting. The entire Aiken County School Board changed their regularly scheduled monthly meeting and all attended the Aiken County Community Stakeholder Meeting. The largest meeting was held in Horry County with 83 participants. The Deans of Education from Anderson University, Clemson University, and South Carolina State University all attended their local community stakeholder meetings as well.

#### Effects of the 2011–12 Community Stakeholder Meetings

Initially, the public comment period was set to end on January 23, 2012. However, the SCDE's Division of Accountability proposed providing additional information to the LEAs, so on January, 23, 2012, State Superintendent Zais announced an extension of the public comment period to February 1, 2012, in a memo to LEAs (Attachment 1; see Attachment 2 for LEA (school district) responses); this memo was also distributed to all who were invited to the November and December 2011 stakeholder meetings, which included teachers, principals, superintendents, LEA assessment personnel, representatives of both public and private institutions of higher education (professors and administrators), the SC Commission on Higher Education, and community leaders and organizations, including the United Way of South Carolina, the South Carolina Advisory Council on the Education of Students with Disabilities, the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, and the Public Charter School Alliance of South Carolina.

One of the largest concerns raised by members of these diverse stakeholder groups centered on whether the ESEA Flexibility request process would allow the state to reduce the level of transparency and accountability on the performance of all students in the public education system. In response to these concerns, the SCDE has preserved the subgroup reporting that will prevent the proposed system of accountability from masking the performance of historically underperforming subgroups.

Additionally, the SCDE plans to build on the relationships forged during this period of stakeholder involvement in the ESEA Flexibility Waiver Request by continuing to engage stakeholder groups, particularly civil rights groups and those that represent historically low-performing student subgroup populations. We believe that these groups are a missing component of efforts to raise student achievement, close achievement gaps, and increase access

to rigorous courses among students that the state simply has not served well.

## EVALUATION

The Department encourages an SEA that receives approval to implement the flexibility to collaborate with the Department to evaluate at least one program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs implement under principle 1, 2, or 3. Upon receipt of approval of the flexibility, an interested SEA will need to nominate for evaluation a program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs will implement under principles 1, 2, or 3. The Department will work with the SEA to determine the feasibility and design of the evaluation and, if it is determined to be feasible and appropriate, will fund and conduct the evaluation in partnership with the SEA, ensuring that the implementation of the chosen program, practice, or strategy is consistent with the evaluation design.

Check here if you are interested in collaborating with the Department in this evaluation, if your request for the flexibility is approved.

## OVERVIEW OF SEA'S REQUEST FOR THE ESEA FLEXIBILITY

Provide an overview (about 500 words) of the SEA's request for the flexibility that:

1. explains the SEA's comprehensive approach to implement the waivers and principles and describes the SEA's strategy to ensure this approach is coherent within and across the principles; and
2. describes how the implementation of the waivers and principles will enhance the SEA's and its LEAs' ability to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement.

*The General Assembly finds that South Carolinians have a commitment to public education and a conviction that high expectations for all students are vital components for improving academic achievement.*

—Preamble to the Education Accountability Act (1998)

In the global economy and rapidly changing world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a quality education is neither a privilege nor luxury; it is a basic necessity. South Carolina's students' future ability to survive—to support themselves and their families and to contribute to their communities—will be determined by the competencies and skills they attain and maintain over the course of their lifetimes.

The public education system has a duty to help students attain the skills that today's world demands. To fulfill this responsibility in South Carolina, we believe that

- Education must be personalized.
- Instruction must be high quality.
- Schools must grow stronger and cultivate strong community support.

South Carolina's commitment to personalizing learning dates back to 1977 when the

state's General Assembly, recognizing that each student needs a base level of funding for educational services and practices to be effective, passed the Education Finance Act to set a funding formula. Subsequent legislation—the Education Improvement Act (1984), the Charter School Act (1996), the Education Accountability Act (1998), the Education and Economic Development Act (2005), and the South Carolina Virtual School Program (2006)—reflects an increased recognition that the state must set expectations, make provisions for learning to take place, and hold schools and districts accountable for results.

South Carolina is committed to establishing higher curriculum and achievement standards and to demonstrating national and international competitiveness. Our hardworking teachers and leaders are currently getting mixed results in their efforts to raise student achievement, as evidenced by our fluctuating graduation rates and scores on the state assessment, SCPASS (South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards).

With passage of the Education Accountability Act (EAA, S.C. Code Ann. § 59-18-100 *et seq.* (Supp. 2014); see Appendix B; see Appendix C for a glossary of acronyms) the General Assembly established a statewide accountability system to measure school performance, provide recognition for high performing schools, and provide technical assistance for low performing schools prior to the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

The passage of NCLB brought another accountability system to accompany South Carolina's system. Initially, the federal system improved our ability to identify student subgroups that needed assistance and to hold schools and districts accountable for all their students. Both systems provided useful information to parents and taxpayers.

However, as the adequate yearly progress (AYP) goals under NCLB have increased over the years, disparities between the state and federal systems have grown. Today, many of the schools that the state system identifies as “average” and “above average” are labeled through the federal system as failing to make AYP. This confuses parents and taxpayers. The stigma of failure demoralizes the teachers and principals in some of our most effective schools who are working diligently to better serve their students and whose results are not accurately reflected in the federal accountability system.

The federal accountability system imposes punishments and sanctions and at the same time limits action. Hence, it compels leaders to give reasons for failures rather than inspiring them to blaze trails to success. The system over-identifies schools in need of assistance, which has diluted the state resources available to serve these schools.

In 2011, only one school district in the state, Saluda School District One, made AYP. Without changes, by 2014, the goal year for 100 percent proficiency under the federal system, no schools or districts in South Carolina will meet the requirements of NCLB.

For South Carolina to see the outcomes that only transforming the system can yield, federal restrictions that limit innovation need to be lifted. The opportunity to request flexibility from some of the requirements of NCLB is timely. The four principles for improving student academic achievement and increasing the quality of instruction required for the flexibility

waivers are well-aligned with the statewide reform efforts currently underway:

- For almost 15 years, the state has had a teacher evaluation system that it has constantly improved. Largely for this reason, *Ed Week's* annual *Quality Counts* has ranked South Carolina highest in its “Teaching Professions” category for six consecutive years.
- From 2010 through 2015, the state adopted and implemented the Common Core State Standards. Pursuant to Act 200 of 2014 (see pages 24–25), the state has created and adopted new college- and career-ready standards for implementation in school year 2015–16.
- The SCDE has reorganized its resources to target aggressive strategies for turning around our lowest performing schools and districts through the newly-created Office of School Transformation.

South Carolina already meets many of the requirements of the four principles for the waivers and continues to lead the nation in establishing rigorous standards and assessments and developing great teachers and leaders. By developing a system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support, we will improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction in our schools.

While unifying the state’s two accountability systems into one will require action by the state legislature, which falls beyond the timeframe for requesting and enacting the federal waivers, this waiver opportunity will nonetheless propel the state further toward achieving the goal of a modernized and unified accountability system. Indeed, Act 200 of 2014 requires that the state propose a new single accountability system in 2016.

#### Personalizing Learning

South Carolina is committed to modernizing our system of accountability to take better advantage of our ability to provide feedback and intervention. The effective use of data makes it possible for education to truly meet each student where they are, rather than simply provide an account of what happened—or, all too often, what did not happen—over the school year. Likewise, the effective use of data makes it possible to identify areas where teachers and leaders need more customized instruction and assistance to enhance their abilities to provide quality instruction that improves student achievement.

The state continues to set high and clearly defined objectives for students. As the SBE and the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) review and approve standards, each cycle of updates improves the precision with which the state defines the learning expectations for students. South Carolina is also improving the tools by which we measure progress towards reaching objectives and to measure student progress towards proficiency.

#### Improving Instruction

The ESEA Flexibility Request opportunity supports the state’s progression in improving the education profession. It provides an impetus for refining our teacher evaluation system to reflect the latest research and

- increase the precision with which we identify a teacher’s effectiveness;
- incorporate the use of quantifiable student performance data to provide feedback

quickly on how a teacher is performing over the course of the school year as well as long-term;

- personalize professional development so that our good teachers get better and our better teachers become the best they can be; and
- identify our strongest professionals for recognition and our weakest for effective interventions to improve their abilities.

Our plan will also enhance our principal evaluation system so that it better assesses a leader's specific performance in raising overall student achievement and his or her general performance in school leadership. Improving our educator evaluation systems by including multiple measures of student performance will lead to increased quality of instruction and greater student achievement.

South Carolina will hold educators to a higher standard. Continued failure will no longer be an option. We will identify, recognize, and reward those who perform well with the flexibility they need for continued success. Those who perform poorly will receive appropriate interventions so that they can serve our students more effectively.

#### Building Stronger Community Schools

The state is moving from a model that largely forces compliance on inputs to one that requires progress toward reaching attainable results. Our plan is to eliminate the disincentives that have cultivated low-performance so that we can leverage state and federal resources to build capacity in our lowest-performing schools. We will accomplish this, in part, by reducing the ineffective "treatments" that are imposed on struggling schools so that we can recruit and empower effective leaders for these schools where we most need to set a new course.

In schools where leaders demonstrate success, we plan to decrease the prescriptive nature of programmatic requirements; leaders who are getting results deserve a level of trust that reflects their hard work. Our highest-performing schools need far less government direction and, in some instances, intrusion. We will identify, recognize, and reward those who perform well with the flexibility they need for continued success.

The community stakeholder meetings (see Consultation above) demonstrated the strong commitment the citizens of South Carolina have for their community schools. The SCDE will continue such efforts to engage parents, community members, leaders, and other stakeholders to build stronger local support for our community schools.

#### Flexibility to Move Our Students Forward

South Carolina has made much improvement; yet we have far to go. The last decade reflects a focus by key decision makers in our state to reform education to better prepare students for work or higher education by

- aligning academic content with student's long-term career goals;
- implementing interventions to engage low-performing or at-risk students;
- expanding educational options to meet student needs rather than force them to fit into systems adults have created; and
- improving instructional practices to better equip educators to meet the challenge of

---

---

preparing students for an ever changing and increasingly competitive world.

This request reflects our state’s ambition to change so that our students can succeed. South Carolina will use the flexibility afforded through the waivers to target resources more effectively to increase student learning; to encourage, recognize, and reward success by schools and districts; to accurately identify low-performing schools through a refined accountability system; and to strengthen our teacher and principal evaluation systems. This flexibility request is a means to establish a comprehensive and coherent approach to align the state’s professional development programs, state and federal accountability systems, student and school intervention programs, and educator evaluation systems. The request demonstrates how this flexibility will help the SCDE and the state’s 84 school districts to align accountability and improvement initiatives.

In the request that follows, South Carolina presents its commitments to fulfill the requirements of each principle (Principle 4 is presented in Appendix D).

## PRINCIPLE 1: COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

### 1.A ADOPT COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that are common to a significant number of States, consistent with part (1) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State’s standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)</p>	<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that have been approved and certified by a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs), consistent with part (2) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State’s standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)</p> <p>ii. Attach a copy of the memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of IHEs certifying that students who meet these standards will not need remedial coursework at the postsecondary level. (Attachment 5)</p>
---	--

### 1.B TRANSITION TO COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Provide the SEA’s plan to transition to and implement no later than the 2013–2014 school year college- and career-ready standards statewide in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for all students and schools and include an explanation of how this transition plan is likely to lead to all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, gaining access to and learning content aligned with such standards. The Department encourages an SEA to include in its plan activities related to each of the italicized questions in the corresponding section of the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance*, or to explain why one or more of those activities is not necessary to its plan.

**COMMITMENT 1: SOUTH CAROLINA WILL IMPLEMENT AND TRANSITION TO NEW COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS TO INCREASE QUALITY INSTRUCTION AND IMPROVE STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.**

On May 30, 2014, the South Carolina Governor signed legislation (Act 200 of 2014),

that requires the state to develop new, high quality, South Carolina college- and career-ready standards for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics to be implemented beginning with the 2015–16 school year.

As reflected in the timeline (pages 59–61), the standards writing teams developed a draft standards document which was posted online for public review and feedback. In addition, an SCDE task force and the EOC review panels provided feedback. A joint committee, consisting of representatives from the SCDE writing teams, the EOC review panels, the SBE, institutions of higher education, and business and community organizations was convened to provide additional feedback in January and February 2015. The feedback was used to revise the draft standards prior to submission to the SBE for approval. The ELA standards were submitted for first reading approval by the SBE in January; math was submitted in February. Both sets of standards received first reading SBE approval, followed by EOC approval, and subsequent second reading SBE approval on March 11, 2015 (see Attachment 4, <http://www.ed.sc.gov/scde-grant-opportunities/documents/FinalVersion-EnglishLanguageArtsStandards.pdf> and <http://www.ed.sc.gov/scde-grant-opportunities/documents/FinalVersion-MathematicsStandards.pdf>). Both sets of standards were certified as being college and career ready by the network of public four-year institutions of higher education that enroll more than 50 percent of the student enrollment in the state (Attachment 5). Additionally, the South Carolina Technical College System certified the standards. Support documents will be developed and professional development provided beginning in April 2015, based on self-reported district needs as identified on an online needs assessment. Professional development will continue for all districts and groups based on individual district needs as determined through needs assessments and communication.

South Carolina adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) (see Attachment 4) and transitioned to and implemented them by the 2013–14 school year. The CCSS complemented initiatives already underway, as legislated through the South Carolina Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA, S.C. Code Ann. § 59-59-10 *et seq.* (Supp. 2014); see Appendix E), to match a student’s school work with his or her career objectives. Hence, the CCSS enhanced the state’s goal to increase the high school graduation rate through efforts to better prepare students for success after graduation, whether their preference is to immediately enter the workforce or to continue their education. (See Appendix C for a glossary of acronyms.) The South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards will continue to support these goals.

Passed by the SC General Assembly and signed into law in 2005, the EEDA mandates a system to provide students with individualized educational, academic, and career-oriented choices and greater exposure to career information and opportunities. This system includes individual graduation plans, career clusters of study, career counseling, regional education centers, and a model for addressing at-risk students. We will discuss the specific ways that the EEDA complements the college- and career-ready standards as details of the plan are presented in this section.

The SCDE is charged with guiding the transition to and implementation of the 2015 standards and will use this opportunity to refine its processes for moving to new academic standards and delivering professional development, resources, and supports to the state’s 84

public school districts. Through this process, the SCDE will work to better coordinate with school districts, institutions of higher education, parents, parent organizations, and business and community organizations, especially those representing special student populations and historically underrepresented groups.

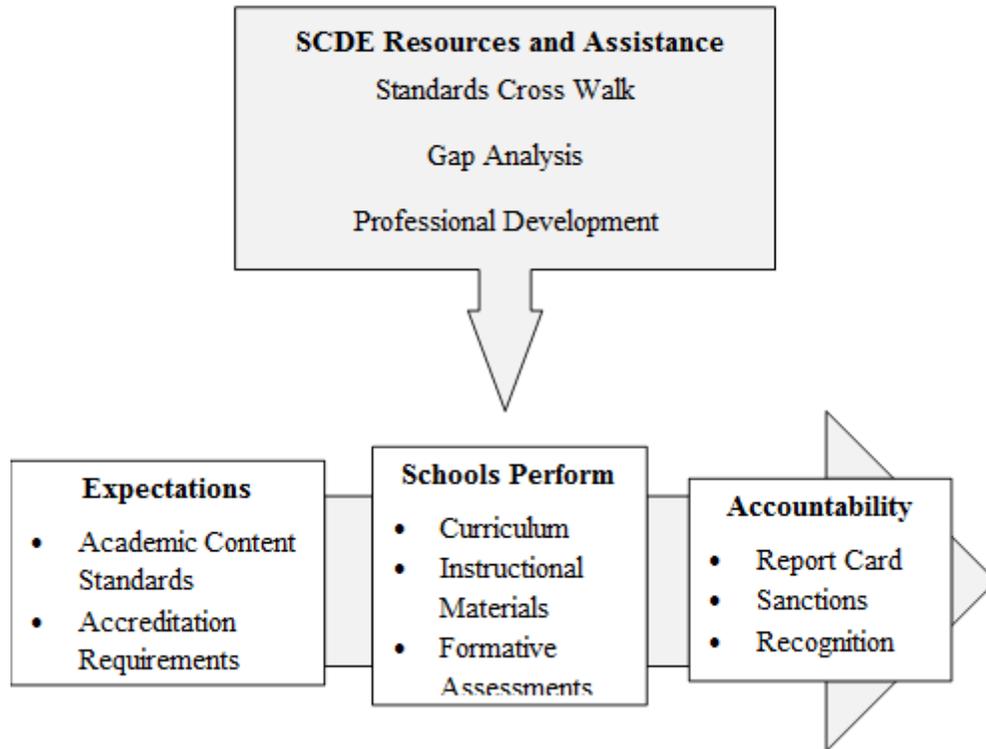
In guiding the transition to the new standards, the SCDE will also focus on better intra-office collaboration while transitioning to and implementing the 2015 College- and Career-Ready Standards. Offices within the Division of Innovation and Effectiveness (Assessment, Federal and State Accountability, Research and Data Analysis, School Transformation, Student Intervention Services), Division of College and Career Readiness (Special Education Services, VirtualSC, Standards and Learning), and the Division of Educator Effectiveness (School Leadership, Educator Evaluation) will work together to develop more efficient and effective processes that can form a model for transitioning to and implementing future curriculum standards.

The SCDE would like to see South Carolina's College- and Career-Ready Standards transform instruction and learning in South Carolina schools. While these standards are rigorous, their power to change instruction and learning hinges on how well superintendents, district and school administrators, principals, teachers, other educators and education professionals, parents, students, schools of education, business leaders, and community members understand the role the new standards play in improving educational outcomes for all students. Our approach for implementing and transitioning to the new standards is to leverage these multiple points of influence on instruction and learning to focus on achieving the state's goal of increasing the high school graduation rate. If any group does not understand the role the standards play, the impetus to change is lessened.

The 2015 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards will help make ELA and mathematics courses more relevant to and challenging for students as they place greater emphasis on academic content, such as informational texts and problem solving, that develop skills all students need when they finish high school.

To support South Carolina's 84 districts and more than 1,200 public schools, the SCDE adheres to an insist/assist approach (see graphic below), in part because, historically and culturally, the state places high value on preserving local control in many policy issues. Within education, the state sets high standards and expectations for students, teachers, and schools; sets metrics for performance expectations; and then holds schools and districts accountable for their performance. The state does not mandate curriculum, professional development courses, formative test selections, and a whole host of other local decisions that drive instruction. The SCDE does insist on high quality performance, and we offer strong assistance and support (including curriculum models, timelines for testing changes, etc.) where it is needed.

## Insist/Assist Approach



A benefit of the insist/assist approach is that it places the focus for educating students where it should be—in the community at each school site. The SCDE exists to build capacity where it is needed and to push resources out to the frontlines—to teachers, administrators, principals, and superintendents—as efficiently and effectively as possible.

To guide the transition to and implementation of the standards, the SCDE has developed an Implementation Timeline that culminates with the new standards in ELA and mathematics guiding instruction statewide beginning with the 2013–14 school year, and revised standards implementation in the 2015–16 school year.

<b>Common Core State Standards Implementation Timeline Outline</b>	
<b>School Year</b>	<b>Implementation Phase</b>
2010–11	Planning, Awareness, and Alignment
2011–12	Transition and Professional Development
2012–13	Transition and Professional Development
2013–14	Implementation (Bridge Year)
2014–15	Full Implementation

The following timeline explains the implementation of the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards.

**SC College- and Career- Ready Standards**

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Implementation Phase</b>
2014–15	Development of and Approval of Standards: Transition and Professional Development
2015–16	Implementation and continued Professional Development
2016–18	Ongoing Professional Development

In South Carolina, our plan to implement Common Core State Standards incorporated the use of a bridge year in 2013–14. During the 2013–14 school year, all schools in all districts used the Common Core State Standards for ELA and mathematics to guide instruction. The SCDE identified the 2013–14 school year as a bridge year referring to the transition from the use of the current state-developed assessments to a new test developed to align to the Common Core State Standards. South Carolina continued using the state-developed assessments in 2013–14, limiting test items to those that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. The SBE adopted the assessment that was being developed by Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortia (SBAC) to replace the state-developed assessments for ELA and mathematics. However, in April 2014, South Carolina withdrew from the SBAC as a result of pending legislation that would prevent the state from continuing as a Governing or Advisory state in the SBAC and prohibit the administration of the Smarter Balanced assessment. As a result of withdrawing from the SBAC, the SCDE was allowed to begin the process to secure assessment for grades 3–8 and high school (ELA and mathematics) for the 2014–15 school year rather than awaiting the legislative action. (See page 51, *Assessments of the State Standards*.)

On May 30, 2014, the South Carolina Governor signed legislation that the State Legislature had ratified on May 29 (Act 200 of 2014), that required the state to withdraw from the SBAC and required another state agency, the Budget and Control Board, to procure an assessment to measure students’ progress on college- and career-ready standards. According to the legislation, the procurement is was to be completed no later than September 30, 2014. ACT, Inc. was awarded a contract. However, the procurement and the award to ACT, Inc. is under protest. At the protest appeal hearing on March 25, 2015, the panel upheld the Chief Procurement Officer’s decision to terminate the contract after one year. The written order on this appeal is not anticipated until after March 31. Additional appeals may occur. The SCDE is writing a request for proposals (RFP) so that assessments meeting state and federal law are in place for school year 2015–16.

During the community stakeholder meetings and public comment period, much of the feedback regarding the implementation of the CCSS centered on whether the state had the capacity to implement the new standards and if it is moving quickly enough to fully implement by the start of the 2014–15 school year. Such feedback reflects how capacity varies from district to district across the state. The school districts that are well-situated to implement the CCSS are anxious for the entire state to move more rapidly. However, those that recognize the challenges that the CCSS represent in the way of needed professional development and changes to assessment question the state’s readiness to move forward with initiating

implementation by the 2013–14 bridge year.

In response to the feedback from districts, administrators, and teachers, the SCDE has

- developed a Common Core State Standards in South Carolina website (<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/190/>) to enable 24/7 access to the state’s implementation timeline and other useful resources to help all teachers, schools, and districts as they prepare for full implementation by the 2014–15 school year; and
- added a process for sharing sample implementation timelines so that districts can see the different approaches to implementing the CCSS. We posted these samples to the Common Core in South Carolina website in early spring 2012, and incorporated them into the professional development and support that the SCDE’s Office of Teacher Effectiveness provided to districts.

The state’s approach to the transition to and implementation of the CCSS was balanced, reflecting our continued commitment to an insist/assist approach and the state’s disposition towards local control. The SCDE insisted on implementation by the 2013–14 school year; we communicated that expectation thoroughly and frequently. We provided a customized assortment of support to assist districts in building their capacity to attain and sustain high-quality instructional practices through the implementation of the CCSS.

While the SCDE recognized that some districts were ready to implement and should not be prevented nor delayed in their desire to move forward, we cautioned these districts regarding the timeline for changes in assessment for accountability but encouraged them to move forward as their capacity allowed.

The work plan (see page 53–59) for implementation and transition provided milestones to keep all involved stakeholders on track to move from using the 2007–08 South Carolina academic standards for mathematics and ELA to using the CCSS for ELA and mathematics to guide instruction.

In school year 2010–11, the SCDE provided training to increase awareness among school district personnel on the strengths of the CCSS, how they aligned with the 2007–08 state standards, and ways in which content transferred from different grade levels, emphasis, and rigor.

School years 2011–12 and 2012–13 were capacity-building years. As mentioned previously, not all of our districts were equal in their ability to provide their teachers training in the content mastery and pedagogical strategies necessary to successfully implement the CCSS. The SCDE assisted districts in developing transition plans to help them build their capacity to sustain the transition to and support for the CCSS in their schools.

The first year in which the state modified its ELA and mathematics assessments to reflect the CCSS was the 2013–14 school year. During that year, only content that was shared across the current standards and CCSS was assessed. Teachers were expected to use the CCSS to guide instruction in 2013–14.

By 2014–15, the state no longer supported the use of the state standards for mathematics and ELA in place prior to 2010. The state only supported the CCSS for 2014–15 and will support the newly adopted the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards 2015 beginning in 2015–16. The state will no longer use the state-developed summative assessments for ELA and mathematics but will use procured high-quality assessments instead. (See page 51, *Assessments of the Common Core State Standards*.)

Beginning with the 2015–16 school year, the *South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards 2015* will be the basis for instruction.

### Alignment between South Carolina’s Standards and the Common Core State Standards

South Carolina engaged in a thorough process to analyze the alignment between the state’s content standards and the CCSS prior to adopting these new standards in the summer of 2010. However, as was revealed by questions that parents, teachers, and others posed during the statewide community stakeholder meetings in January 2012, the public needed more information both on how the state adopted the CCSS and how it would assist its then 86 school districts in the implementation of and transition to using and assessing the then new standards for ELA and mathematics.

In South Carolina, the process for review and adoption of state standards and assessments is defined in the Education Accountability Act (EAA; see Appendix B). Passed in 1998, the EAA establishes the subject areas in which standards are set and establishes the accountability system by which schools and student performance are measured. This state statute requires that the South Carolina SBE, in consultation with the South Carolina EOC, review state standards and assessments every seven years to ensure that they maintain a high level of expectation for learning and teaching. This cyclical review process places a high premium on active participation by a variety of stakeholders. Prior to the development of the CCSS, the state most recently completed reviews of mathematics in 2007 and ELA in 2008.

Although the CCSS initiative began earlier, the SCDE began working with the EOC regarding adoption of these standards in 2009 in preparing its initial application for the Race to the Top grant for submission to the US Department of Education (USED) in January 2010. A requirement of the Race to the Top program was that states demonstrate their commitment to and progress toward adopting a common set of K–12 standards.

In November 2009, staff from the SCDE and the EOC attended a meeting that the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association jointly convened to provide details about the Common Core State Standards Initiative and the timeline for adopting the standards. During this meeting, the EOC and SCDE representatives considered the implications of the timeline for adoption and decided to request a joint meeting of the SBE and the EOC to update all members on the initiative and the timeline; this meeting was held on February 8, 2010.

The SCDE established a Leadership Team to recruit two review panels, one for ELA

and one for mathematics, to examine the draft CCSS documents. To ensure a variety of stakeholders, the team solicited nominations to the panels from the SBE, the EOC, and the state's public school districts; nominations included teachers, school and district administrators, and representatives from higher education and professional organizations. SCDE staff assigned the nominees to one of the two review panels. Because the CCSS ELA standards integrate content from science and social studies to foster thematic instruction and real-life types of problem solving, staff convened science and social studies practitioners to consider the inclusion of science and social studies content in the ELA standards and discuss implications of those content areas if the CCSS were adopted.

The two review panels carefully compared the CCSS content and format to 2007–08 South Carolina standards for ELA and mathematics. This review and alignment process focused on the criteria of comprehensiveness and balance, rigor, measurability, manageability, organization, and communication. Each review panel conducted a standard-by-standard review of its respective CCSS standards (ELA or mathematics) for the assigned grade levels, calculating the percentage that aligned with the state's standards. This analysis culminated in a report on the alignment between the two sets of standards and an assessment of whether the CCSS were at least as rigorous as the 2007–08 state standards (Appendix F).

In many cases, the CCSS aligned with but exceeded the rigor of the current South Carolina standards for ELA and mathematics. Where the review panels identified differences, they convened a working group of their respective panels, recruited additional members for their expertise, and continued meeting to determine whether action was needed to address the specific differences between the two sets of standards. Subsequently, these working groups made recommendations based on what is crucial to student learning and what is necessary for success in subsequent grade levels.

As a result of this review and alignment process, South Carolina deemed that the differences between the state standards for ELA and mathematics and the CCSS did warrant adoption without modifications. Thus, in July 2010, South Carolina adopted the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts* and *Common Core State Standards for Mathematics*. The recommendations of the review panels guided the timeline for implementation.

### Ensuring Success for All Students

South Carolina's college- and career-readiness aspirations extend to all students, including those who need additional support and consideration because English is not their first language or due to a disability. To help ensure that we effectively analyze the linguistic demands of the state's standards to inform development of corresponding standards specific to these students that enable their success, the SCDE is actively participating in two organizations, the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment Consortium (WIDA, [www.wida.us/](http://www.wida.us/)) and the National Center and State Collaborative (<http://www.ncscpartners.org/>).

The WIDA is comprised of 27 member states. It supports academic language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students through high-

quality standards, assessments, research, and professional development for educators. Already WIDA has conducted an alignment study ([www.wida.us/Research/agenda/Alignment](http://www.wida.us/Research/agenda/Alignment)) that found adequate linkage between the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards (2007 edition) and the CCSS for ELA, which suggests that the WIDA standards are an option for consideration as South Carolina revises its English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) standards to align them with CCSS for ELA. WIDA's timeline for revising its CCSS-aligned standards coincides with the state's timeline for the full implementation of the new standards for all of our students (pilot testing in 2012–13, standards revised and field testing by 2013–14, and full implementation by 2014–15).

The SCDE will engage in a process to ensure that the state's ESOL standards are aligned to the 2015 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and mathematics. When last updated in 2006, South Carolina's ESOL standards were closely aligned to the state's 2002 ELA standards. The SCDE worked with the SBE and the EOC to analyze the linguistic demands of the CCSS in ELA to develop aligned ESOL standards that can be used by both ESOL and English immersion content teachers and address social and academic language development across the four language domains (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) in the major content disciplines.

The 2015 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards will be in place for 2015–16. The SCDE is issuing an RFP for an English language learners (ELL) assessment for 2015–16. The RFP will be written for assessments to align with the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards.

The SCDE is continuing to analyze the learning and accommodation factors necessary to ensure that students with disabilities will have the opportunity to access learning content aligned with the 2015 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards. The SCDE will ensure that all activities related to the standards, including outreach, dissemination, and professional development, address the needs of students with disabilities. The SCDE also plans to analyze the learning factors necessary to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities have access to the standards at reduced levels of complexity.

South Carolina is working with the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) to develop an alternate assessment on alternate achievement standards aligned to the CCSS. South Carolina is a partner state in the NCSC, a consortia funded by the USED, Office of Special Education Programs General Supervision Enhancement Grant to develop a system of support, including assessment, curriculum, instruction, and professional development, to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities graduate from high school ready for post-secondary options.

Staff in the SCDE's Office of Assessment and Office of Special Education Services participated with the NCSC to analyze the learning and accommodation factors necessary to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities will have the opportunity to achieve the CCSS in ELA and mathematics. This work included developing linkages to the CCSS in ELA and mathematics, known as Core Content Connectors, which will be the basis of instruction and assessment for students who participate in the alternate assessment aligned to

the CCSS. The SCDE established a 30-member community of practitioners, which included special educators and other stakeholders, to support implementation of professional development related to instruction based on the CCSS for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Following a timeline that coincided with the full implementation of the CCSS in South Carolina, the NCSC member states used the Core Content Connectors to guide instruction by the 2013–14 school year, field test assessment items aligned to the CCSS through the Core Content Connectors, and fully implement the alternate assessment aligned to the CCSS by the 2014–15 school year. NCSC, in which the SCDE is an active member, has developed alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) linked to the CCSS. The Offices of Assessment and Special Education Services will conduct a study during summer 2015 to determine alignment between the Core Content Connectors and the 2015 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards.

### Educating Stakeholders on the Common Core State Standards

South Carolina used multiple approaches to inform stakeholders statewide about the CCSS. Our outreach entails making educators aware of the importance of fully implementing the CCSS, involving the larger community that supports schools through the state’s Regional Education Centers, and communicating to parents through a network of programs to ensure that they are on board with preparing their children for the new standards. In addition to the professional development and supports that the Office of Teacher-Effectiveness provided (to be detailed later in this section), the SCDE provided resources to educators and administrators digitally via the state’s educational television network and the SCDE’s website and leveraged the resources of partnering state and community organizations to inform families, businesses, and institutions of higher education at the local level.

Beginning in 2011, the SCDE released its *Implementing Common Core State Standards for South Carolina* video series through StreamlineSC. A free resource available to all public, private, and home schools in the state, StreamlineSC is a partnership between South Carolina Educational Television (SCETV), the SCDE, and the K–12 Technology Initiative to improve and manage learning resources in the state’s schools. This release reflected the SCDE’s commitment to using a digital platform to enable a more customized approach to deploying CCSS professional development.

Many of the state’s principals, instructional leaders, and district administrators used the *Implementing the Common Core State Standards for South Carolina* videos to develop their plans for implementing the CCSS. The series reinforced to superintendents the importance of establishing strong district implementation teams to lead their schools through the transition to the CCSS. District instructional leaders used the videos to help them assess their district’s human resource capacity to implement the CCSS. For most South Carolina school districts, the issue for educators was not a matter of having enough teachers, but rather a matter of retraining teachers to have the right skills in terms of subject content and pedagogical strategies.

The SCDE began public engagement activities in spring 2013 to help parents and the general public more clearly understand the impact the CCSS would have on instruction. These activities focused on the importance of supporting students, especially children of less-engaged parents, through the CCSS implementation. This outreach included information sessions similar to the community stakeholder meeting process in January 2012 (see Consultation section above) and digital distribution of information directly to stakeholders.

An important resource to help parents and families understand the standards is the Family Friendly Standards that the EOC and the SCDE have published and disseminated ever since the South Carolina Legislature passed the Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act ([www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t59c028.php](http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t59c028.php)) in 2001. The *South Carolina Family Friendly Standards* (<http://www.scfriendlystandards.org/>) are a series of guides to help families understand the South Carolina academic standards; the guides are presented by grade level so that a family can access all of the academic standards for a given grade in one document. The *Family Friendly Standards* are published in English and Spanish and are updated with each cyclical review of academic standards.

Rather than waiting until the full implementation year of 2013–14 to provide *Family Friendly Standards* that reflect the CCSS, the SCDE and the EOC provided updated *Family Friendly Standards* beginning in fall 2012. During the 2012–13 transition year, two versions of the *Family Friendly Standards* were available—one that reflected the current state standards in ELA and mathematics as updated to include the social studies standards that the state adopted in 2011, and a second version that reflected the full implementation of the CCSS for all grades.

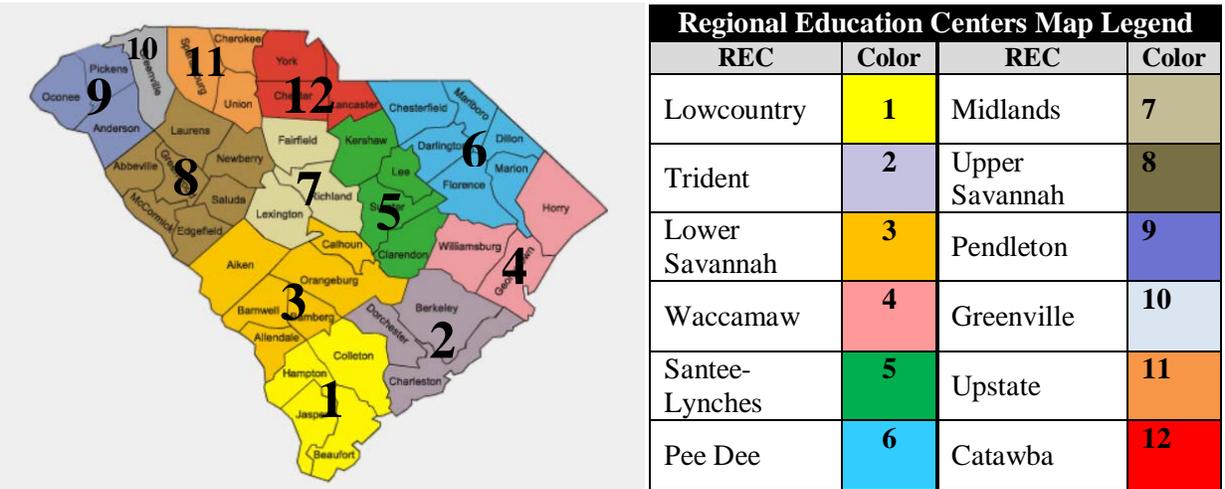
The SCDE provided additional outreach activities to complement the *South Carolina Family Friendly Standards* and communicate the value of the CCSS throughout the state. In March 2012, the SCDE's Office of Teacher Effectiveness provided an informational resource for parents on the CCSS (Appendix G). This resource was made available electronically to inform parents about the new standards, what they mean for students, and the state's plan for implementation.

Another component of the plan to inform and involve the larger community in the implementation of the CCSS was to work with the state's 12 Regional Education Centers. The EEDA established the Regional Education Centers to coordinate and facilitate the delivery of information, resources, and services to students, educators, employers, and the community (<http://recs.sc.gov>) by providing

- services to students and adults for career planning, employment seeking, training, and other support functions;
- information, resources, and professional development programs to educators;
- resources to school districts for compliance and accountability pursuant to the provisions of the EEDA; and
- information and resources to employers including, but not limited to, education partnerships, career-oriented learning, and training services.

The state's counties are clustered into 12 Regional Education Centers as indicated

below.



They work with school districts and institutions of higher education to create and coordinate workforce education programs. The local impact of the Regional Education Centers is driven by the composition of their Advisory Boards, as each consists of

- a school district superintendent;
- high school principal;
- local workforce investment board chairperson;
- technical college president;
- four-year college or university representative;
- career center director or school district career and technology education coordinator;
- parent-teacher organization representative; and
- business and civic leaders.

As the state moves towards using college- and career-ready standards to guide instruction, it stands to reason that Regional Education Centers will continue to play a role in compelling leaders in their respective communities to see the impact that college- and career-ready expectations can have for the long-term viability of their communities.

The SCDE also worked with the state’s Commission on Higher Education to inform institutions of higher education statewide about the transition to college- and career-ready standards. The Division of College and Career Readiness has an established partnership with the state’s colleges of education, regularly meeting with the deans through the South Carolina Education Deans Alliance and representatives from the Commission on Higher Education to exchange information. This forum allows the SCDE to keep the colleges of education aware of the impact the standards will have on the public education system.

On February 12, 2015, the SCDE presented the new 2015 College- and Career-Ready Standards to public four-year institutions via the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs of the Commission of Higher Education. Institutions enrolling more than 50 percent of the higher education students certified that students meeting the standards will not need remediation to perform post-secondary work. (Attachment 5).

## Preparing Teachers to Teach All Students to the Standards

South Carolina intends to provide professional development and other supports for the 2015 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards in a way that will prepare teachers to teach all students. Our plan is to provide professional development that will be customized for districts and schools so that they are able to incorporate the use of multiple measures of student data, benefit from coordinated services from the SCDE, and understand how to incorporate aligned instructional materials to teach the new standards.

South Carolina's system of delivering professional development is evolving. Over the next few years we will incorporate more targeted professional development to help teachers and principals understand how to use student performance data continuously to improve instruction. The South Carolina Longitudinal Information Center for Education—SLICE—will assist with this process.

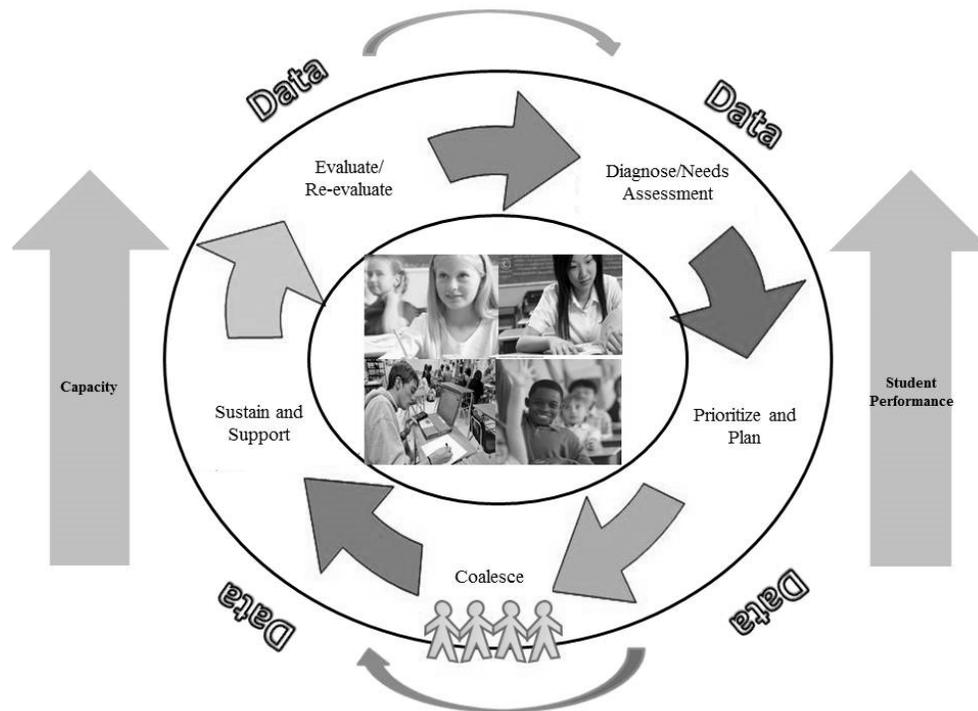
In 2006, the SCDE received a Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) grant from the USED which allowed us to build a statewide data system to store and analyze educational data. In July 2010, the SCDE received a second SLDS grant to expand the use of educational data in decision-making at the school and classroom levels. When fully implemented, SLICE will provide access to educational data so that day-to-day decisions can be made about meeting individual student's needs. This web-based solution will inform teachers of specific student needs and will suggest educational strategies and activities to address those needs.

To provide data for informed decision-making related to individual students or groups of students, the SCDE developed the Student Potential Performance Snapshot (SPPS) and released it in SLICE. The SPPS is available to every school and district in the state, detailing information on every student to provide early warnings about low-performing students who are at-risk of not advancing to the next grade or of not graduating. The SPPS provides information for determining effective strategies and programs for improving academic performance and getting a student on course for graduation. The Enrich Assess system is another performance tool currently available in every district and school in the state to provide early warning of low-performing students through the analysis of academic assessments.

We want our teachers to be more effective at using multiple measures of student performance data to guide instruction. The SCDE will support teachers' capacity to use the assessments that they develop to check for student understanding. Over time, teachers will strengthen their ability to use the state-approved formative assessments as objective measures of how well students are progressing toward mastering the new standards.

When designing professional development offerings, the engages an implementation cycle: conducting an assessment of current needs, developing a plan of action, implementing the plan of action, and evaluating the plan of action's success based on outcomes, such as improved student performance and an increase in teacher effectiveness (see graphic below).

## Professional Development Cycle



This professional development initiative is an example of the dynamic process of moving from development to delivery. Following this cycle, the Office of Standards and Learning will offer professional development and other supports to districts using a hybrid delivery model. In addition, the Division of Educator Effectiveness is developing a model for continuous evaluation and quality improvement of all professional development delivered in the state.

To bridge the gap between development and delivery, the then SCDE's Offices of Policy and Research and Teacher Effectiveness collaborated on a Timeline for Professional Development (Appendix H) to guide the transition to the CCSS.

The SCDE partnered with SEDL (Southwest Educational Developmental Laboratory), beginning in 2010–11, to develop video training modules to clarify the meaning of each of the CCSS standards and provide illustrations and samples to help teachers, schools, and states better understand implementing the new standards.

In September 2011, the then Office of Policy and Research reminded each district to establish a District Implementation Team, with representatives from each grade band and content area, to serve as the conduit for district-level support on the CCSS implementation. The District Implementation Teams are an example of the “train-the-trainer” delivery model the SCDE uses to build internal capacity in districts and schools across the state. The

designated leader of each District Implementation Team is the team’s liaison with the SCDE.

Following the establishment of the District Implementation Teams, the SCDE released a video series to provide an overview of the CCSS and guide the creation of a district transition plan from the current state standards to the new standards.

In November 2011, the then Office of Teacher Effectiveness held regional sessions throughout the state entitled *Common Core State Standards: Transitioning from Awareness to Implementation*. These sessions provided an overview of the SCDE’s professional development delivery model for the CCSS and resources for developing or refining a district’s plan for integrating the CCSS into classroom practice. Both the presentation and resources were provided electronically to assist the team leaders in planning professional learning opportunities for their District Implementation Team and teachers.

Following these sessions, the then Office of Teacher Effectiveness surveyed District Implementation Team leaders using the CCSS for ELA and Mathematics Needs Assessment Survey (Appendix I), which is divided into three sections:

- Implementation Continuum,
- Guiding Questions, and
- Customized Assistance.

From this needs assessment, the SCDE developed a professional development plan to both meet the identified needs and have the greatest statewide impact. Two new resources resulting from this process are

- Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Support Site maintained by the SCDE’s Office of Virtual Education, this digital platform makes a variety of resources and supports accessible 24/7 and enables continuous feedback on implementation from the SCDE.
- The Common Core State Standards Professional Development Series (Appendix J)—the then Office of Teacher Effectiveness presented these face-to-face sessions regionally throughout the state. To accommodate remote/off-site participants, the sessions were web streamed live and also recorded and archived on the CCSS Support Site to facilitate access by those unable to participate at the scheduled time. Virtual follow-up sessions were held via discussion threads and blog posts on the CCSS Support Site.

Based on ongoing virtual updates from the District Implementation Teams, the then Office of Teacher Effectiveness collaborated with other SCDE offices to develop offerings for summer 2012. The K–2 standards for both ELA and mathematics was a specific focus of the summer sessions.

In winter 2012, the SCDE expanded its partnership with SEDL to provide high quality resources to support the Office of Teacher Effectiveness as it works with districts, institutions of higher education, and private vendors to ensure that the districts are developing high-quality transition plans for implementing the CCSS.

As the 2012–13 school year began, the SCDE surveyed districts on their transition

status and results of their transition efforts. The Office of Teacher Effectiveness continued to provide customized and targeted professional development services to schools using a tiered system of support. Throughout the year, the SCDE monitored the efforts of other states, maintained contact with national organizations, and explored school leadership needs through its Office of School Transformation in an effort to assess and evaluate our programs and services.

The SCDE is also partnering with the state's schools of education to provide support to schools and districts on the implementation of college- and career-ready standards. Many of the state's colleges of education have long standing partnerships with school districts that will help facilitate these professional development opportunities. The collaboration between the SCDE and the colleges of education will help ensure all districts receive the assistance and services they need to be successful.

The SCDE regularly meets with the South Carolina Education Deans Alliance, which is comprised of the leadership of the state's 31 colleges of education. These regular meetings provide a forum for exchanging information and synchronizing efforts. Already, the SCDE and the Deans Alliance have had initial discussions on standards implementation, and they will continue to collaborate to create and deliver an action plan for serving the needs of South Carolina's school districts, administrators, and teachers as they transition to and implement the new standards.

South Carolina has incorporated strengthening the system of support for students with disabilities (SWD), economically disadvantaged students, and English language learners (ELL) into its plan for the implementation of the standards. Within the SCDE, the Office of Standards and Learning works cross-divisionally with the Office of Special Education Services to deliver professional development on serving SWD and with the Office of Federal and State Accountability to deliver similar professional development models on serving economically disadvantaged students and ELL. Further, professional development from these two offices is shepherded by the Office of School Transformation, which works specifically with low-performing schools and districts on improvement planning, resources, and evaluation. Identified improvement schools often have high populations of students who are economically disadvantaged so special attention is paid to the needs of these students.

With these populations, our approach is to help all teachers understand their responsibility to serve these students and to empower teachers by embedding differentiated strategies that benefit SWD, economically disadvantaged students, and ELL students into all of the professional development training that the SCDE provides. By offering customized professional development for teachers, the SCDE strives to encourage teachers to design instructional support that is customized or tailored to meet a student's needs.

The SCDE worked with the District Implementation Teams to ensure that the learning and accommodation factors necessary for ELL students to be successful were in place. Our plan embeds support for and training on instructional strategies for ELL students into the general content training that the Office of Standards and Learning currently conducts. This will build on and strengthen the training that the Office of Federal and State Accountability's

ESOL program conducts.

Currently the ESOL program offers separate professional development on effective strategies to support ELL students. The program conducts numerous meetings each year at the state level including Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) sessions, coaches training, and presentations with national speakers. The content of the training is included in the Teacher Resources (<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/90/TeacherResources.cfm>) that we share with all educators. This training is separate from other professional development that content area teachers attend.

The SCDE's Office of Special Education Services serves students with special needs and offers professional development on effective strategies to support this population. This training is separate from other professional development that content area teachers receive. The program conducts two or three meetings per year at the state level and provides onsite training for districts that request the service.

Our plan to implement the 2015 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards supports our continuing efforts to engage economically disadvantaged students and low-performing students, improve their academic performance, and keep them on course to graduate from high school. Relevant, challenging standards, customized education programs, sound at-risk interventions, and effective professional development combine to drive increased student achievement among these students.

Regarding economically disadvantaged students, the SCDE will provide high quality technical assistance based on data analysis and needs assessments. Also, as teachers are identified for participation in more technical assistance initiatives through the new accountability system and the transition to and implementation of the 2015 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards, emphasis will be placed on instructing economically disadvantaged students in the general curriculum. In addition, the SCDE will focus professional development efforts to improve outcomes for these students through training opportunities that appropriately serve and best meet the needs of these students. Key elements for instruction include using research-based instructional strategies within and across a variety of academic and functional domains, differentiation of instruction for all learners, and instruction in strategic and innovative approaches to learning new concepts and skills. Planned professional development activities include professional development on the 2015 state ELA and mathematics standards and activities through the Read to Succeed Act of 2014, the revised educator evaluation system roll-out, and the annual Research to Practice Professional Development Institute. The Offices of School Transformation and Federal and State Accountability also provide professional development assistance to Priority, Focus, and Support schools. Additionally, the SCDE encourages teachers to participate in the annual summer institute at the Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty at Francis Marion University.

In South Carolina, we believe all students can learn. When students are not performing well, we consider external factors such as the structure of their schedules, the instructional strategies their teachers use, and the overall environments in which they live and attend school.

---

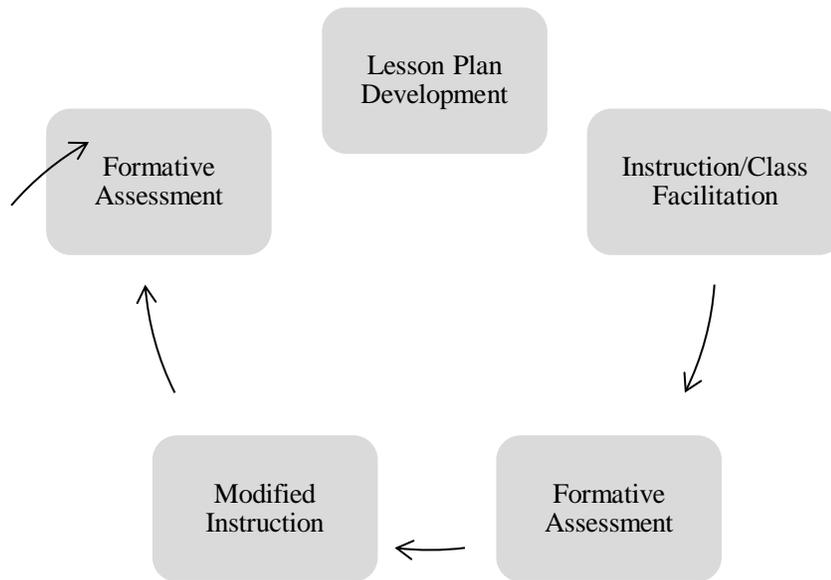
We also consider internal factors—the student’s knowledge, skills, motivation, and aspirations. Our state recognizes that doing the same things the same way will not raise student achievement. Instead, we search for ways to create an educational experience for low-performing students by varying the external and, to the extent possible, internal factors that place the student at-risk.

As part of the EEDA, the state created the *Personal Pathways to Success: At-Risk Student Intervention Implementation Guide* to help schools identify effective programs that are designed to prevent at-risk students from dropping out of high school. This guide evaluates programs using National Dropout Prevention Center’s strategies and external research assessments of the data available for each program. In 2011, the programs in the *Guide* were replaced with more current at-risk models identified by the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (<http://www.dropoutprevention.org/>). Each high school in the state must implement an at-risk student intervention program that is approved by the SCDE to help decrease their drop-out rate.

To assist schools and districts with identifying students and appropriate interventions, the SPPS identifies characteristics that put students at risk of dropping out, including specific attendance issues, discipline problems, and low academic performance. The SPPS identifies areas of need for interventions designed to help the student improve and to motivate the student to stay in school. Every district, school, and student has a calculated South Carolina Risk Index based on ten at-risk characteristics. The ten characteristics are a sub-set of 22 at-risk characteristics that the SPPS can monitor for a student.

Most schools offer a formative assessment during the course of the school year. Most of our schools offer these assessments two or more times a year. The SLICE SPPS application serves as a real-time data portal that allows the administration of each state-approved formative assessment to serve as a data dissemination that empowers guidance counselors, school principals, superintendents, and SCDE student intervention specialists to identify places where student progress is not projected to reach the state expectation of standards mastery. SLICE SPPS provides access to data on long-term student performance down to the individual student. Sharing information this way allows for meaningful communication so that the state testing system will no longer serve as an account of what did or did not take place during the school year. Rather, the state can more effectively hone the professional development services that we offer specific districts, schools, or teachers by acquiring timely, reliable data. This process will not be tied to any form of sanctions for schools or teachers.

## Student Performance Feedback Loop



We believe that this continuous feedback loop will contribute to the improved performance of ELL, SWD, and low-performing students by serving as an early warning signal that will empower the state to more effectively customize the professional development we offer to districts, schools, and teachers. Principals will also be able to more seamlessly combine the use of information on student performance with the program evaluation of various student interventions and programs to more effectively determine the impact interventions and programs have on participating students. The SCDE will update the professional development offered to principals to improve their effectiveness as instructional and program leaders in their schools. As we expand SLICE SPSS and other specialized tools, the SCDE will update its professional development to incorporate the use of these powerful tools.

SLICE specialized applications, such as SPSS, expand on what some schools are already doing. For example, 69 schools in the state are using the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP™). TAP™ uses student performance data to develop customized professional development for participating educators. This professional development is crafted to fit a teacher's needs based on the performance of his or her students. This is also true of schools that have partnered with Edison Learning where educators and students are taught to use student performance to inform instructional practices. While it is very much up to local leaders in schools to determine which specific models to use, the SCDE can assist schools by developing agency and, consequently, district capacity to more effectively use accurate student performance data to provide educators professional development that will ensure that all of their students benefit from the implementation of the South Carolina College- and Career-

## Ready Standards.

However, the SCDE is not waiting for the full expansion of SLICE to update our professional development to reflect the adoption of the standards. While school performance on the pre-2010 ELA and mathematics standards may not predict performance on the new ELA and mathematics standards, we believe schools that are not performing well should receive targeted assistance as they prepare to implement the current standards. Below we describe the process by which the SCDE is providing professional development to assist teachers and principals in preparing for the 2015 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards to guide instruction. Our customization incorporates attention to past school performance to identify instances where strategies to address special populations need to be incorporated into the professional development services.

As needed, the Office of Standards and Learning will coordinate with the Offices of Special Education Services, School Transformation, Student Intervention Services, and Federal and State Accountability to assist districts and schools in a coordinated system of support.

### Preparing Principals to Lead Based on the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards

To successfully implement the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards, school leaders must prioritize changing instruction in their schools. South Carolina has long recognized the importance of developing strong school leaders; indeed, S.C. Code Ann. § 59-24-50 (2004) mandates “continuous professional development programs which meet national standards for professional development and focus on the improvement of teaching and learning....” These programs must “provide training, modeling, and coaching on effective instructional leadership as it pertains to instructional leadership and school-based improvement....”

In fulfillment of this state mandate, the mission of the Office of Leader Effectiveness is to improve school and student achievement by enhancing the effectiveness of school leaders in South Carolina. The Office offers the Leadership Development Continuum for school leaders based on proven research on educational leadership practices in order to provide developmentally appropriate learning opportunities.

The Office of Leader Effectiveness leadership continuum includes leadership education and training for administrators at all phases of their careers. These professional development opportunities begin with programs for teacher leaders and include tailored programs for assistant principals, principals, district staff, guidance personnel, media specialists, and superintendents. Programs last from one to two years and include both on-site and virtual experiences.

The Leadership Development Continuum consists of five learning strands which provide a framework for improving leader effectiveness:

- Leading Student Achievement,

- Leading Change,
- Leading Collaboration,
- Leading an Effective Organization, and
- Leading with Self-Knowledge.

The five learning strands intentionally begin with Leading Student Achievement as this strand is the primary objective and determinant of a truly effective school leader. To prepare school leaders to provide strong, supportive instructional leadership on the standards, the Leading Student Achievement strand will include the following: resources that assist the school leaders with locating high-quality instructional materials aligned to the new standards; face-to-face networking and online discussions with other school leaders; methods to personalize the learning of each student, as well as personalize the professional growth of each staff member; and instructional strategies that add relevance to students' learning.

To ensure that future school leaders are well prepared to serve as instructional leaders based on the state's college- and career-ready standards for the state, the SCDE's Division of College and Career Readiness will emphasize South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards in discussions with the Education Leadership Round Table, which is comprised of leaders of the eleven education leadership preparation programs in South Carolina.

In February 2015, the SCDE also provided all districts and principals with student growth information based upon 2013–14 school year assessment data. Professional development on interpreting this data and analyzing student growth information is assisting leaders in making informed decisions about quality instruction.

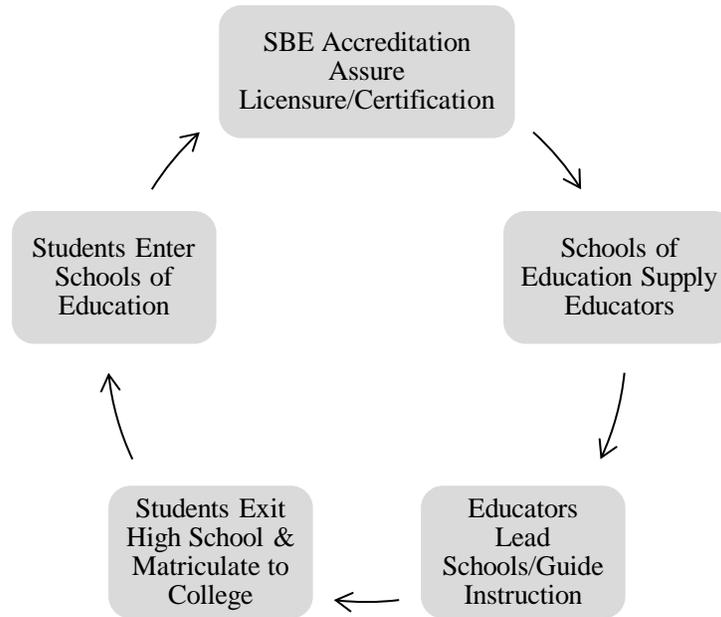
#### Working with South Carolina's Teacher and Principal Preparation Programs Regarding the College- and Career-Ready Standards

In addition to preparing veteran educators, it is critically important that newly licensed teachers be prepared for the heightened expectations of the new South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards at the same time we prepare them for the reality that is the modern classroom. Annually, approximately one-third of new teachers are recent graduates of the state's schools of education. While the schools of education are not the only supply of new teachers, they are a substantial influence on the educator labor pool. Raising the quality of instruction is tied to teacher training; poorly trained teachers are not likely to offer high-quality instruction. Although out-of-school factors are by far the largest influences, teachers are the largest in-school factor influencing student achievement. Consequently, it is essential that the SCDE, the Commission on Higher Education, and the institutions of higher education across the state collaborate on the state objective to increase the high school graduation rate and the number of college- and career-ready graduates.

The SBE is the accrediting body for schools of education that wish for their teacher candidates to attain certification and licensure upon program completion. This solidifies a partnership between the elementary and secondary education system and the post-secondary education system in which the investment for effectiveness of educator certification programs returns to them in the students who eventually matriculate to their institutions of higher

education (see graphic below).

### Strong Schools of Education, Strong College Matriculants



The SCDE's Division of College and Career Readiness will work closely with the state's educator preparation programs and institutions of higher education to ensure that all programs produce highly effective educators who have a deep understanding of the content contained in the state's new standards. The SBE also plays an important role in driving the changes that will need to take place in the state's schools of education.

South Carolina's SBE requires that all teacher education programs meet the performance-based standards as established by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Statutory authority to determine accreditation decisions for and impose sanctions against teacher education programs is granted to the SBE. For SBE approval, public institutions must seek and receive CAEP accreditation. Private institutions may seek CAEP accreditation or meet CAEP standards for SBE approval. The SCDE develops guidelines to assist teacher education programs to meet the CAEP performance-based standards.

Through its Divisions of Educator Effectiveness and College and Career Readiness, the SCDE routinely works with the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education and the institutions of higher education across the state to properly accredit institutions and to communicate standards implementation timelines and expectations. This coordination is essential to the partnership the SCDE and schools of education share in preparing teachers and educators who are new entrants to the classroom or those changing the role they serve in the state's system of public schools.

The SCDE convenes the South Carolina Education Deans Alliance, which consists of the deans of the schools of education across the state. A representative from the South

Carolina Commission on Higher Education also participates in the Deans Alliance. The Deans Alliance is the mechanism by which the SCDE vets proposed changes to the requirements schools of education must meet in order for their programs to lead to certification for their teacher or principal candidates. The Deans Alliance also helps inform the deans of the schools of education on ways in which practices within the schools of education can better support the elementary and postsecondary schools that they indirectly serve. This relationship is an important one as it facilitates communication regarding changes in the classroom that are relevant to raising student achievement and increasing the quality of instruction.

The Division of College and Career Readiness and the Deans Alliance had discussions on implementation of the standards. The schools of education will continue to collaborate to create and deliver an action plan for serving the needs of South Carolina school districts, administrators, and teachers as they implement the standards. In fall 2012, the SCDE reviewed and aligned its professional standards for teacher licensure with the new standards and indicators for teacher evaluation, which are linked to the state's standards. Together, these two strategies—formally updating accreditation and informally coordinating with the deans of the schools of education—will ensure that incoming teachers and administrative leaders are prepared to implement the new college- and career-ready standards in classrooms.

As mentioned previously, many schools of education have long-standing partnerships with districts that will help facilitate these professional development opportunities. The collaboration between the SCDE and the schools of education will help ensure all districts receive the assistance and services they need to be successful.

Various initiatives of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education strengthen our state's effort to improve the quality of instruction. The Improving Teacher Quality program is a collaboration between higher education and the pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade (P–12) system that will ensure that in-service teachers and principals are prepared to use the standards. The Commission on Higher Education uses the funds provided by the Improving Teacher Quality program to conduct a competitive awards program, *Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers and Principals*. The program supports increasing student academic achievement through strategies such as improving teacher and principal quality and increasing the number of highly qualified teachers in classrooms and highly qualified principals and assistant principals in schools by focusing on improving the content knowledge of the teachers and/or administrators in the content area they teach.

The Commission provides a competitive grants program to partnerships comprised, at a minimum, of schools of education and divisions of arts and sciences from higher education institutions along with one or more high-need school districts as identified by federal guidelines.

The Improving Teacher Quality program provides the Commission with the ability to expand its professional development offerings to the P–12 community to cover nine content areas and reach other school personnel. The program seeks to bring together higher education faculty and P–12 school personnel to foster mutually beneficial partnerships based on sustained professional development. The ultimate goal of the partnership is improved student

achievement. The Commission on Higher Education has begun working with the SCDE to update the professional development provided under the *Improving Teacher Quality* program.

Higher education collaboration for the implementation of the standards is also supported by South Carolina's Centers of Excellence program. The South Carolina General Assembly created the Centers of Excellence program to enable institutions of higher education to create state-of-the-art resource centers to improve teacher education. Resource centers develop and model state-of-the-art teaching practices, conduct research, disseminate information, and provide training for K–12 and higher education personnel in the Center's specific area of expertise.

Any institution of higher education in the state authorized by the SBE to offer one or more degree programs at graduate or undergraduate levels for the preparation of teachers is eligible to apply. A Center must focus on the development and modeling of state-of-the-art teacher training programs (in-service and pre-service) at the host institution as well as serve as a catalyst for changing teacher training programs at other institutions of higher education which prepare and support teachers. A Center should enhance the institution's professional development programs as an integral part of its mission and focus services on low-performing schools as identified under the EAA's annual report cards.

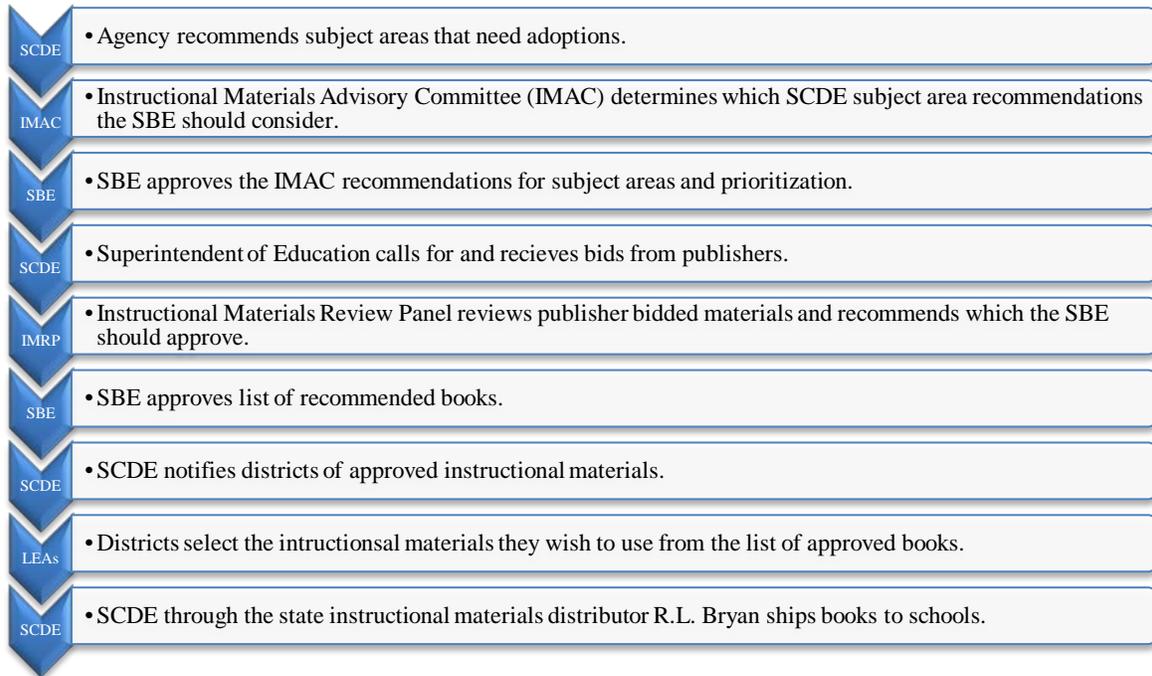
The Centers of Excellence will foster the implementation of the college- and career-ready standards by updating their models for teaching practices to reflect the instructional changes that are necessary for the standards to guide instruction by 2013–14. The SCDE and Commission on Higher Education will continue to work collaboratively on this effort.

#### Developing and Disseminating High-Quality Instructional Materials Aligned with the Standards

South Carolina's commitment to providing teachers and students with the instructional materials they need to effectively implement the standards is reflected in the SCDE's commitment to investing in instructional materials that will support the implementation of the standards. This comes at a time when the state is struggling with a recession that has limited the availability of resources. Additionally, the very concept of instructional materials is changing to reflect the digitization of content delivery and democratization of content development.

South Carolina has prioritized providing students and teachers with instructional materials that support implementing the standards as part of the state's existing practice for the instructional materials process that occurs any time the state adopts standards. With the adoption of new academic content standards, state statute and regulations require that the SBE evaluate the instructional materials currently in use in South Carolina classrooms to analyze whether or not existing books are aligned with the newly adopted standards. This process is conducted via the Instructional Materials Adoption Cycle.

## Instructional Materials Adoption Cycle



The Instructional Materials Adoption Cycle takes approximately 18 months from the initial meeting of the IMAC to the teachers receiving materials for use in her or his classroom.

The state is investing in our students' futures by investing in instructional materials that are compatible with college- and career-ready standards. The following table presents the timeline for when instructional materials will be distributed to schools.

State Standards Instructional Materials Planning Timeline	
<b>School Year 2012–13</b>	
Summer 2012	ELA Kindergarten–Grade 2
	ELA Grade 3–5
	Algebra
	Geometry
	Calculus
	Probability and Statistics
	Discrete Math
<b>School Year 2013–14</b>	
Summer 2013	ELA Grades 6–8
	Math Kindergarten-Grade 5
<b>School Year 2014–15</b>	
Summer 2014	ELA Grades 9–12
	Math Algebra II
	Math Probability and Statistics

## Courses to Prepare Students for College and Careers

In middle school, students may take high school courses in ELA and mathematics. SBE Regulation 43–232 (Defined Program for Middle Schools) allows seventh- and eighth-grade students to take high school courses for credit.

The EEDA required the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education to convene the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs to address articulation agreements between school districts and public institutions of higher education in South Carolina to provide seamless pathways that adequately prepare students to move from high school directly into institutions of higher education. The law requires dual enrollment college courses offered to high school students by two-year and four-year colleges and universities to be the same in content and rigor to the equivalent college courses offered to college students and to be taught by appropriately credentialed faculty.

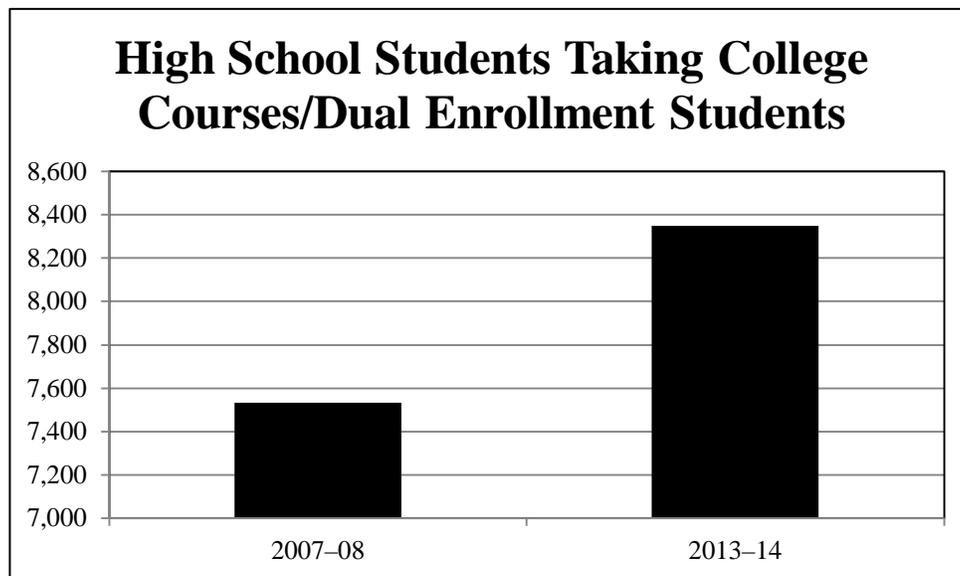
The Commission on Higher Education sets guidelines for offering dual enrollment coursework and their articulation to two-year and four-year colleges and universities, reporting annually on student participation in dual enrollment courses. The Commission also created the South Carolina Transfer and Articulation Center (SC TRAC), a web portal designed to improve college course transfer and articulation in the State. SC TRAC serves all public higher education students, including students who are participating in dual enrollment programs. The system helps students plan their education by giving them the ability to see how coursework earned at one college or university would apply at other institutions of higher learning within the state by providing easy access to transfer policies, transfer agreements, course equivalencies, and detailed and up-to-date information on degree pathways.

As of October 2011, SC TRAC was populated with approximately 551,000 course equivalencies and 770 transfer agreements between and among public institutions of higher education in the state. So strong is the service that the Commission provides that in 2011, the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) recognized SC TRAC as the winner of the PESC 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Competition for Best Practices (<https://www.sctrac.org/portals/8/SCFiles/PESC%20BestPractices-Awards03-2011.pdf>).

The EEDA is changing the expectations for high school student access to college credit-bearing courses and their prerequisites. Systems like SC TRAC support this increased demand by removing the barrier to access that was once represented by unclear or inconsistent course transfer policies, which made it difficult for students seeking to plan their courses. College-bound high school students may also take advantage of SC TRAC to

- learn about each public college and university in South Carolina;
- learn about the programs (majors, minors, and concentrations) and degrees offered at each public college and university;
- discover how college credit will be awarded for Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams; and
- discover how college credit will be awarded for dual enrollment and other college courses taken while in high school.

South Carolina is seeing an increase in the number of students participating in dual enrollment courses (see chart below).

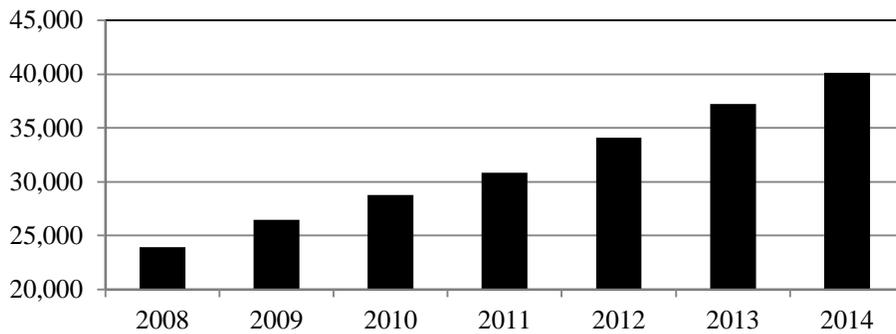


Since 1984, each school district in South Carolina has been required to provide Advanced Placement (AP) courses in all secondary schools that include grade 11 or 12. These classes prepare students for the national AP examinations. Students who score 3, 4, or 5 on an AP exam, in many instances, are considered qualified to receive credit for the equivalent course(s) at colleges and universities that give credit for AP exams. In accordance with state policy, all public colleges and universities in South Carolina award credit for AP exams with scores of 3 or higher.

South Carolina is increasing the number of students taking AP courses, the number of students taking AP exams, and the number of exams with scores of 3 to 5 (see chart below: “Students Taking AP Courses”). We believe this represents an increased expectation of college and career readiness among students and parents alike.

The number of exams taken in South Carolina public schools rose from nearly 24,000 in 2008 to 40,122 in 2014, an increase of 67.9 percent. Of South Carolina public school students taking AP examinations in 2014, 57 percent earned scores of 3 or higher (22,674 out of 40,122); this equals the national percentage of 57 percent of examinations with scores of 3 or higher for public school students during the same period.

## Students Taking AP Courses



### Assessments of the State Standards

South Carolina's EAA requires the procurement of assessments in ELA and mathematics for grades 3–8 that align to the state standards. Additionally, it requires procurement of a college- and career-readiness assessment for students in grade eleven. A contract to meet this requirement was awarded to ACT, Inc. The ACT Aspire™ will be administered to students in grades 3–8 and The ACT® will be administered to students in grade 11 in Spring 2015.

Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), the only other company that submitted a proposal, protested the contract award to ACT, Inc. A hearing was held on November 19, 2014. The decision of the Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) on December 18, 2014, was that since “the award to ACT was in violation of the Code the CPO directs that the contract be terminated at the end of the first year, in lieu of the three year term provided for in the solicitation. The Budget and Control Board is ordered to resolicit these requirements and award a contract in compliance with the Code.” This decision was appealed to the Budget and Control Board Review Panel. A hearing was held on March 25, 2015. On April 7, 2015, the South Carolina Procurement Review Panel signed an order that upheld the CPO's ruling. Therefore, the state is beginning the process to procure assessments for spring 2016 by releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP).

The SCPASS in science and social studies is aligned to the state's science and social studies standards and is administered to students in grades 4–8.

End-of-Course Examination Program tests in English 1, Algebra 1, and Biology 1 are aligned to the state standards. The English 1 and Algebra 1 tests are aligned to the CCSS and will be updated to align to the state's 2015 ELA and mathematics standards for 2015–16. These examinations are administered to students when they complete the applicable courses.

Alternate assessments for ELA and mathematics have been developed through the NCSC. The SC-Alt assessment was developed in-state for social studies, science, and biology and is aligned to the applicable state standards.

Each public school student in South Carolina is assigned a unique student identifier that is tied to their performance throughout the course of their K–12 career. From grade 3, the state will be able to use SLICE to evaluate the impact of the specific courses a student has taken and the interventions that they have received on their long-term performance. The Governing Partners in SLICE include the Department of Employment and Workforce, the Commission on Higher Education, and the South Carolina Board of Technical Colleges. Using SLICE as the platform, the SCDE will be able to connect the performance of students at any point in the assessment system to college-going and college-credit accumulation rates.

In December 2013, South Carolina began reporting college-going and college-credit accumulation rates through the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Program Indicators. Also in January 2014, SLICE became operational. The state now has access to summary student performance data by district and school via the SLICE Public Data Dashboards. In fall 2015, teachers, school principals, district administrators, and selected educational support staff will have secure access to the appropriate level of detailed data to support their roles and responsibilities.

Future Direction

The agencies over K–12 public education in South Carolina (SCDE, SBE, and the EOC) have joined with the S.C. Association of School Administrators, the State Chamber of Commerce, and the S.C. Council on Competitiveness in adopting the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate as the vision for the future of public education. We want all students to graduate from high school with world class knowledge, skills, and life characteristics.

To make this vision a reality, we need college- and career-ready content standards *and* aligned systems of assessment, accountability, funding, educator preparation, educator evaluation and professional development, learning, and state supports. Task forces within South Carolina and networks of like-minded states around the country are working to define the elements of these aligned

The infographic features the South Carolina Department of Education logo at the top left. The title "Profile of the South Carolina Graduate" is prominently displayed in blue. Below the title is a globe icon and the sub-heading "World Class Knowledge". This section lists two bullet points: "Rigorous standards in language arts and math for career and college readiness" and "Multiple languages, science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), arts and social sciences".

Below the knowledge section are two columns of bullet points. The left column, titled "World Class Skills", lists: "Creativity and innovation", "Critical thinking and problem solving", "Collaboration and teamwork", "Communication, information, media and technology", and "Knowing how to learn". The right column, titled "Life and Career Characteristics", lists: "Integrity", "Self-direction", "Global perspective", "Perseverance", "Work ethic", and "Interpersonal skills".

At the bottom, it states "Approved by SCASA Superintendent's Roundtable and SC Chamber of Commerce SC Education Oversight Committee, SC State Board of Education, & SC Dep't of Education". The name "Molly Spearman - State Superintendent of Education" is written in a large, blue font at the very bottom.

systems and the steps necessary for implementation, continuous improvement, and scale up for the entire state.

In spring 2015, the SCDE is convening stakeholders to begin work on defining competencies and learning progressions aligned to the Profile. The project is combining work on the progressions, creation of performance assessments, professional development on the new state standards and the Read to Succeed Act of 2014, and training on Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) used in the expanded educator evaluation systems. Curriculum-embedded performance assessments and learning progressions will move students to deeper learning along personalized pathways. Melding the performance assessment with SLO training will assist educators with the “student-growth” measures needed to improve teaching and learning. Combining the learning progression development with training on the new standards and new statutory requirements will give educators their own opportunity for deeper learning on the goals students must achieve. Once the state has developed learning progressions and performance assessments, the SCDE anticipates proposing that results on those assessments be combined with other measures as part of the state’s accountability dashboard system.

<b>Plan for Implementation</b>					
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Party or Parties Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Significant Obstacles</b>
<b>English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Standards Analysis and Revision</b>					
ESOL information updates for district office personnel and ESOL instructors	May 2012	Office of Federal and State Accountability	<a href="http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/90/">http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/90/</a>	Staff time	South Carolina is awaiting the product that WIDA will produce to ensure that we are not duplicating the consortia’s work in our alignment process for the SC ESOL standards
Revise the South Carolina English Speakers of Other Languages Standards (ESOL) to align with CCSS by adopting the WIDA ELL Standards	June 2012	Office of Federal and State Accountability and SBE	<a href="http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/90/">http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/90/</a> <a href="https://www.wida.us/standards/eld.aspx">https://www.wida.us/standards/eld.aspx</a>	Staff time	
District Implementation Teams updated on the pending revisions to ESOL Standards	June 2012	Offices of Teacher Effectiveness and Federal and State Accountability	CCSS site <a href="http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/190/">http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/190/</a>	Staff time	
Pilot Testing for newly revised South Carolina ESOL Standards	August 2012– June 2013	Office of Federal and State Accountability		Staff time	
ESOL program updates: LEA training updated to reflect the new ELL standards	July 2013	Office of Federal and State Accountability	<a href="http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/90/TeacherResources.cfm">http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/90/TeacherResources.cfm</a>	Staff time	
Full implementation of ESOL Standards	August 2014– June 2015	Office of Federal and State Accountability	<a href="https://www.wida.us/membership/sates/SouthCarolina.aspx">https://www.wida.us/membership/sates/SouthCarolina.aspx</a>	Staff time	

			<a href="https://www.wida.us/standards/eld.aspx">https://www.wida.us/standards/eld.aspx</a>		
<b>Students With Disabilities</b>					
Finalize development of Core Content Connectors via membership in National Center and State Collaboration Consortia	Summer 2012	Office of Federal and State Accountability	<a href="http://www.ncscpartners.org/about">http://www.ncscpartners.org/about</a>	Staff time	South Carolina is awaiting the product that NCSC will produce to ensure that we are not duplicating the consortia's work in our alignment process for the CCSS since the Extended Standards relate to the extensions to the previous ELA and math standards
Prioritize Core Content Connectors that will comprise an alternate assessment that is aligned to CCSS	Summer 2012	Office of Federal and State Accountability	<a href="https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/Main_Page">https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/Main_Page</a>	Staff time	
Develop training on Core Content Connectors curriculum design and instruction	November 2011–August 2012	Office of Federal and State Accountability		Staff time	
Create professional development for Core Content Connectors	November 2011–August 2012	Office of Federal and State Accountability	<a href="http://www.ncscpartners.org/professional-development">http://www.ncscpartners.org/professional-development</a>	Staff time	
Design validity evaluation for Core Content Connectors	November 2011–August 2012	Office of Federal and State Accountability		Staff time	
Conduct District Implementation Team training updated to incorporate aspects of Core Content Connectors	September 2012	Office of Teacher Effectiveness	<a href="http://www.ncscpartners.org/professional-development">http://www.ncscpartners.org/professional-development</a>	Staff time	
Train LEAs on use of Core Content Connectors via DTC-Alt Pretest Workshop	November–December 2012	Office of Federal and State Accountability		Staff time	
Train LEAs on use of Core Content Connectors via SC-ALT District Training	January–February 2013	Office of Federal and State Accountability		Staff time	
Train LEAs on use of Core Content	Summer 2013	Office of Federal and State Accountability		Staff time	

Connectors via SC-ALT District Training					
Use Core Content Connectors to guide instruction	August 2013– June 2014	Office of Federal and State Accountability	<a href="http://www.ncsca.org/about">http://www.ncsca.org/about</a>	Staff time	
Field test assessment tasks aligned to Core Content Connectors	October– November 2014	Office of Federal and State Accountability	<a href="http://www.ncsca.org/about">http://www.ncsca.org/about</a>	Staff time	
Fully implement Core Content Connectors in all schools	August 2014– June 2015	Office of Federal and State Accountability	<a href="http://www.ncsca.org/about">http://www.ncsca.org/about</a>	Staff time	
Fully implement Alternate Assessment on Alternate Achievement Standards aligned to the CCSS through the Core Content Connectors in all schools	August 2014–and updated as needed due to changes in standards	Office of Federal and State Accountability	<a href="http://www.ncsca.org/about">http://www.ncsca.org/about</a>	Staff time	
Convene committee to determine alignment between the SC College- and Career-Ready Standards and the Core Content Connectors	Summer 2015	Offices of Special Education Services and Assessment		Staff time	
If aligned, continue full implementation.		Offices of Special Education Services and Assessment		Staff time	
If not aligned, prioritize and align to South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards.	Fall 2015	Offices of Special Education Services and Assessment		Staff time	
<b>Outreach and Dissemination on State Standards</b>					
Professional development videos developed; disseminated the <i>Implementing Common Core State Standards for South Carolina</i> video series	September 2011– August 2012	Office of Policy and Research	<a href="http://www.sctev.org/education/streamlines/">http://www.sctev.org/education/streamlines/</a>	Staff time	Ensuring equitable impact across the state
District Implementation Teams	September 2011	Office of Policy and Research		Staff Time	District compliance

established					
CCSS: Transitioning from Awareness to Implementation Professional Development	November–December 2011	Office of Teacher Effectiveness	Appendix H	Staff time and funding	Ensuring equitable impact across the state
Administered CCSS for English Language Arts and Mathematics Needs Assessment Survey to District Implementation Teams	December 2011	Office of Teacher Effectiveness	Appendix I: CCSS for English Language Arts and Mathematics Needs Assessment Survey		District compliance
Created the CCSS Support Site	January 2012	Office of Teacher Effectiveness	CCSS Site <a href="http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/190/">http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/190/</a>  CCSS Support Site <a href="http://scde.mroo.ms.org/index.php?page=27424">http://scde.mroo.ms.org/index.php?page=27424</a>	Staff time	
Updated the Regional Education Center Advisory Board on Nature of Common Core State Standards	January 2012	Office of Policy and Research		Staff Time	
Updated SBE on implementation of CCSS	February 2012	Offices of Policy and Research, Assessment, and Teacher Effectiveness		Staff Time	
CCSS sessions for SC Schools of Education	February 2012	Office of Teacher Effectiveness		Staff time and funding	SC CoE attendance
CCSS Spring and Summer Seminar Series	February 2012–August 2012	Office of Teacher Effectiveness	CCSS Site <a href="http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/190/">http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/190/</a>	Staff time and funding	Ensuring equitable impact across the state
Disseminate CCSS Informational Resource for Parents	March 2012	Office of Teacher Effectiveness	Appendix G	Staff Time	
Meet with South Carolina Deans Alliance (SCDA) to provide update on SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortia recommendations	March 2012	Division of School Effectiveness		Staff Time	

Provide SCDA the CCSS Informational Resource for Parents	March 2012	Office of Teacher Effectiveness		Staff Time	
Meet with local representatives of minority and civil rights groups	March 2012–March 2013	Office of Policy and Research		Staff Time	
Provide Regional Educational Centers the CCSS Informational Resource for Parents	April 2012	Office of Policy and Research		Staff Time	
Reconvene civil rights and minority stakeholder group (state level)	April 2012–June 2012	Office of Policy and Research		Staff time	
Meet with Regional Education Committees (RECs) to share presentation <i>CCSS and the EEDA</i>	April 2012–April 2013	Office of Policy and Research		Staff Time	
Provide SCDA an overview of the updates to CCSS Professional Development	May 2012	Office of Teacher Effectiveness		Staff time	
Administer CCSS Needs Assessment to District Implementation Teams on their transition status and results of their transition efforts	August 2012	Office of Teacher Effectiveness	Appendix I: CCSS for ELA and Mathematics Needs Assessment Survey	Staff time	District compliance
CCSS Fall Seminar Series	September 2012–August 2013	Office of Teacher Effectiveness	Appendix J	Staff time and funding	Ensuring equitable impact across the state
Update SCDA on the release of Family Friendly Standards	September 2012	Office of Teacher Effectiveness	<a href="http://www.eoc.sc.gov/informationforfamilies/familystandards/Pages/default.aspx">http://www.eoc.sc.gov/informationforfamilies/familystandards/Pages/default.aspx</a>	Staff time	
Disseminate the Family Friendly Standards to SICs/PTOs/PTAs	January 2013	EOC	<a href="http://www.eoc.sc.gov/informationforfamilies/familystandards/Pages/default.aspx">http://www.eoc.sc.gov/informationforfamilies/familystandards/Pages/default.aspx</a>	EOC Staff time and funding	
Provide REC Advisory Panel the Family Friendly Standards	April 2013	Office of Policy and Research		Staff time	

Meeting with RECs to share Family Friendly Standards	April 2013–April 2014	Office of Policy and Research		Staff time	
Summer Institutes	June–July 2013	Office of Teacher Effectiveness		Staff time and funding	
Research to Practice Institutes	July 2013	Office of Teacher Effectiveness		Staff time	
ELA Instructional Materials Alignment Review Grades 6–12	July 2013	Office of Teacher Effectiveness		Staff time and funding	
Literacy Leaders Institutes	July 2013–June 2014	Offices of Teacher Effectiveness and School Transformation		Staff time (Literacy Specialists) and funding	
Implementing the CCSS for Principals	August 2013–March 2014	Offices of Standards and Learning, Assessment, Educator Evaluation, Career and Technology Education, Special Education Services, and Federal and State Accountability	<a href="http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/190/">http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/190/</a>	Staff time	
Instructional Materials Caravan for Selecting CCSS Aligned Materials	January 2014	Office of Standards and Learning		Staff time	
Summer Institutes	June–July 2014	Office of Standards and Learning		Staff time	
Research to Practice	July 2014	Office of Standards and Learning		Staff time	
Numeracy Leaders Training	August 2014–June 2015	Office of Standards and Learning.		Staff time	
Professional Development Needs Assessment Survey to District Instructional Leaders	March 2015	Office of Standards and Learning		Staff time	
SC College- and Career-Ready Standards Overview for District Leaders	May 2015	Office of Standards and Learning		Staff time	
Plan and develop Professional Development based on Needs	April–May 2015	Office of Standards and Learning		Staff time and funding	

Assessment data					
Professional Development and Support Document Development	June 2015–June 2018	Office of Standards and Learning		Staff time and funding	

Timeline for the Development of the New South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and Mathematics		
Date	Task	Notes
	<i>The SCDE appointed a state team that includes English and math experts along with experts in testing, special needs education, English language learners, and/or early childhood education specialists. This team will develop new standards and indicators.</i>	
June 3, 2014	Memorandum requesting nominations of ELA and math experts was distributed	
June 23, 2014	Parent, educator, business, and community leader taskforce nomination link was provided to the public.	
June 30, 2014	Nominations Deadline for State Writing Team members	Nominations will be sorted by content area, job position including higher education, and demographics.
Week of July 1, 2014	State Team Finalized	SCDE ELA and math staff will meet concurrently to ensure the selections are of high quality and representative of the categories mentioned above as well as geographically balanced and inclusive of multiple leadership levels in the educational system.
July 7, 2014	State Team Notification letters mailed	A notification letter will include required meeting dates and preparatory materials and instructions for those selected (e.g. review the standards of Alaska, Nebraska, Virginia, Florida, Indiana, Texas, and Minnesota (Math only)).
	<i>The SCDE will prepare a field review version of the new standards in collaboration with other SCDE offices as appropriate.</i>	
July 21, 2014	First Math Meeting	Dr. Zais will provide opening remarks, instructing panelists that Common Core will not be the basis of the rewrite.
August 1, 2014	First ELA Meeting	
August 4, 5, 11, 12, 19, 20, 26, 27, and September 3, 2014	The math team determined how to meet college- and career-ready requirements and overarching themes (depth, fluency, etc.)	
August 6, 7, 12, 13, 20, 21, 27, 28, and September 2, 2014	The ELA team determined how to meet college- and career-ready requirements and overarching themes (text complexity, writing, reading, listening, and speaking across the content areas, etc.)	
September 1–30, 2014	Grade band teams work; meeting schedule to be determined.	Writing Team members and their supervisors signed a letter of commitment assuring the SCDE that the

**Timeline for the Development of the New South Carolina  
College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and Mathematics**

Date	Task	Notes
		team member will be released from their normal employment to allow attendance at a required meetings.
September 15–October 15, 2014	Group meetings of the state team to ensure vertical alignment and spiraling structure of standards.	
October 15–30, 2014	Internal SCDE review and approval of the new standards.	
October 16, 2014	Presentation of draft standards to Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) of the Commission on Higher Education (CHE).	Dissemination of draft standards by this group to their content experts will provide the assurances needed for the CHE to certify that the standards are college-ready.
	<i>The SCDE disseminated the draft of the new standards to parents, business and community leaders, South Carolina educators, discipline-based focus groups, EOC-led panels, and others for a field review period of thirty days. Public comments were accepted and encouraged.</i>	
November 1–30, 2014	Public field review, Task Force review, and EOC review. More than 4,200 online, field-review submissions were received in addition to feedback from the SCDE Task Force and the EOC Review Panels.	Via online review and survey.
December 1–15, 2014	State teams reconvened to respond to and incorporate feedback into final draft standards. Final revisions and formatting.	
January 6, 2015	Joint Meeting for ELA—representatives from the state team, EOC Review Team, SBE, and Higher Education	
January 7, 13, and 14, 2015	Joint Meeting for Math—representatives from the state team, EOC Review Team, SBE, and Higher Education	
	<i>The SCDE submitted the new proposed academic standards to the SBE for first-reading approval.</i>	
January 21, 2015	SBE First Reading for ELA	
February 11, 2015	SBE First Reading for Math	
February 11–20, 2015	Notification received from the University of South Carolina system, Lander University, Francis Marion University and Clemson University certifying the SC College- and Career-Ready Standards	
February 12, 2015	Presented final version of standards to ACAP group of the CHE.	
	<i>After receiving SBE first-reading approval, the new proposed academic standards will be sent to the EOC for action. The ASA subcommittee of the EOC will then recommend to the full EOC the approval of the new standards.</i>	

**Timeline for the Development of the New South Carolina  
College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and Mathematics**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Notes</b>
March 2, 2015	ASA of EOC Meeting	
March 9, 2015	Full EOC Approval	
	<i>After the full EOC approves the new standards, they will be sent to the State Superintendent of Education and the chairperson of the SBE for second reading approval. The EOC will provide explanations as to why any new standards were not approved.</i>	
March 11, 2015	SBE Second Reading Approval	
	<i>Once the new standards are approved by the SBE and the EOC, they will be disseminated to South Carolina school personnel and school districts and published on the SCDE website.</i>	
March 15, 2015	Standards published and disseminated.	
April—Summer 2015	Professional Development in Support of the Understanding and Implementation of the South Carolina Standards; support documents developed.	

**Testing Schedule  
2014–15**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Disseminate general information to school districts during Instructional Leaders Roundtable, Chief Academic Officers, and state guidance counselor meetings regarding test formatting and alignment of test to curriculum standards	November 2014–April 2015	Elizabeth Jones is director of the SCDE’s Office of Assessment
Inform parents of testing schedule, testing policies, and administration procedures	December 2014–April 2015	
Schedule and conduct WebEx training sessions for District Test Coordinators	February–March 2015	
Schedule and conduct training sessions for school test coordinators, test administrators, and monitors	February–March 2015	
Administer tests for ELA, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies	April–May 2015	
Make-up testing as needed	May 2015	

## 1.C DEVELOP AND ADMINISTER ANNUAL, STATEWIDE, ALIGNED, HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENTS THAT MEASURE STUDENT GROWTH

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA is participating in one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition.</p> <p>i. Attach the State’s Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under that competition. (Attachment 6)</p>	<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The SEA is not participating in either one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition, and has not yet developed or administered statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3–8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs.</p> <p>i. Provide the SEA’s plan to develop and administer annually, beginning no later than the 2014–2015 school year, statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3–8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs, as well as set academic achievement standards for those assessments.</p>	<p><b>Option C</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA has developed and begun annually administering statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3–8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the SEA has submitted these assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review or attach a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review. (Attachment 7)</p>
---	--	--

The state withdrew from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium on April 14, 2014. Acts 155 and 200, which amended the EAA regarding assessments, were enacted in April and May of 2014. In compliance with these acts, the Executive Director of the State Budget and Control Board, a separate state agency, with the advice and consent of a special assessment panel, directed the procurement of college- and career-readiness assessments to satisfy federal and state accountability purposes for grades 3–8 and 11 in ELA (English, reading, and writing) and mathematics. According to Act 200, the procured assessments are to be administered in 2014–15, 2015–16, and 2016–17. The assessments are also to be administered in 2017–18 and 2018–

19 upon approval of the South Carolina EOC.

A contract was awarded to ACT, Inc. on November 1, 2014, for the administration of the ACT Aspire assessments in grades 3–8 and The ACT (and ACT WorkKeys®) in grade 11 in writing, English, reading, and mathematics. DRC, the only other company that submitted a proposal, protested the award. A hearing was held on November 19, 2014. The December 18, 2014, decision of the Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) provided that since “the award to ACT was in violation of the Code the CPO directs that the contract be terminated at the end of the first year, in lieu of the three year term provided for in the solicitation. The Budget and Control Board is ordered to re-solicit these requirements and award a contract in compliance with the Code.”

This decision was appealed to the Budget and Control Procurement Board Review Panel. While the appeal was being resolved, the SCDE proceeded with plans to administer the ACT Aspire and The ACT assessments for spring 2015. A hearing on the appeal was held on March 25, 2015. On April 7, 2015, the Procurement Review Panel signed an order that upheld the CPO’s ruling. In compliance with that ruling, the state is beginning the process to procure assessments for spring 2016 by writing and releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP).

The SCDE has developed a plan and timeline to ensure high-quality assessments are administered in spring 2016 and beyond. Input is being received from stakeholders in the districts to ensure that, in addition to meeting the needs of the state for accountability purposes, the RFP addresses the needs of those who will be administering the assessment. The RFP will call for evidence of valid and reliable assessments for use in an accountability system. In the RFP, offerors will be required to provide

- test blueprints and item specifications used in development of the proposed assessments. In addition, the offeror will be required to show evidence of the alignment between the blueprints, the item specifications, and the requirements of the 2015 college- and career-ready standards.
- a description of the process followed to review the test items during the development process and the process used to select the items for inclusion in the assessments.
- a description of the scaling methodology that includes documentation of equating and linking studies.
- a description of the scoring process and evidence that scores are valid and reliable.
- test administration procedures, including the use of appropriate accommodations. These procedures must demonstrate that the assessment system has been designed to be valid and accessible for use by the widest possible range of students. Offerors must provide evidence that there is an appropriate variety and number of valid accommodations to meet the needs of students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency and ensure that individuals with expertise in working with students with disabilities and with English language learners were included in the development of the test items and the assessments.
- data analyses and any other evidence to document reliability and validity (for the purpose of identifying students prepared to attend post-high school educational institutions or to successfully obtain and perform in an entry-level career) of the assessments. Selection of

the vendor will depend on the offeror providing documentation of acceptable studies, including using appropriate samples as part of the test development studies and a commitment that the studies will be repeated in-state with the state’s student population. Continuation with the use of the procured assessments will be contingent on the vendor’s willingness/ability to make necessary changes to rectify any deficiencies identified in the studies using the states’ population.

- documentation of alignment that provides evidence that the assessments are
  - aligned comprehensively (i.e., items measure the full range of the standards, address the appropriate range of cognitive complexity, measure the appropriate level of difficulty and depth of knowledge);
  - aligned in terms of both content and process skills;
  - aligned in terms of degree and pattern of emphasis; and
  - reflective of the full range of the state’s achievement standards (i.e., the assessments provide a sufficient number of items to assess students at all levels of achievement).
- a commitment for independent evaluation of alignment of the assessments with the state’s college- and career-ready standards. This evaluation must be conducted in-state with local committees of educators, include stakeholder involvement, and include representatives from diverse populations. The offeror must also address how the vendor will maintain and/or improve alignment of assessments and standards over time.
- the process and timeline used for setting college- and career-ready achievement standards and the process used to validate those standards. In addition, the offeror must commit to conduct a confirmatory standard setting in South Carolina and follow the state’s recommended methodology and timeline to validate the state-achievement standards.
- samples and/or descriptions of meaningful report formats to communicate to students, parents, and educators.
- evidence of commitment to monitor the assessment system to ensure on-going quality.
- description of procedures to be used in monitoring the assessment system.
- evidence that the assessment system meets the definition of “high-quality assessment” required by the ESEA Flexibility guidance.

The timeline for completing the procurement and awarding a contract is provided in the following table. This is an aggressive timeline that requires substantial collaboration among state entities.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Date for Completion</b>
SCDE receives input from district superintendents and EOC Committee pertaining to administration procedures, test design, etc.	SCDE/District Superintendents	May 12, 2015
RFP submitted to the Budget and Control Board (B&CB)	SCDE	May 14, 2015
Legislature defines who procures the assessments.	SC Legislature	May 21, 2015
B&CB releases the RFP.	B&CB	June 4, 2015
Offers are received by the B&CB	B&CB	August 6, 2015
Reviewers receive proposals	B&CB	August 13, 2015

Reviewers score proposals	B&CB	August 20, 2015
Negotiations/clarifications	B&CB	August 27, 2015
Intent to Award posted	B&CB	September 3, 2015
Contract awarded	B&CB	September 10, 2015
Initial professional development webinar	SCDE	September 24, 2015
District test coordinators conference	SCDE	October 8, 2015
Monthly Instructional Leader & Testing (ILR) & Accountability Roundtable (TAR) meetings	SCDE	September 17, 2015; October 15, 2015; November 19, 2015; January 21, 2016; February 18, 2016; March 17, 2016; April 14, 2016
Administer assessments	SCDE	Late spring 2016
Focus Group on continuous improvement—ILR/TAR	SCDE	May 19, 2016

Upon award of a contract, information will be provided to stakeholders (superintendents, instructional leaders, testing and accountability coordinators) about the assessments and the implementation of the assessments. This information will be provided through correspondence, SCETV and Instructional Television Network and face-to-face meetings (e.g., through regularly scheduled monthly meetings and through meetings specifically scheduled by the SCDE in conjunction with the contractor).

The SCDE has the resources to work with local school districts to implement the assessments on the short timeline. The SCDE Office of Assessment includes staff experienced in measurement and research, instructional design, test development and administration, and teaching and testing students with disabilities. In addition to the NCLB State Assessment Grant, monetary resources are provided by the state legislature.

Significant obstacles include the availability of a valid and reliable off-the-shelf assessment system that aligns to the college- and career-ready standards, the short timeline to award a contract for the assessments, and the limited time between the award and the administration for communicating with district, schools, students, and parents. Based on experiences in 2014–15, additional potential obstacles are ensuring assessments for all students, parental refusal to permit students’ to test, and corporate policies on test administration that conflict with local practice. In addition, the SCDE anticipates new USED guidance on peer review that is to be issued after this RFP process in underway, which could impact the contract(s).

## PRINCIPLE 2: STATE-DEVELOPED DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

### 2.A DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STATE-BASED SYSTEM OF DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

- 2.A.i Provide a description of the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system that includes all the components listed in Principle 2, the SEA’s plan for implementation of the differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system no later than the 2012–2013 school year, and an explanation of how the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system is designed to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

#### COMMITMENT 1: SOUTH CAROLINA WILL DEVELOP A DIFFERENTIATED SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY THAT INCENTIVIZES AND REWARDS CONTINUAL GROWTH.

Presently, South Carolina assesses its schools and districts through two accountability systems. The state-mandated system was created in 1998, when the South Carolina General Assembly passed the Education Accountability Act (EAA, S.C. Code Ann. § 59-18-100 *et seq.* (Supp. 2014); see Appendix B) to hold public schools accountable for the performance of their students. Schools and districts are required to test students in four subject areas in grades 3–8 and students have to pass an exit exam as a requirement to graduate (since eliminated). Each school and district is given a rating based on student achievement and student growth and reporting on other factors. Those ratings are publicized in School Report Cards. When *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) was enacted, the state maintained this original system and developed a separate, distinct system to meet the federal requirements as required by federal law. The state has since been operating under the two systems, which is confusing to parents and the community. (See Appendix C for a glossary of acronyms.)

The state plans to merge the two current systems into one unified and more modern system; the ESEA flexibility allows South Carolina to begin aligning the two current systems toward this objective. However, changing the state system requires legislative action beyond the timeframe for submitting this request, which prohibits us from proposing one unified system at this time. Despite this, many of the elements included in this waiver request address major shortcomings of the federal system and more closely mirror the elements of the proposed unified state and federal system. In addition, the State Superintendent plans to align all systems to support the Profile of the SC Graduate, a college- and career-ready profile that has been adopted by the Superintendents’ Division of the S.C. Association of School Administrators, the State Chamber of Commerce, the S.C. Council on Competitiveness, the SBE, and the EOC. The SCDE is working with stakeholders to define supporting profiles for educator teams, learning systems, and state supports. After that step, the stakeholder teams will explore the implications for changes to educator preparation, evaluation, assessment, data systems, funding, and the accountability systems as a whole. At present, the SCDE is working with the 51st State Accountability Working Group convened by the CCSSO and a collaborative of in-state school

districts working on this redesign of public education to support better development of college- and career-ready students.

The most significant deficiency in the federally mandated AYP system is that it is essentially a pass/fail system, whereby failing to reach even one annual measurable objective (AMO), among many, automatically means that a school has not met AYP and thus is labeled as failing. Another significant flaw in the AYP system is that the original baseline year AMO from which all future AMOs were calculated was the 2002–03 test score that identified the bottom 20 percent of students tested that year.

Early on in using the federal system, the majority of schools had little difficulty meeting the AYP goal. Over time, however, as the AYP goal increased significantly every three years in approaching the 2014 goal of 100 percent of students scoring Proficient or above, the goal has outpaced the performance of schools, resulting in more and more schools lagging farther and farther behind the AMO each year.

The opportunity for ESEA flexibility allows South Carolina to develop a new system that is based on the achievement of all students in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies and includes graduation rate for high schools and districts, and measures the progress of all students over time.

The cornerstone of South Carolina’s proposed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support plan is a fundamental change in the way schools and districts are judged to have met AYP. The proposed system substantively improves the method for determining student achievement and progress in schools and districts without sacrificing the high standards that have been a hallmark of South Carolina’s state accountability system since the inception of NCLB.

The federal AYP system over-identifies hundreds of schools for assistance and, as a result, dilutes available state and federal resources. By significantly narrowing the scope to target fewer schools for assistance, the proposed system will allow the state to use resources more effectively. Once schools are identified as needing assistance, we will employ a differentiated system of support to ensure all students, regardless of learning needs, meet the College- and Career-Ready State Standards and are college or career ready when they graduate from high school.

For purposes of the March 2015 renewal application, the SCDE is maintaining the basic description of the system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and supports that has been in place since the first application in 2012 with some amendments. The SCDE requests a “pause” year as it transitions to new assessments. No new ratings will be assigned for schools and districts based upon the assessments administered in spring 2015. Rather, designations given in 2015 based upon assessments in spring 2014 will be retained. Data from the 2015 assessments will be used to establish baselines for a revised system of differentiated recognition, accountability, and supports, which will be proposed via an amendment to this application. Student achievement will be reported on the SCDE ESEA Flexibility Website. The SCDE will set Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for each applicable grade and subject area in the ESEA Flexibility Waiver. For the 2014–15 school year, South Carolina adopted the ACT Aspire assessments for students in grades 3–8 and The ACT for high school (grade 11) ELA and

mathematics. Since this was the initial statewide administration of these tests in South Carolina, the process of establishing cut scores for SC students is ongoing. To date, three cut scores, defining four achievement levels, have been established for ACT Aspire. One cut score, defining college and career readiness, has been established for The ACT. The SCDE is awaiting the results of a research being conducted for South Carolina by ACT. This research will examine probabilities of success in first-year college coursework to make empirically based cut score recommendations for two additional cut scores. Results of all research will be reviewed by the SCDE, the EOC, and other education stakeholders within South Carolina. Once the review is completed, the SCDE will submit AMOs and goals to the USED in a waiver amendment. The anticipated AMO setting is projected to be prior to the amendment deadline of January 2016.

As noted above, Act 200 of 2014 requires recommendation of a new single accountability system in 2016 for implementation in the 2016–17 school year. In addition, the SCDE is working with stakeholders to redesign its systems to support the Profile of the S.C. Graduate. The SCDE anticipates that this system will be more focused on academic learning progressions based upon proficiency; dashboards assessing students' skill development; and indicators of students' development of life characteristics that promote success in college and careers. The supports system will focus on continuous improvement of all schools and districts. The reporting systems will not use a simplified (and sometimes misleading) single rating, but rather will contain a dashboard of leading and lagging indicators to guide continuous improvement and innovation.

Act 200 of 2014 requires a new system by 2016, and the SCDE anticipates that the implementation of a new system will take much collaboration, experimentation, data analysis, work, thought, and time. Therefore, the existing ESEA system will remain in place with indicated amendments, the “pause” year, and recalibration until consensus is reached on how to improve the system. That system itself will likely be subject to continuous improvement and change over time.

The following is a description of the 2012–14 system prior to the “pause.” One change being made at the request of stakeholders is to remove rating labels (A–F) and shift to a dashboard of measures. As noted, additional changes will be made concerning the high school assessments for several reasons, including because of the elimination of and Acts 155 and 200.

The SCDE will use multiple factors beyond ELA and math to determine an index score for purposes of identifying Reward, Focus, and Priority Schools and for each school and district in the state and to recognize progress that schools and districts make towards achievement goals. Schools with an index score less than 70 that are not otherwise identified are eligible for “Support School” status.

With input from a variety of stakeholders, the SCDE has developed a methodology that includes multiple measures to determine the Index. These measures include achievement in ELA, mathematics, and science; social studies in grades 4–8; graduation rates; and percentage of students tested. South Carolina's school composite index includes two measures of participation: percent of students tested in ELA and percent of students tested in math. All schools will be expected to meet or exceed the goal of 95 percent participation on all student assessments in

order to meet the AMO. Although input from stakeholders was mixed regarding the addition of science and social studies to the ESEA Grade determinations (stakeholders, including teachers, in initial meetings requested that we include these content areas while participants in the community stakeholder meetings questioned their inclusion.), the SCDE has chosen to include these content areas (social studies in grades 4–8), which are part of the current state assessment system, as the state moves towards unifying the current state and federal accountability requirements into a single, comprehensive accountability system that will provide accurate, meaningful, and timely information to students, parents, educators, and the public. (Results of the high school U.S. History and the Constitution end-of-course assessment are reported but not included in the index.)

In addition to giving full credit to schools and districts that meet the AMOs, we also give partial credit to schools and districts for student progress towards the AMO in the four content areas and graduation rate when they do not meet the AMO. In the matrix calculation, for each of the multiple measures used to assess performance, a school receives a full point (1.0) for each student subgroup and the “All Students” group that meets the AMO for that measure. If the subgroup does not meet the AMO on a particular measure, progress toward the AMO is awarded in two ways:

- If the mean is above Proficient, partial credit of .6 to .9 is awarded based upon the quartile between Proficient and the AMO in which the mean falls.
- If the mean is below Proficient, partial credit of .1 to .5 is awarded if the mean for that subgroup improved over the previous year. One tenth of one point is given for each scale score point improvement over the previous year, up to 5 scale score points.

For example: in the sample high school matrix (Matrix 1 below):

- The school did not meet the AMO for the African-American subgroup on the mathematics measure, but the subgroup performance was in the first quartile above Proficient and was awarded a .6.
- The school did not meet the AMO for the male subgroup on the science measure, but the mean of the subgroup performance improved 5 scale score points over the mean of this subgroup in the previous year, and was awarded a .5.

Matrix 1

	English/LA Proficiency Met/Improved?	Math Proficiency Met/Improved?	Science Proficiency Met/Improved?	English/LA Percent Tested 95 % Tested?	Math Percent Tested 95 % Tested?	Graduation Rate Met/Improved?
<b>All Students</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>African-American</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Asian/Pacific Is</b>	<b>I/S</b>	<b>I/S</b>	<b>I/S</b>	<b>I/S</b>	<b>I/S</b>	<b>I/S</b>
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Am Indian/Alaskan</b>	<b>I/S</b>	<b>I/S</b>	<b>I/S</b>	<b>I/S</b>	<b>I/S</b>	<b>I/S</b>
<b>Disabled</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>Limited Eng. Prof</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Subsidized Meals</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total # of Points</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7.5</b>
<b>Total # of Objectives</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Percent of Above</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>83%</b>
<b>Weight</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Weighted Points Subtotal</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>7.50</b>	<b>7.50</b>	<b>24.90</b>
<b>Weighted Points Total</b>	<b>87.37</b>					

Each of the measures carries a specific weighting; the weighted points are then totaled, and an index score—the ESEA Index—is assigned.

In determining the ESEA Index for high schools, ELA and mathematics proficiency and graduation rates will carry the most weight. For elementary and middle schools, ELA and mathematics proficiency will carry the most weight in determining the index score. To determine the ESEA Index for districts, the weights for elementary, middle, and high schools will be incorporated into the calculation.

Through the community stakeholder meetings, online comment forms, and e-mails, a majority of stakeholders, including school and district personnel, expressed serious reservations regarding the use of letter grades.

The current administration believes that letter grades overly simplify the accountability system and mask important information needed for continuous improvement. Under that system, descriptors define each rating within the context of the state’s performance expectations. While the lower ratings signify that the school or district has not yet met performance standards, the state recognizes that there are students achieving at high levels in that school or district, and we intend to provide supports so that all students meet our expectations of college and career readiness at graduation.

We will continue to disaggregate data by subgroups and have added the subgroups of male and female to the calculation of ESEA Index. Data indicate existing performance gaps between these subgroups in South Carolina in certain subjects in certain years. The SCDE feels strongly that these gaps should be addressed through the accountability system despite mixed feedback from stakeholders who attended the community stakeholder meetings.

South Carolina's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, based on student achievement, graduation rates, and school performance and progress over time, includes all students and all subgroups of students identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II). To ensure that schools are accountable for the performance of all subgroups of students, a school may not receive the highest rating in South Carolina's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system if there are significant achievement or graduation rate gaps across subgroups that are not closing in the school.

South Carolina's ESEA flexibility accountability system assigns an index score to each school annually based on a school's total composite index score (0–100) derived from student performance on multiple measures of academic achievement (ELA, math, science, and social studies (grades 4–8)), participation in testing, and ELA and math and graduation rate (for high schools).

To comply with the new federal requirement that *a school may not receive the highest rating if there are significant achievement or graduation rate gaps across subgroups that are not closing*, a school with significant and persistent achievement or graduation rate gaps across subgroups will not be eligible for "Reward School" status in South Carolina's ESEA differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system.

For this purpose, a *significant* achievement gap in subgroup performance is defined as a gap equal to or greater than one standard deviation above the mean achievement gap for that particular subgroup across all schools of the same type. In other words, if the mean achievement gap for LEP students in middle schools is 15 scale points and the standard deviation is 6.0, then any school with an LEP achievement gap of 21 points or more would be considered to have a significant subgroup achievement gap for LEP students. A significant subgroup achievement gap in any other subgroup will be determined in similar fashion as equal to or greater than one standard deviation above the mean achievement gap for that particular subgroup, across all schools of the same type (Methodology for Title I Distinguished School for Performance and Title I Distinguished School for Progress, Step 6).

For this purpose, a *persistent* achievement gap in subgroup performance is defined as a significant achievement gap in subgroup performance in two or more years in a row and that is not closing over the two or more years, or is closing due solely to a decline in performance of the comparison group.

Thus, a school with an index score that might otherwise qualify it to be a Reward School, but that has a significant and persistent achievement gap in subgroup performance, will be excluded.

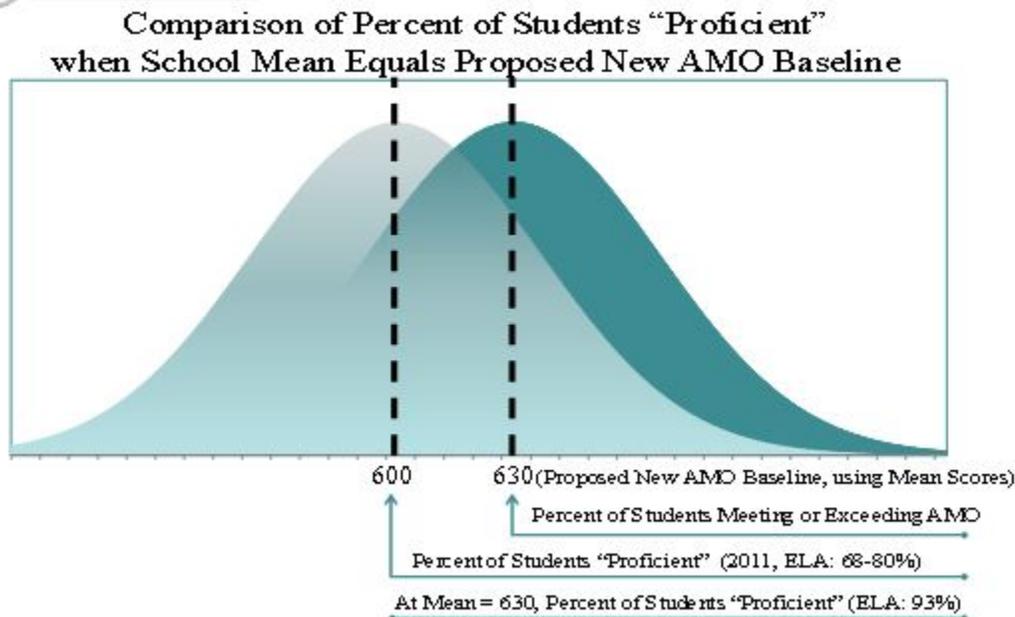
South Carolina believes that the proposed ESEA system will create additional incentives for schools and districts to work diligently to meet high standards and to focus on improving the academic achievement and performance of the “All Students” group, as well as the achievement and performance of all students in all subgroups, including historically underperforming groups such as students with disabilities and students from low socioeconomic households. Specific interventions for these subgroups will be determined through the comprehensive needs assessments described in the Priority and Focus Schools sections below.

Because the determination of the ESEA Index will no longer be an “all or nothing” exercise, schools and districts will have a much more realistic accountability system that will allow them to demonstrate, measure, and track improvement in making a positive impact on student achievement.

At the beginning of each school year, the State Superintendent of Education will publicly acknowledge Reward Schools and will reiterate and emphasize the purpose, importance, and goals of the state’s proposed new accountability system, so that everyone in the state is aware of the success and positive accomplishments of the state’s public schools. The favorable media attention will be a welcome counterpoint to the usual gloom-and-doom media accounts that our public schools typically receive.

The method used to measure improvement in South Carolina’s accountability system is rigorous and accurately reflects substantial progress toward student achievement goals.

The following figure illustrates how a school with a mean ELA score of 630—that is, a school that meets the proposed new AMO in the base year—would compare in terms of the percent of students Proficient or above, using the current cut score of 600.



The number of additional schools estimated to be included in the accountability system when the N size is reduced from  $N \geq 40$  to  $N \geq 30$  are presented in the following tables. (These projected counts are based on simulations using 2010–11 data.)

In 2010–11, of the 1,131 total number of schools in the state (305 elementary schools, 646 middle schools and 180 high schools), only 10 schools (4 elementary schools, 6 middle schools and 0 high schools) did not meet the  $N \geq 40$  criteria. With the  $N \geq 30$  criteria, only 1 additional school, a middle school, would be included in the accountability system, based on the “All Students” category. The effect of reducing the N size from 40 to 30 is much more pronounced across subgroups, with the number of additional schools whose subgroup performance would be taken into account in calculating overall school performance ranging from 1 additional school to as many as 149 additional schools.

**TABLE S1: Number of ELEMENTARY Schools in Accountability System, based on N equal to or greater than 40 versus N equal to or greater than 30 (2010–11).**

State	Students	Number of Schools Held Accountable				Total Number of Schools in State	Number of Additional Schools	Percentage of Additional Schools
		Schools under NCLB ( $n \geq 40$ )		Schools under Flex ( $n \geq 30$ )				
		#	%	#	%			
ELEM SCHOOLS	All Students	642	99.38	642	99.38	646	0	0.0%
	Male	623	96.44	633	97.99	646	10	1.5%
	Female	615	95.20	629	97.37	646	14	2.2%
	White	504	78.02	528	81.73	646	24	3.7%
	African-American	523	80.96	552	85.45	646	29	4.5%
	Asian/Pacific Islander	7	1.08	15	2.32	646	8	1.2%
	Hispanic	66	10.22	118	18.27	646	52	8.0%
	Am Indian / Alaskan	1	0.15	1	0.15	646	0	0.0%
	Disability	259	40.09	408	63.16	646	149	23.1%
	Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	65	10.06	113	17.49	646	48	7.4%
	Subsidized Meals	624	96.59	633	97.99	646	9	1.4%

**TABLE S2: Number of MIDDLE Schools in Accountability System, based on N equal to or greater than 40 versus N equal to or greater than 30 (2010–11).**

State	Students	Number of Schools Held Accountable				Total Number of Schools in State	Number of Additional Schools	Percentage of Additional Schools
		Schools under NCLB (n>=40)		Schools under Flex (n>=30)				
		#	%	#	%			
<b>MIDDLE SCHOOLS</b>	All Students	299	98.03	300	98.36	305	1	0.3%
	Male	295	96.72	296	97.05	305	1	0.3%
	Female	292	95.72	295	96.72	305	3	1.0%
	White	251	82.30	258	84.59	305	7	2.3%
	African-American	276	90.49	285	93.44	305	9	3.0%
	Asian/Pacific Islander	10	3.28	23	7.54	305	13	4.3%
	Hispanic	75	24.59	110	36.07	305	35	11.5%
	Am Indian / Alaskan	2	0.66	2	0.66	305	0	0.0%
	Disability	216	70.82	243	79.67	305	27	8.9%
	Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	62	20.33	87	28.52	305	25	8.2%
	Subsidized Meals	291	95.41	292	95.74	305	1	0.3%

**TABLE S3: Number of HIGH Schools in Accountability System, based on N equal to or greater than 40 versus N equal to or greater than 30 (2010–11).**

State	Students	Number of Schools Held Accountable				Total Number of Schools in State	Number of Additional Schools	Percentage of Additional Schools
		Schools under NCLB (n>=40)		Schools under Flex (n>=30)				
		#	%	#	%			
<b>HIGH SCHOOLS</b>	All Students	180	100	180	100	180	0	0.0%
	Male	165	91.6	175	97.2	180	10	5.6%
	Female	163	90.5	175	97.2	180	12	6.7%
	White	145	80.5	149	82.7	180	4	2.2%
	African-American	138	76.6	150	83.3	180	12	6.7%
	Asian/Pacific Islander	1	0	3	0.1	180	2	1.1%
	Hispanic	8	0.4	17	0.9	180	9	5.0%
	Am Indian / Alaskan	0	0	0	0	180	0	0.0%
	Disability	35	19.4	78	43.3	180	33	18.3%
	Limited	3	0.1	6	0.3	180	3	1.7%

English Proficiency (LEP)								
Subsidized Meals	169	93.8	174	96.6	180	5	2.8%	

Current scale scores for “Proficient” and “Exemplary” by grade level are detailed in the *2011–2012 ACCOUNTABILITY MANUAL: The Annual School and District Report Card System for South Carolina Public Schools and School Districts*.

For elementary and middle schools, on the SCPASS a single cut score is used to define “Proficient.” Proficient is defined as a score of 600 or above for all subjects (ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies) and all grades tested (grades 3–8), while “Exemplary” is defined by separate cut scores for each subject and grade level.

For high schools, student performance was assessed by the High School Assessment Program and End-Of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) tests in Biology I. At the high school level, the concept of “Proficient” for student performance is more complicated to define. Accordingly, at the high school level the metric used to track student performance was the percent of students passing and EOCEP tests. (As noted elsewhere in this renewal request, the exam was eliminated in 2014. The ACT college readiness assessments in ELA and mathematics will be the ESEA assessments. When the state amends the ESEA methodology after analysis of the 2015 assessment data, amendments may be designated for the high school assessments. Acts 155 and 200 of 2014 direct the use of the ACT’s WorkKeys and a college- and career-readiness benchmark assessment as part of federal and state accountability.

SCPASS cut-off scale scores are summarized in the following table, excerpted from the South Carolina Accountability Manual.

<b>Table S4: SCPASS Cut-Off Scale Scores</b>					
<b>Established by SCDE for Use in Calculating Absolute Ratings</b>					
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Not Met 1</b>	<b>Not Met 2</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
ELA (Reading & Research)	3	LT 563	563	600	GE 643
ELA (Reading & Research)	4	LT 569	569	600	GE 649
ELA (Reading & Research)	5	LT 574	574	600	GE 661
ELA (Reading & Research)	6	LT 565	565	600	GE 648
ELA (Reading & Research)	7	LT 566	566	600	GE 644
ELA (Reading & Research)	8	LT 569	569	600	GE 649
Math	3	LT 566	566	600	GE 642
Math	4	LT 580	580	600	GE 658

Math	5	LT 579	579	600	GE 659
Math	6	LT 582	582	600	GE 658
Math	7	LT 585	585	600	GE 652
Math	8	LT 585	585	600	GE 657
Science	3	LT 537	537	600	GE 649
Science	4	LT 564	564	600	GE 674
Science	5	LT 566	566	600	GE 676
Science	6	LT 560	560	600	GE 669
Science	7	LT 571	571	600	GE 664
Science	8	LT 562	562	600	GE 651
Social Studies	3	LT 580	580	600	GE 653
Social Studies	4	LT 590	590	600	GE 668
Social Studies	5	LT 570	570	600	GE 658
Social Studies	6	LT 585	585	600	GE 671
Social Studies	7	LT 562	562	600	GE 646
Social Studies	8	LT 571	571	600	GE 656

LR = Less Than

GE = Greater Than or Equal To

#### Plan for Annual Implementation

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)
Conduct statewide assessments in ELA, math, social studies, and science	September–May	Office of Assessment	Test results from contractor
Run profiles of all schools and districts to determine index	July–October	Office of Research and Data Analysis	List of schools and districts with index
Run data to determine Priority Schools	August–September	Office of Research and Data Analysis	List of Priority Schools
Run data to determine Focus Schools	August–September	Office of Research and Data Analysis	List of Focus Schools
Run data to determine Reward Schools	September	Office of Research and Data Analysis	List of Reward Schools
Run data to determine non-Title I support schools	September	Office of Research and Data Analysis	List of Support Schools
Run data to determine Title I support schools	September	Office of Research and Data Analysis	List of Title I Support Schools
Public Release of ESEA dashboards	October	Office of Research and Data Analysis	Posted on SCDE Website
Technical Assistance to districts on the analysis of ESEA Index and differentiated recognition, accountability, and supports categories.	July–October (and beyond)	Office of Federal and State Accountability and Office of Research and Data Analysis	Record of assistance sessions



Disburse Title I, 1003(a) funds to Focus Schools and to Title I Support Schools	September/October	Office of Federal and State Accountability	Grant Award Letters
---	-------------------	--	---------------------

2.A.ii Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding information, if any.

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA includes student achievement only on reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools.</p>	<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system or to identify reward, priority, and focus schools, it must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. provide the percentage of students in the “all students” group that performed at the proficient level on the State’s most recent administration of each assessment for all grades assessed; and</li> <li>b. include an explanation of how the included assessments will be weighted in a manner that will result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve college- and career-ready standards.</li> </ul>
--	--

The following table presents the percentage of students in the “All Students” group that performed at Proficient or above on each state assessment at each grade level for 2011:

2011 Assessment Results Percent of All Students at Proficient								
Grade	SCPASS				EOC			
	ELA	Math	Science	Social Studies	ELA	Math	Biology	US History
3	80.00%	70.40%	60.80%	76.60%	-	-	-	-
4	78.00%	79.40%	70.90%	77.10%	-	-	-	-
5	78.30%	75.30%	64.90%	70.40%	-	-	-	-
6	70.20%	72.50%	64.90%	77.60%	-	-	-	-
7	68.40%	69.70%	71.70%	63.40%	-	-	-	-
8	67.80%	69.50%	70.10%	71.90%	-	-	-	-
High School	-	-	-	-	60.60%	51.80%	68.00%	49.70%*

SCPASS—Palmetto Assessment of State Standards  
 HSAP—High School Assessment Program (High School Exit Exam)  
 EOC—End-of-Course Examination Program  
 \*Not included in index starting 2015.

The State Superintendent of Education, in consultation with major stakeholders, strongly supports efforts to use graduation rates as a key indicator of workforce, career, or college readiness. Policy recommendations from the CCSSO and the conclusions of the Alliance for Excellent Education reinforce this approach:

*“To achieve meaningful accountability for high school graduation rates, it is important that states a) target schools with the lowest graduation rates for intensive intervention, and, at the same time, b) hold all high schools accountable for maintaining adequate graduate rates [sic].”*

*“In order to ensure students are graduating high school ready to succeed in college and a career, states should include four key elements of high school graduation rate policy in their redesigned accountability systems: meaningful accountability for graduation rates; disaggregation of graduation rates for accountability purposes; accurate and uniform calculation of high school graduation rates; and ambitious and achievable graduation rate goals and targets.”*

—Alliance for Excellent Education, January 2012.

Under the 2012–14 ESEA rating system, graduation rates will carry the highest weight in determining the total composite index score and attainment of the AMOs for high schools and school districts. We have set the goal that each high school in South Carolina reach a high school graduation rate of at least 90 percent. This goal is ambitious, as is reflected by the large number of high schools in our state that fall far short of this goal, and it is achievable, as is demonstrated by the high performing, high poverty schools that have been able to meet or exceed this graduation rate.

South Carolina’s achievement goals remain some of the highest in the nation, and schools and districts will continue to be held accountable for students learning those standards. In keeping with the original intent of NCLB, the second most important factor in determining the school’s ESEA Index is student performance in ELA and mathematics. We include science and social studies (grades 4–8) as factors in determining the school index, but at a lesser weight than ELA and mathematics. To ensure accurate results, we are retaining the 95 percent student participation in testing indicators for both ELA and math. South Carolina’s proposed school composite index includes two measures of participation: percent of students tested in ELA and percent of students tested in math. All schools will be expected to meet and exceed the goal of 95 percent participation on all student assessments.

Because the system will no longer be “all or nothing” in terms of meeting AYP, a more nuanced system of recognition and support will be offered to districts and schools. As detailed in Table 2 below, each school and district will receive a calculated, weighted numerical index score ranging from zero to 100; this will allow a school or district to measure its progress in relation to the state AMO, and allow designation of status as Reward, Focus, Priority, or Support Schools.

To reinforce the importance of academic achievement, the multiple measures of academic achievement combined will account for the majority of the total weight in the school composite

index score.

At the elementary and middle school levels, the combined weights for the four academic achievement measures (ELA, math, science and social studies) will account for 90 percent of the total composite index score. ELA and math have the highest relative weights of 40 percent each, with science and social studies contributing an additional 5 percent each. In addition, percent of students tested in ELA will account for 5 percent of the total composite index score, and percent of students tested in math, likewise, will account for 5 percent.

Under the 2012–14 ESEA rating system, at the high school level, the academic achievement measures plus graduation rate will account for 85 percent of the total composite index score. Graduation rate has a weight of 30 percent, and ELA, and math have equivalent weights of 25 percent each. The three academic achievement measures (ELA, math, and science) have a combined weight totaling 60 percent, with ELA and math each weighted at 25 percent, and the science measure at 5 percent. The two participation measures (i.e., percent of students tested in ELA and math) are weighted 7.5 percent each.

At the SEA and the LEA level, the proposed weights for performance measures and additional indicators are identical to the measure weights at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

For the SEA and LEAs, the total composite index score for the SEA and the LEA as a whole will be reported, as will the composite index score for each grade span (elementary, middle, and high school) in the SEA and the district. Also, the matrix details for each grade span will be reported, including the means and Ns for each subgroup in each cell (with an N equal to or greater than 30). The minimum N size will not apply to the “All Student” group to allow for the calculation of an ESEA Index for small schools. Similarly, achievement gaps by subgroup and measure will also be reported and highlighted. This will allow the SCDE and the LEAs to easily identify which subgroups have met the AMO, which are above Proficient, which have made progress, and which subgroup(s) and measures require particular attention and effort in order for the SEA and the LEA to achieve the state’s expectations in the next year.

Table 2

<b>Proposed Weights for Performance Measures and Additional Indicators</b>							
	Performance Measures				Additional Indicators		
	<u>ELA Proficiency</u>	<u>Math Proficiency</u>	<u>Science Proficiency</u>	<u>Social Studies Proficiency</u>	<u>ELA Percent Tested</u>	<u>Math Percent Tested</u>	<u>Graduation Rate</u>
Elem/Middle Schools, LEAs, and the SEA	40	40	5	5	5	5	N/A
High Schools, LEAs, and the SEA	25	25	5	N/A	7.5	7.5	30

South Carolina believes this system will result in strong accountability with a continued emphasis on ELA and mathematics student achievement for all students, high graduation rates,

participation of all students in testing, and the addition of student achievement measures for science and social studies. For high schools, a total of 77 possible objectives will be used to determine ESEA Index. For elementary schools, the maximum number of objectives is 66; for districts it is 77. In the NCLB-AYP system, South Carolina used a minimum “N” size of 40 in subgroup calculations. In order to use as much data as possible from as many students as possible to assess school performance more accurately, for all students and all subgroups, the new ESEA Indexing method proposes to use an “N” size of 30 for all subgroups except the “All Students” group, which will not use an N size. Lowering the “N” size addresses concerns expressed by some stakeholders and shared by the SCDE that too high an “N” could mask the performance of small subgroups of students.

The student achievement measures included in the proposed school composite index score include ELA, math, science, and social studies. In the calculation of the school composite index score, all available assessment data for all eligible students will be used in the calculations.

### Testing South Carolina Students

South Carolina assessments and testing requirements are summarized in the following table.

2013–14 School Year Student Assessments		
Program Name	Subjects	Grades
SCPASS	Writing, ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies	3–8 (Students in grades 3, 5, 6, and 8 take either science OR social studies. Students in grades 4 and 7 take both.)
(through 2014)	ELA and Mathematics	10 (defined as the student’s second year in high school)
EOCEP	English 1, Algebra 1, Biology 1, US History and Constitution	When students take the course for high school credit. Results are also a percentage of the grade for the course.
SC-Alt	ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies	Age commensurate with grades 3–8 and 10

SCPASS—SC Palmetto Assessment of State Standards testing program.

HSAP—High School Assessment Program – constitutes the state exit examination. Students must pass both subjects to earn a diploma. Testing begins in a student’s second year of high school. Students who do not pass an subject were given repeated opportunities to attempt the test, and improvement over time was part of the state accountability system.

EOCEP—End-of-Course Examination Program

SC-Alt—South Carolina Alternate Assessment –administered to students with significant cognitive disabilities who are determined by the Individualized Education Program

Team to be unable to participate in the general assessment even with appropriate accommodations.

Beginning with the 2014–15 school year, new assessments will be administered to South Carolina public school students following South Carolina State Standards. These new assessments are intended to address requirements for college and career readiness.

Assessments required for accountability under state and federal law are summarized in the following table.

<b>2014–15 School Year Student Assessments</b>		
<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Grades</b>
SCPASS	Science and social studies	4–8
ACT Aspire	Writing, English, reading, mathematics (Science is optional at no cost to districts.)	3–8
EOCEP	English 1, Algebra 1, and Biology 1	When students take the course for high school credit
The ACT	College and Career Readiness assessment, including ELA and mathematics used for ESEA 1111(b)	11 (defined as the student’s third year in high school, according to the 9GR)
WorkKeys	Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, Locating Information	11 (defined as the student’s third year in high school, according to the 9GR)
SC-Alt	Science and social studies	Ages commensurate with grades 4–8 Biology I Alt: see explanation of change in year tested on pages 82–83.
NCSC	ELA and mathematics	Ages commensurate with grades 3–8 and 11

SCPASS—SC Palmetto Assessment of State Standards testing program. The science and social studies subject tests used in previous years will be administered to all students in grades 4–8.

ACT Aspire—This test replaces the SCPASS Writing, ELA, and mathematics subject tests.

EOCEP—End-of-Course Examination Program.

1. Algebra I (or Math for the Technologies II)
2. Biology I (or Applied Biology II)
3. English I

The algebra and English courses may be taken in either middle or high school. The biology courses are typically taken in either the first or second year of high

school. All students enrolled in these courses must take the EOCEP tests. By law, the test accounts for 20 percent of a student's grade in the course. Students must pass the courses to earn a high school diploma.

The ACT—This test replaces the for high school student assessment. There is no longer an exit exam requirement for students graduating from South Carolina public schools.

WorkKeys—An additional high school assessment to assist students, parents, teachers, and guidance counselors in developing individual graduation plans and in selecting courses aligned with each student's future ambitions; promote South Carolina's Work Ready Communities initiative; and meet federal and state accountability requirements.

SC-Alt—South Carolina Alternate Assessment. The science and social studies subject tests that align to state standards will be administered to students with significant cognitive disabilities.

NCSC—National Center and State Collaborative. Replaces SC-Alt ELA and mathematics subject tests and will be administered to students with significant cognitive disabilities.

9GR—A code in the student information system indicating the first year in which the student is in ninth grade. For example, a student who entered ninth grade in August 2011 would be required to take the ACT during the 2014–15 school year, regardless of whether the student had accumulated sufficient credits to be considered in “eleventh grade.”

NOTE: Students also take examinations for determination of college credit (e.g., AP exams, exams in dual credit courses) and career-readiness exams, such as ASVAB and certification exams.

The South Carolina Alternate Assessment (SC-Alt) and NCSC are administered to students with significant cognitive disabilities who are determined by the Individualized Education Program Team to be unable to participate in the general assessment even with appropriate accommodations. Students participate in these assessments based on their ages as of September 1 of the tested year commensurate with the grades of students in the tested grades. Students who qualify to take alternate assessments and are ages 8–13 and 16 will participate in NCSC ELA and mathematics. Students who qualify to take alternate assessments and are ages 9–13 will take the SC-Alt science and social studies tests. The SC-Alt biology test is the alternate for the EOCEP biology test and is administered to alternate assessment–eligible students once during high school. In previous years, students who were age 15 (commensurate with grade 10) took SC-Alt ELA, mathematics, and biology. However, beginning in spring 2015, the NCSC ELA and mathematics tests are to be administered to students at age 16 (age commensurate with grade 11). Therefore, the SC-Alt biology test will also be administered to students at age 16. Since the cohort of students who are age 16 in spring 2015 have met their high school science

participation requirement, the SC-Alt biology test will not be administered in spring 2015. As in the past, any student who is beyond the specified age for testing and has not taken the SC-Alt biology test will take it the following spring.

To incorporate students tested with SC-Alt, the ESEA methodology realigns the SC-Alt scores with the standard state assessment (SCPASS) science and social studies scores so that all SC-Alt students will be included in all of the calculations at the school, district, and state level. This is accomplished by using SC-Alt scale scores which have been transformed to the SCPASS scale score system (i.e., with 600 = Proficient, a standard deviation of 50, and the same range). This transformation is possible because SC-Alt scores are based on a carefully constructed Rasch-based scale score system, and a review of the SCPASS and SC-Alt transformed scale score distributions has shown that the distributions are very similar.

To align the new alternate assessment (NCSC) scores with the new standard assessments that are being implemented during the 2014–15 school year (ACT Aspire for elementary and middle schools and ACT for high schools), a similar score transformation and alignment method will be applied. South Carolina also will apply the 1 percent rule, as summarized below, specific to using mean scale scores, which follows our ESEA methodology.

#### **Using SC-Alt and NCSC Scores in ESEA Accountability: Applying the 1 Percent Cap Adjustments and Establishing AMOs for Special Education Center Schools**

The NCLB 1 percent rule requires that the cap be applied at the district and state level and allows each state to propose how the scores for the districts exceeding the cap would be adjusted to meet the 1 percent limitation of inclusion of Proficient scores. The ESEA flexibility model for 2012–14 used by the SCDE used mean scale score data for determining whether schools or districts met achievement AMOs. This model introduces additional considerations in regard to choosing how to adjust scores and which student scores to adjust.

After several simulations and in-depth analyses were run using 2012 data, which created a methodology for and reviewed the effects of making different percent cap score adjustments, it was recommended that the best method for applying the percent adjustment would be to rank the Proficient scale scores from high to low and select the highest scores for adjustment (that is, resetting the selected scores to 599 which is 1 point below Proficient (i.e., the Proficient performance level in SCPASS assessments is equal to 600).

The rationale for proposing the rank order adjustment method is that the districts exceeding the 1 percent cap are consistently including large numbers of students (proportionately) in the SC-Alt assessment who are scoring at the very highest level (70.8 percent at Level 4 for ELA and 49.5 percent at Level 4 for mathematics). This method fairly addresses those schools that have extreme scores and are most likely over-identifying students for the SC-Alt. The analysis of the data from 2012 supports the use of this ranked score adjustment method over a random score adjustment, because it more logically addresses the over-identification issue of extreme scores for both districts and schools.

## 2.B SET AMBITIOUS BUT ACHIEVABLE ANNUAL MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

Select the method the SEA will use to set new ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for the State and all LEAs, schools, and subgroups that provide meaningful goals and are used to guide support and improvement efforts. If the SEA sets AMOs that differ by LEA, school, or subgroup, the AMOs for LEAs, schools, or subgroups that are further behind must require greater rates of annual progress.

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Set AMOs in annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup who are not proficient within six years. The SEA must use current proficiency rates based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p>	<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Set AMOs that increase in annual equal increments and result in 100 percent of students achieving proficiency no later than the end of the 2019–20 school year. The SEA must use the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p>	<p><b>Option C</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p> <p>ii. Provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs in the text box below.</p> <p>iii. Provide a link to the State’s report card or attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–2011 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups. (Attachment 8)</p>
---	--	--

The following description of the South Carolina system of recognition, accountability, and support remains in the waiver flexibility request for reference to AMOs calculated using the 2012, 2013, and 2014 South Carolina state assessments. Because South Carolina is implementing the assessments being procured during the 2014–15 school year, the state proposes to re-formulate the AMOs that it uses for federal and state accountability after analysis of those data, consultation with stakeholders, and collaboration with the EOC on a single accountability system. Therefore, South Carolina requests a “pause” year with the March 31, 2015, extension.

In compliance with NCLB, South Carolina adopted AMOs for two key components of student academic achievement, ELA and mathematics in 2002–03. Hence, the state’s AYP

AMOs for ELA and mathematics were originally calculated using 2001–02 as the baseline year and 2014 as the goal year. The 2014 goal was for 100 percent of students to meet or exceed proficiency on the state standards and the system tracked school performance on the basis of the percent of students in each school who scored “Proficient” or above on the state standards assessment tests.

ESEA Flexibility provided the SCDE an opportunity to reconsider both the efficacy of the 2014 goal and the impact that NCLB’s AYP has had on public K–12 education in South Carolina. By any reasonable standard, the previous AYP accountability system was seriously flawed and the goal of 100 percent of students meeting or exceeding proficiency by 2014 was neither realistic nor attainable.

With the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, the SCDE proposed a new method of measuring school performance annually by setting rigorous goals for elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools, by replacing an indirect measure of school performance that tracked the minimum performance level over time—*percent of students who score Proficient or above*—with a direct measure of student performance and school performance—*actual test scores*.

Under the NCLB-AYP system, on the SCPASS tests, where scores can range from 200 to 900, “Proficient” was defined as a score of 600 (or above). When examining actual student performance on SCPASS school by school, we found that for a majority of schools in South Carolina, the average of student scores on the state assessments (in statistical terms, the school mean) already exceeded the minimum score of 600, which defined “Proficient.”

### Continuous improvement

The AYP AMOs for ELA and mathematics are presented in Appendix K. In 2011–12, the ELA AMOs for

- elementary schools (elementary and middle schools) is 79.4 percent of students Proficient or above;
- high schools is 90.3 percent of students Proficient or above; and
- school districts is 89.4 percent of students Proficient or above.

For elementary schools, “Proficient” was defined as a SCPASS ELA and mathematics assessment score of 600 (on a normed scale from 200 to 900). For high schools, “Proficient” was defined as a ELA score of 200.

With AYP AMOs as previously defined—as the percent of students Proficient or above—and with AYP AMO levels set at 79.4 percent, only about one in four elementary schools in the state (27 percent of elementary and middle schools combined) met AYP in 2010–11. Only 8 percent of high schools in the state met AYP in 2010–11.

With the ESEA Flexibility Waiver, South Carolina proposed new AMOs that were both ambitious and achievable, based on actual school performance as measured by student test scores on the state standards assessments and end-of-course exams. We anticipated that using actual test scores would reflect the impact of instruction and learning more accurately than the previous

system.

Using 2011–12 as the base year, we set realistic AMOs for elementary, middle, and high schools, respectively, using student mean scores. For 2012–13 and beyond, the proposed new AMOs increased by 3–5 points annually, based on empirical examination. This incremental increase was consistent with previous growth trends of schools in South Carolina and reflected our objective to have ambitious yet attainable goals.

The mean (average) of SCPASS test scores for elementary schools was 644 for ELA and 641 for mathematics. Because “Proficient” was defined as a SCPASS score of 600 or above, the elementary school performance, as measured by SCPASS test scores instead of percent of students scoring Proficient or above, was already about 7 percentage points higher than the test score associated with the minimum proficiency level.

Similarly, the performance of middle schools, measured as the average (mean) of SCPASS test scores in each school rather than simply as the percent of students scoring Proficient or above, also was about 5 percentage points higher than “Proficient.” The average (mean) of middle schools was 630 for SCPASS ELA and 634 for SCPASS Math, while a score of 600 was defined as “Proficient.”

While high school test scores, on average, were closer to or a little below the score for “Proficient,” a similar disparity existed between the federal system determination that most high schools had not met AYP and actual high school student performance when measured in test score units instead of percent of students scoring “Proficient” or above.

South Carolina’s AMOs for elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies are presented below:

<b>Annual Measurable Objectives for South Carolina</b>						
<b>Mean Student Scores on State Standards Assessments and End-Of-Course Examination</b>						
	<b>ELA</b>			<b>Math</b>		
	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>
2011–12	630	624	223	630	624	220
2012–13	635	628	226	635	628	223
2013–14	640	632	229	640	632	226
2014–15	645	636	232	645	636	230
2015–16	New Assessment–TBD					
2016–17						
2017–18						
	<b>Science</b>			<b>Social Studies</b>		
	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>
2011–12	630	624	76	630	624	71

2012–13	635	628	77		635	628	73
2013–14	640	632	78		640	632	75
2014–15	TBD	TBD	TBD		TBD	TBD	
2015–16	TBD	TBD	TBD		TBD	TBD	
2016–17	TBD	TBD	TBD		TBD	TBD	
2017–18	TBD	TBD	TBD		TBD	TBD	
Elementary school AMOs are an annual increase of 5 points based on SCPASS.							
Middle school AMOs are an annual increase of 4 points based on SCPASS.							
High school AMOs for ELA and math were an annual increase of 3-to-4 points based on the High School Assessment Program (HSAP). In Spring 2015, The ACT became the high school assessment for ELA and math.							
High school AMO for science (EOCEP Biology) is an annual increase of 1 point							

We projected the AMOs through the 2017–18 school year based on guidance from the USED. Each component measured the success of the “All Students” group and all student subgroups as defined by demographic categories of gender, race/ethnicity, disability status, limited English proficiency status, and socioeconomic status (as measured by eligibility for the free and reduced-price meals program). South Carolina has also taken advantage of the Community Eligibility Program offered by the United States Department of Agriculture; re-definition of the socioeconomic status subgroup is underway as a result.

The state set ambitious and attainable goals for student performance on state standards assessments and end-of-course examinations. The table below, *Student Performance Goals*, presents the goals for mean school scores for each school level and content area. Once a school reaches these goals, the state will not penalize them for a lack of continual growth as long as the mean school score remains at or above the goal. South Carolina proposed an annual increase in the AMOs for each content area and school level through the 2017–18 school year; AMOs for ELA and mathematics will be reset by the January 2016 deadline based on 2014–15 school year assessment data.

<b>Student Performance Goals by SY 2017–18</b>					
<b>Desired Mean Student Scores on State Standards Assessments and End-Of-Course Examination</b>					
<b>ELA</b>			<b>Math</b>		
<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>
TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>Science</b>			<b>Social Studies</b>		
<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>High</b>
660	648	82	660	648	N/A

During the 2014–15 school year, South Carolina adopted the ACT Aspire assessments for students in grades 3–8 and The ACT for high school (grade 11) ELA and mathematics. Since this was the initial statewide administration of these tests in South Carolina, the process of establishing cut scores for SC students is ongoing. To date, three cut scores, defining four

achievement levels, have been established for ACT Aspire. One cut score, defining college and career readiness, has been established for The ACT. ACT, Inc. is currently conducting research which will provide recommendations to the SCDE for two additional cut scores. After the cut scores are approved, the SCDE will set Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for each applicable grade and subject area in the ESEA flexibility waiver and will submit the resulting AMOs and student performance goals to the USED in an ESEA flexibility waiver amendment. The anticipated AMO setting is projected to be prior to the final flexibility waiver deadline of January 2016. Achievement results will be reported on the SCDE's ESEA Flexibility Website.

South Carolina's report card is accessible at <http://ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/2011/index.cfm> and indicates the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010–11 school year in ELA and mathematics for the “All Students” group and all subgroups.

### Proposed ESEA Methodology

#### For Measuring Performance

Step 1—Identify the student cohort for accountability purposes

Students continuously enrolled in current year between 45th day and 1st day of testing.

Step 2—Calculate the averages (means):

For the “All Students” group ( $N > 0$ ), and

For each subgroup ( $N \geq 30$ ).

Step 3—Compare each mean to the annual measurable objective (AMO) score. Award partial credit for each mean that is above the Proficient score or for improvement for each mean that is less than Proficient (if the mean improved over the previous year).

For the “All Students” group ( $N > 0$ ), and

For each subgroup ( $N \geq 30$ ).

Step 4—Add the Objective Scores.

Divide by Total Possible Objectives and

Convert to a percent Objectives Score.

Step 5—For Each Measure, multiply percent Objectives Scores times weight.

Step 6—Calculate the Total Score:

Add the weighted scores for each measure for a Total Score (Range: 0 – 100).

#### For Calculating Graduation Rate

Step 1—Identify the student cohort for accountability purposes.

Step 2—Compare the graduation rate percentage to the AMO.

Step 3—Award partial credit for each graduation rate that is above the rate for Proficient (66.7%) or award partial credit for improvement for each graduation rate that is less than Proficient (if the graduation rate improved over the previous year).  
For the “All Students” group ( $N > 0$ ), and  
For each subgroup ( $N \geq 30$ ).

Step 4—Add the Objective Scores.  
Divide by Total Possible Objectives and  
Convert to a percent Objectives Score.

Step 5—For Each Measure, multiply percent Objectives Scores times weight.

Step 6—Calculate the Total Score:  
Add the weighted scores for each measure for a Total Score (Range: 0 – 100).

Step 7—For each school, LEA, and the SEA, assign an ESEA Index

For SEA accountability purposes, South Carolina proposes to report and track the total composite index score for the SEA, each school and district, as well as more detailed performance information for the “All Students” group and for each ESEA subgroup. In addition, for the sake of continuity in federal reporting, South Carolina will also continue to report by SEA, district, and school the percent of students who are Proficient as well as the percent below and above proficiency for the “All Students” group and for each ESEA subgroup.

A significant problem with the federally mandated AYP system was that the goal, defined as percent of students who score “Proficient” or above, placed undue emphasis only on those students who scored slightly below 600. The focus of school improvement often was to “bump” the students just below “Proficient,” ignoring those students who were too far below “Proficient,” and not likely to reach proficiency in a short period of time. Hence, the goal, by definition, was set at a level of *minimum* proficiency. So long as a school was able to get a sufficient number of students in the “All Students” group and students in each subgroup to score at least 600, then the school could meet the AMO.

The SCDE proposed to redefine school performance expectations, AYP goals, and the metric by which student performance was assessed in terms of test scores rather than percent of students who meet minimum proficiency.

This shifted the focus from primarily those students who were scoring slightly below the criterion score (600) to, more appropriately, the performance of *all students* and all students in each subgroup. Schools and districts will be able and encouraged to simultaneously focus on increasing student achievement and closing achievement gaps.

Based on actual test performance of students, a majority of schools in the state already exceeded the minimum score of 600. For example, in 2010–11, elementary and middle schools ranged from 630–644 in ELA and 634–641 in mathematics—significantly above the minimum proficiency score of 600. South Carolina’s proposed AMOs in those subjects were both

ambitious and achievable.

South Carolina’s proposed AMOs were defined directly using scale scores for the academic achievement assessments rather than indirectly by calculating the percent of students in each school who score at or above a cut score defined as “Proficient.”

The proposed AMOs were based on analysis and review of actual student performance on each assessment measure over the past several years. Student assessment scores were analyzed at the state, district, and school level by school type for All Students as well as by subgroup. Measures of central tendency and the distributions of scores were reviewed.

When student performance was disaggregated by school type, student performance at the elementary school level was higher than at the middle school level and lower at the high school level:

- For elementary schools, the average scale score across the various subjects was 636.5 (or 6 percent above the target of 600 for MET AYP);
- For middle schools, the average scale score across all subjects was slightly lower at 631.7 (or 5 percent above the target for MET).
- For high schools, the average scale scores (on the high school assessments, with difference scale range) were close to the cut-off for Proficient, so we set the AMOs at the mean scores for that year—that is, a scale score of 223 in ELA and 220 on math.

In addition, when 2010–11 student assessment data were further disaggregated and analyzed by subgroups, substantial differences were evident between the mean performance of the “All Students” group and the means of the various ESEA subgroups.

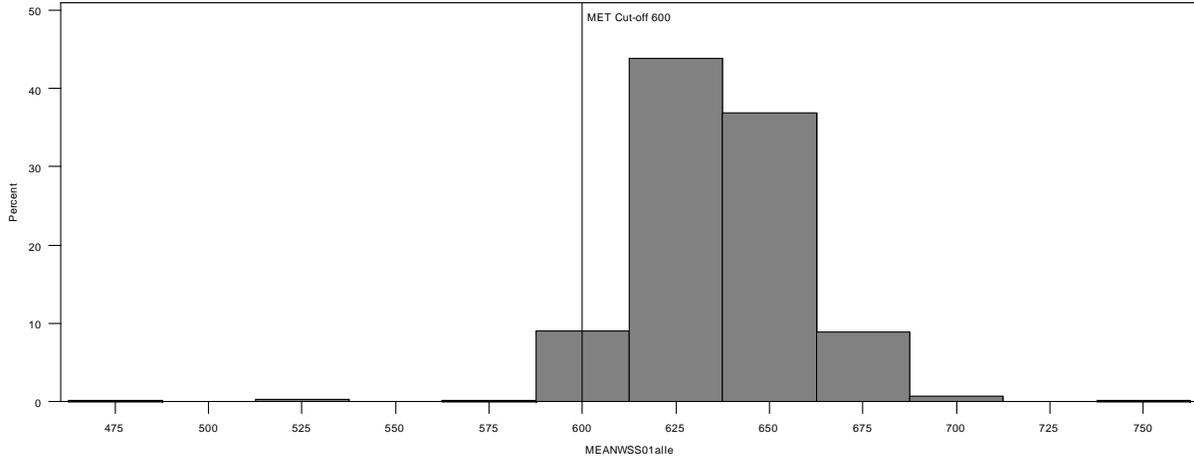
In setting the initial year AMOs, we tried to balance the desire to set an ambitious starting point with the need to set realistic annual goals that reflect the variability that existed in student performance by school type, grade level, and especially by subgroup.

For illustrative purposes, selected frequency distributions for student performance measures are presented below.

**2011 ASSESSMENTS RESULTS  
DISTRIBUTIONS OF MEAN TEST SCORES BY SCHOOL TYPE**

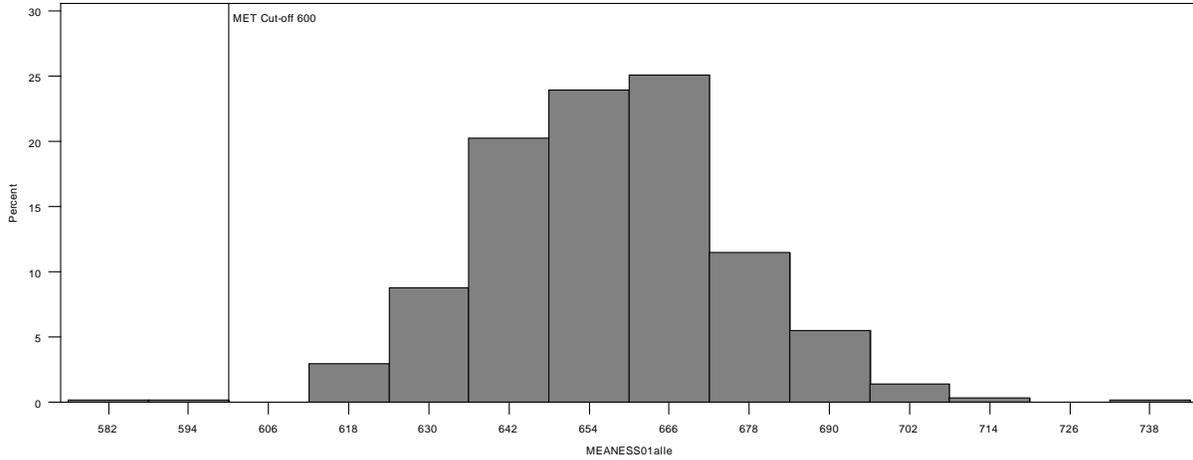
**Elementary School: Writing**

**DISTRIBUTIONS**



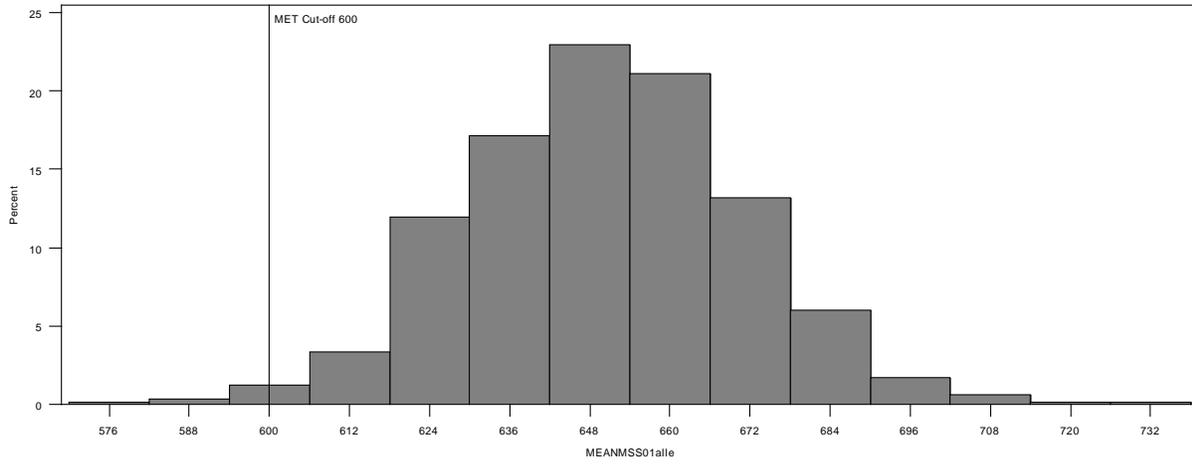
**Elementary School: English Language Arts (ELA)**

**DISTRIBUTIONS**



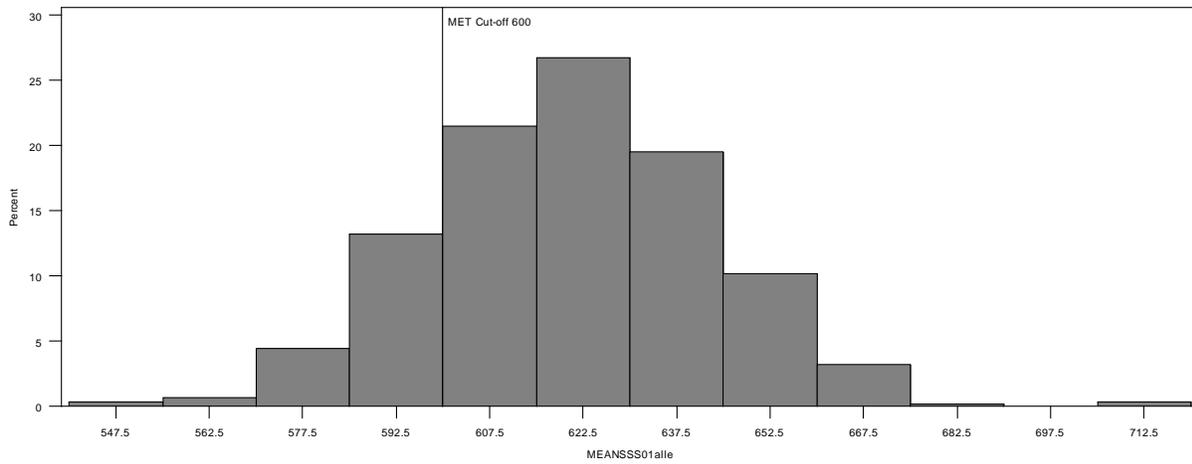
## Elementary Schools: Mathematics

### DISTRIBUTIONS



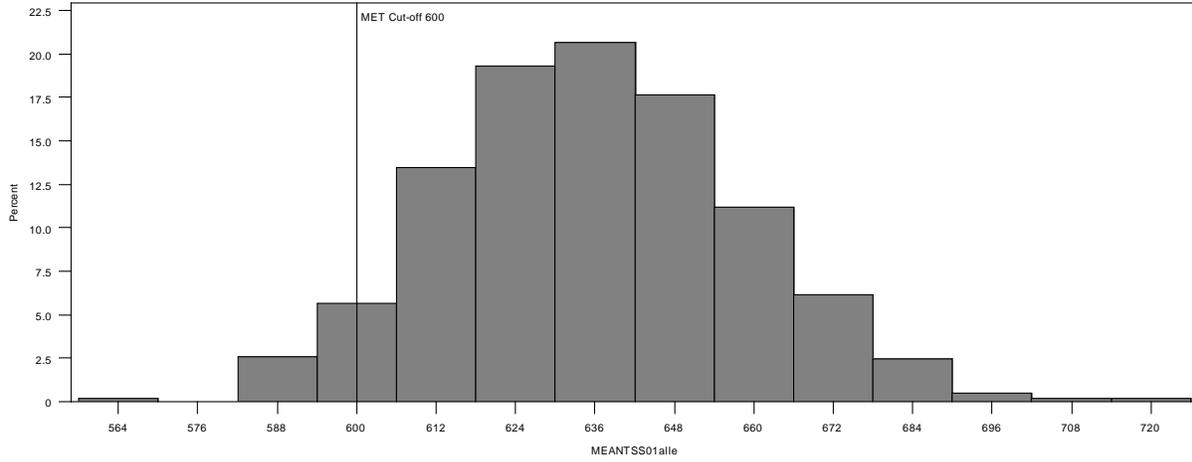
## Elementary Schools: Science

### DISTRIBUTIONS



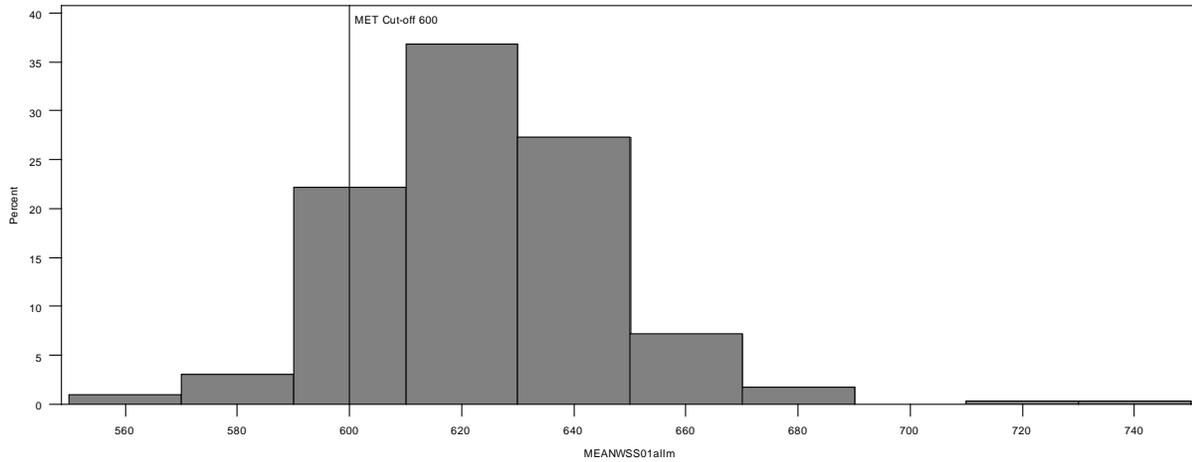
## Elementary Schools: Social Studies

### DISTRIBUTIONS



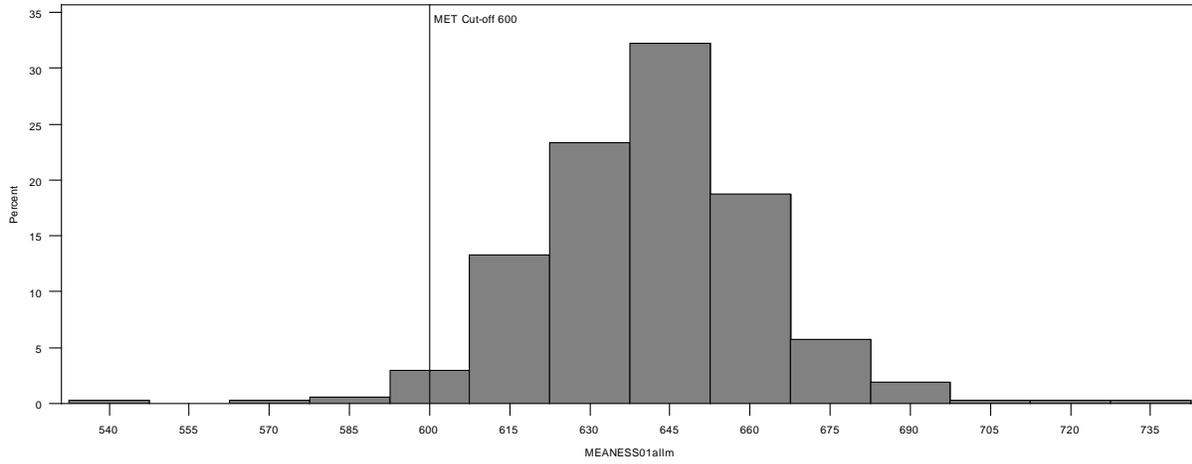
## Middle Schools: Writing

### DISTRIBUTIONS



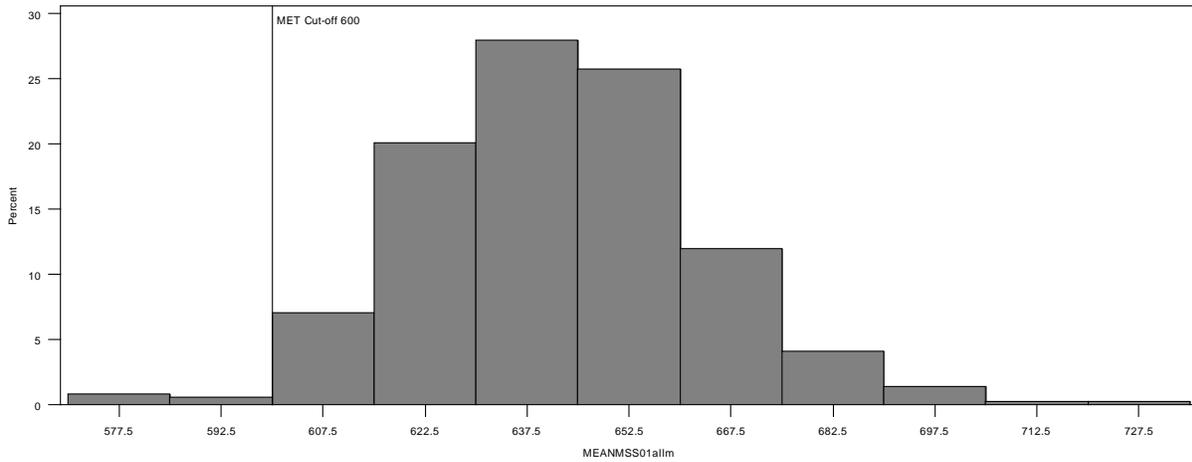
## Middle Schools: ELA

### DISTRIBUTIONS



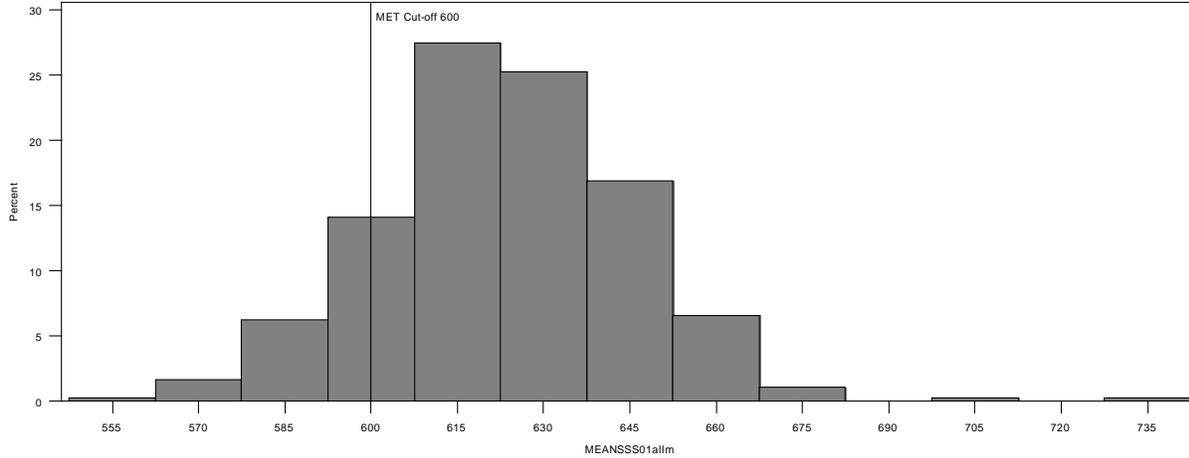
## Middle Schools: Mathematics

### DISTRIBUTIONS



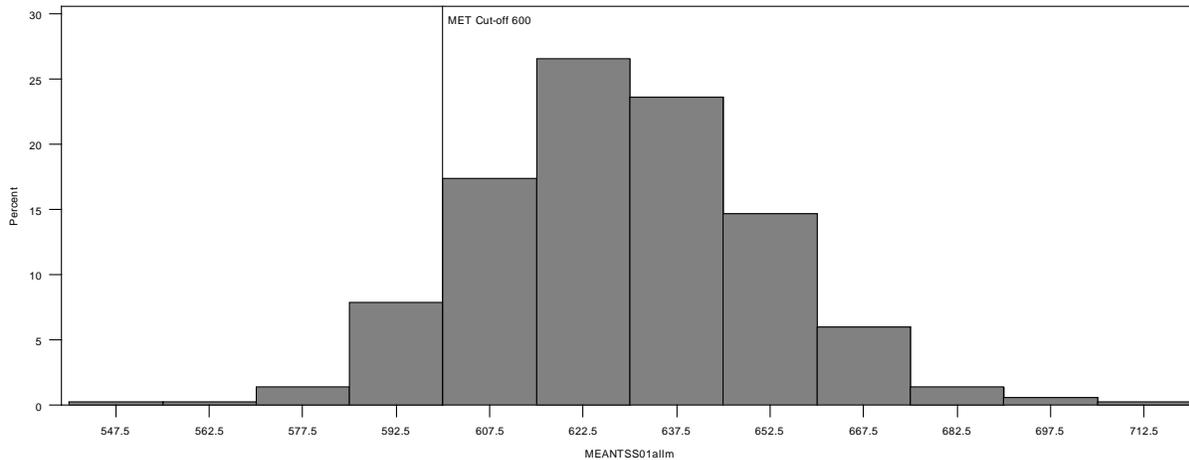
## Middle Schools: Science

### DISTRIBUTIONS



## Middle Schools: Social Studies

### DISTRIBUTIONS



For the ESEA Flexibility Waiver base year, elementary and middle school AMOs were set at a goal level that was substantially higher than past cut-off for “MET” (e.g., in ELA and math, a score of 600), and at the same time about one percentage point below the mean or average scale score for the school type.

South Carolina’s experience with the state system for school accountability, the School and District Report Cards, reinforced by input from stakeholders, strongly suggested that schools whose performance was in the lowest quartile of the distribution (on a given measure) needed the proposed ESEA goals to be more realistic than the percent of students Proficient cut score and

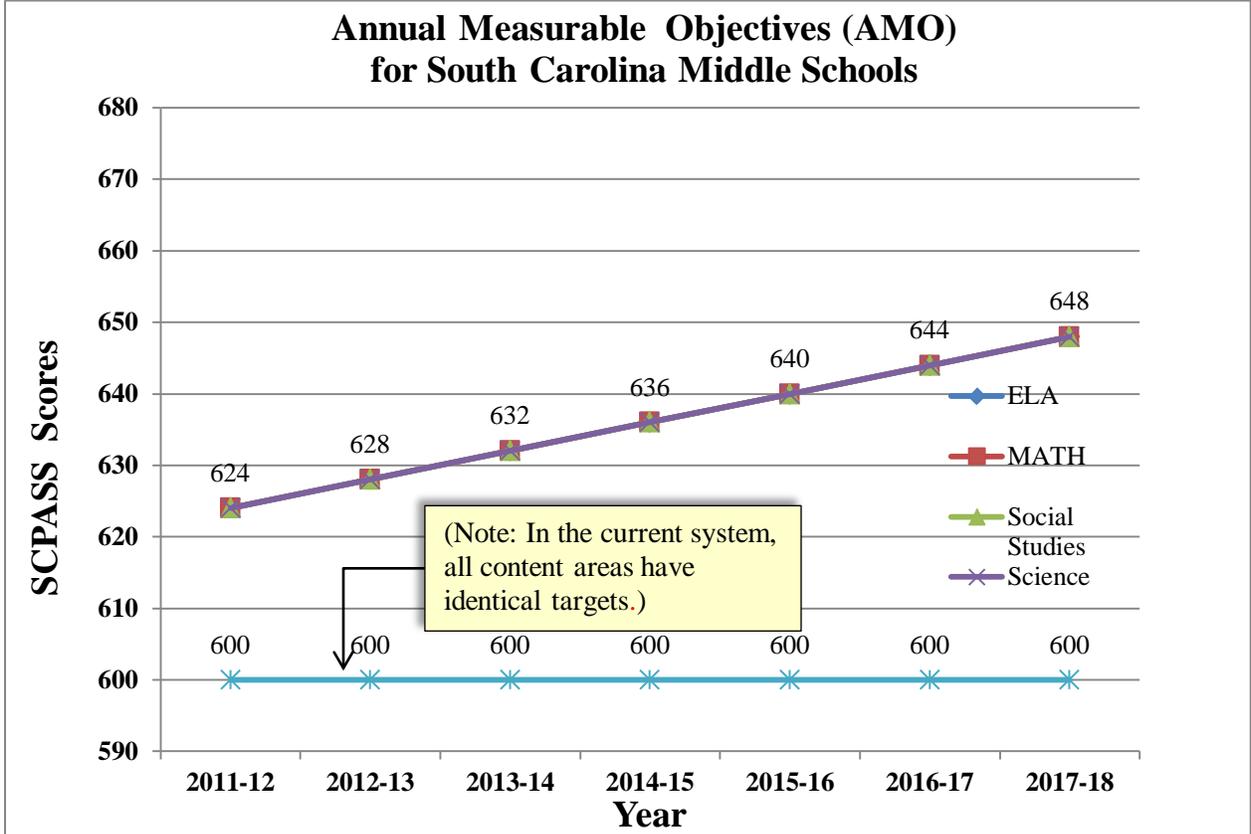
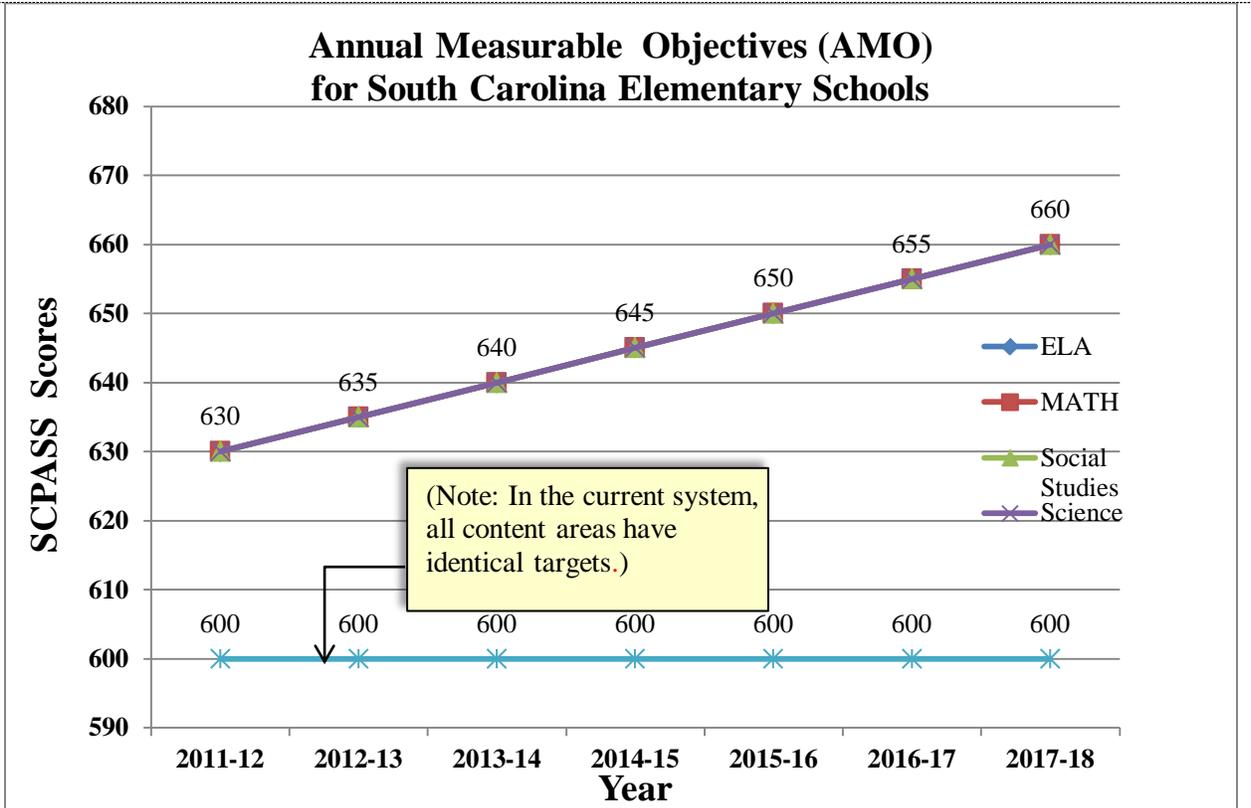
that the proposed AMOs needed to be perceived to be “within reach.” In addition, with districts and schools accustomed to dealing with a single score defining the AYP “Proficient” goal across assessment measures, it was important to remain consistent and set the proposed AMOs in terms of a single mean score for ELA, math, science and social studies, rather than having different AMOs unique to each measure.

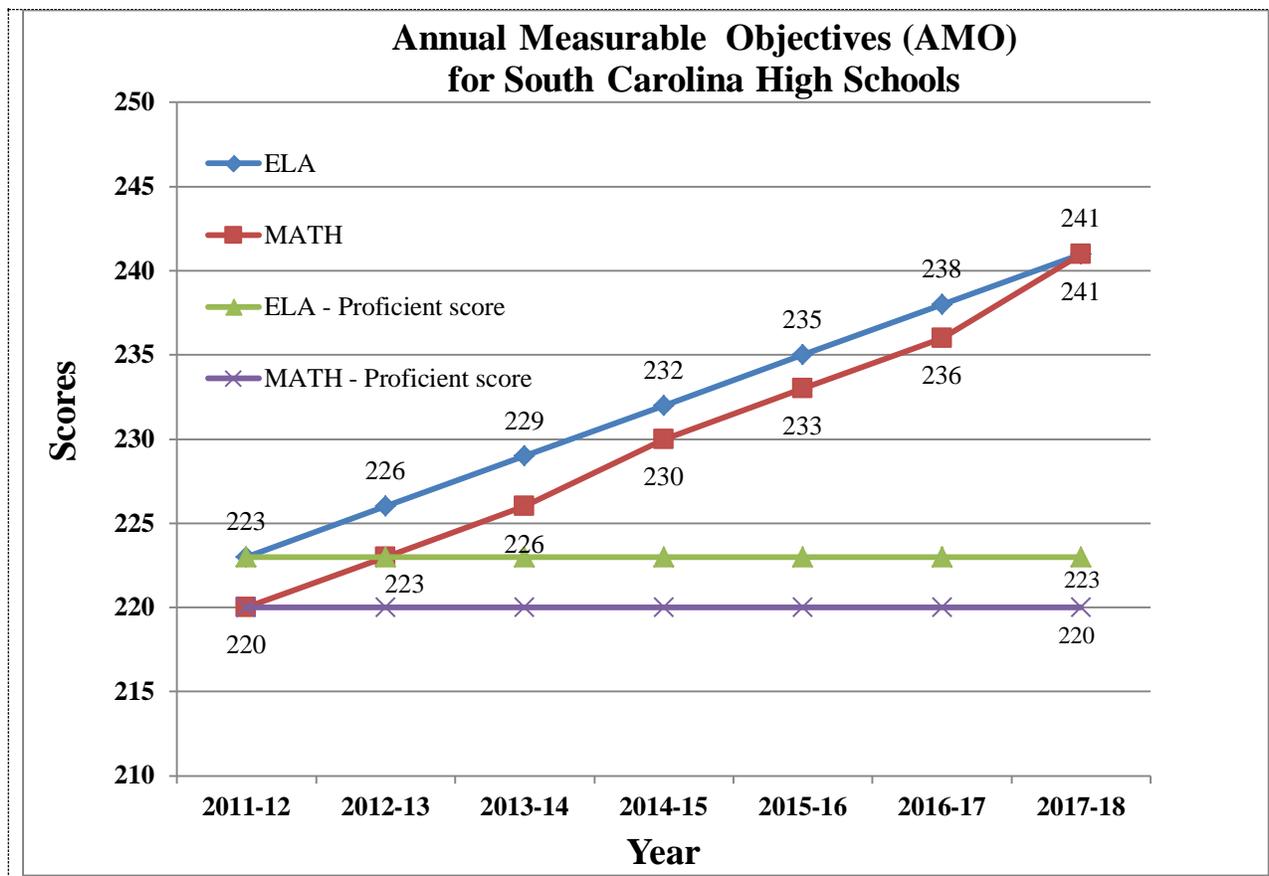
Accordingly, South Carolina’s AMO targets were set by taking the scale score cut off point for “Meeting Grade Level Standard” (600) using the base year test data and adding 5 percent for elementary schools (630) and 4 percent for middle schools (624).

For elementary schools, the proposed AMO starting in 2011–12 began at a mean scale score of 630 which was approximately equivalent to an AMO of 93 percent of students Proficient or above (when 600 was used as the cut score for “Proficient”). That is, based on 2011–12 actual data, a school with a mean ELA score of 630 and a mean math score of 630—equal to the AMO—would be estimated to have about 93 percent of students Proficient or above (i.e., when the mean of the distribution was 630 and  $sd = 20$ , a score of 600 was equivalent to a  $z$ -score = -1.5, and approximately 93 percent of the distribution would be expected to be above 600.) For middle schools, the proposed AMO of 624 for ELA and math would be approximately equal to 88 percent of students Proficient or above (i.e., a  $z$ -score = -1.2, 88.5 percent above 600). By comparison, the AMOs for ELA and math with a cut score of 600 were set at 79.4 percent of students scoring Proficient or above.

To determine the annual increases in AMOs, we analyzed mean student assessment scores over time by school type, and chose realistic incremental increases within the range of observed increases in school means over the previous three-year period.

Beginning in 2012–13, South Carolina proposed to raise AYP goals from 600 in ELA and mathematics to the following:





To determine the proposed AMOs, South Carolina analyzed statewide mean student assessment scores over time, by school type, for all students, and subgroups.

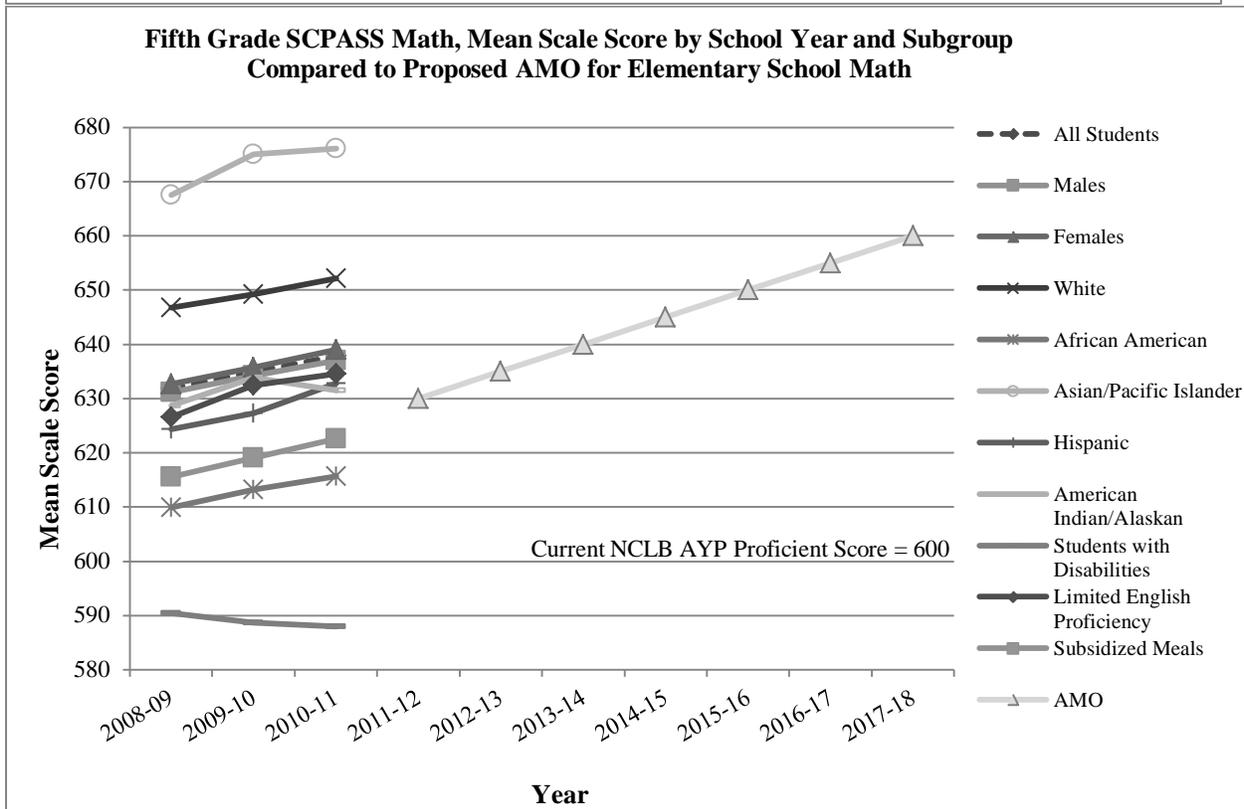
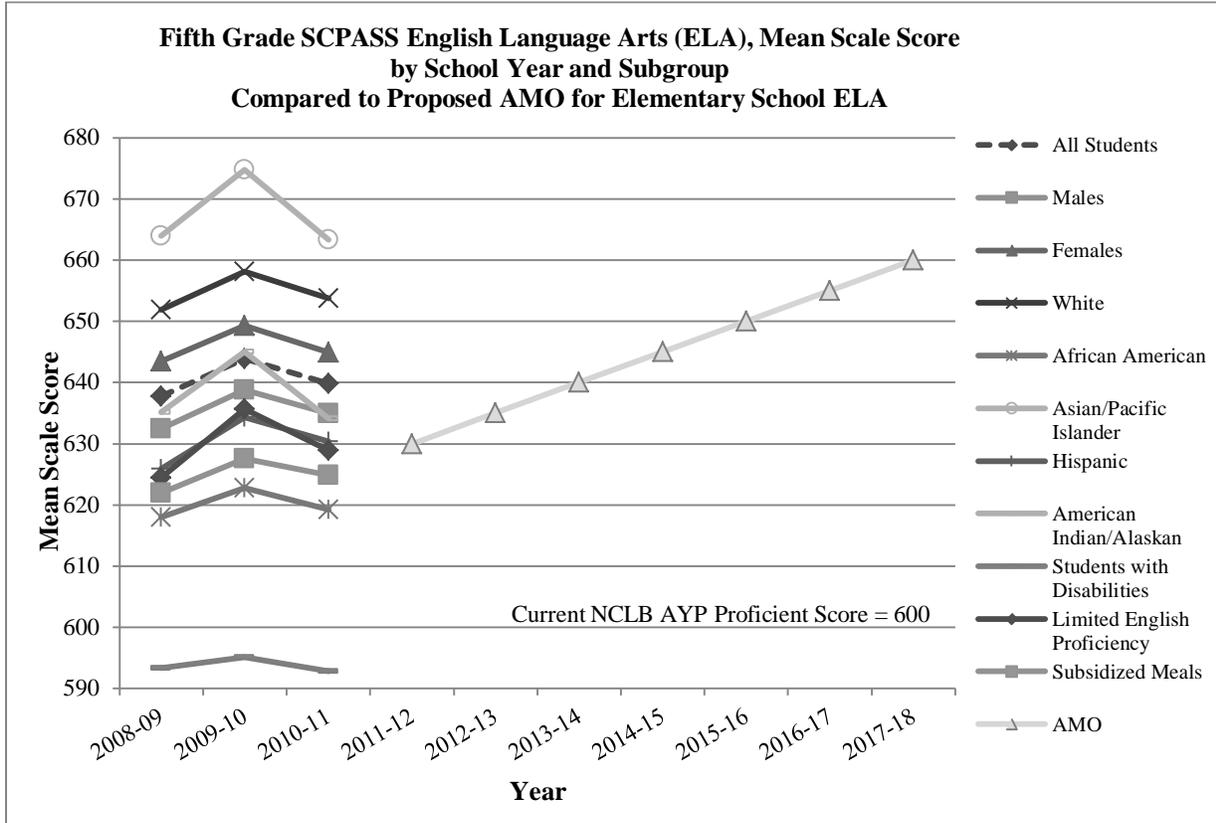
The historical trajectory of statewide mean scale scores for the “All Students” group and for student subgroups are presented in Figures A1–A6.

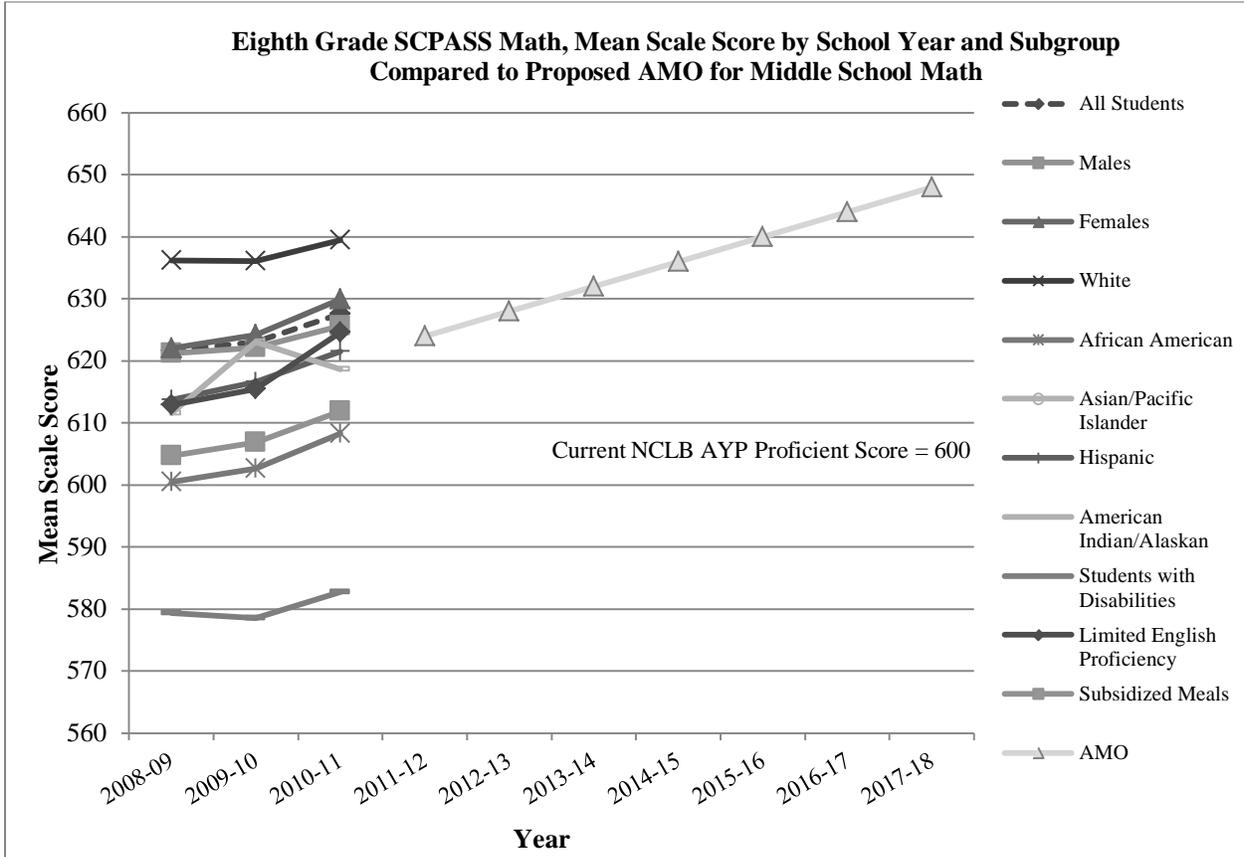
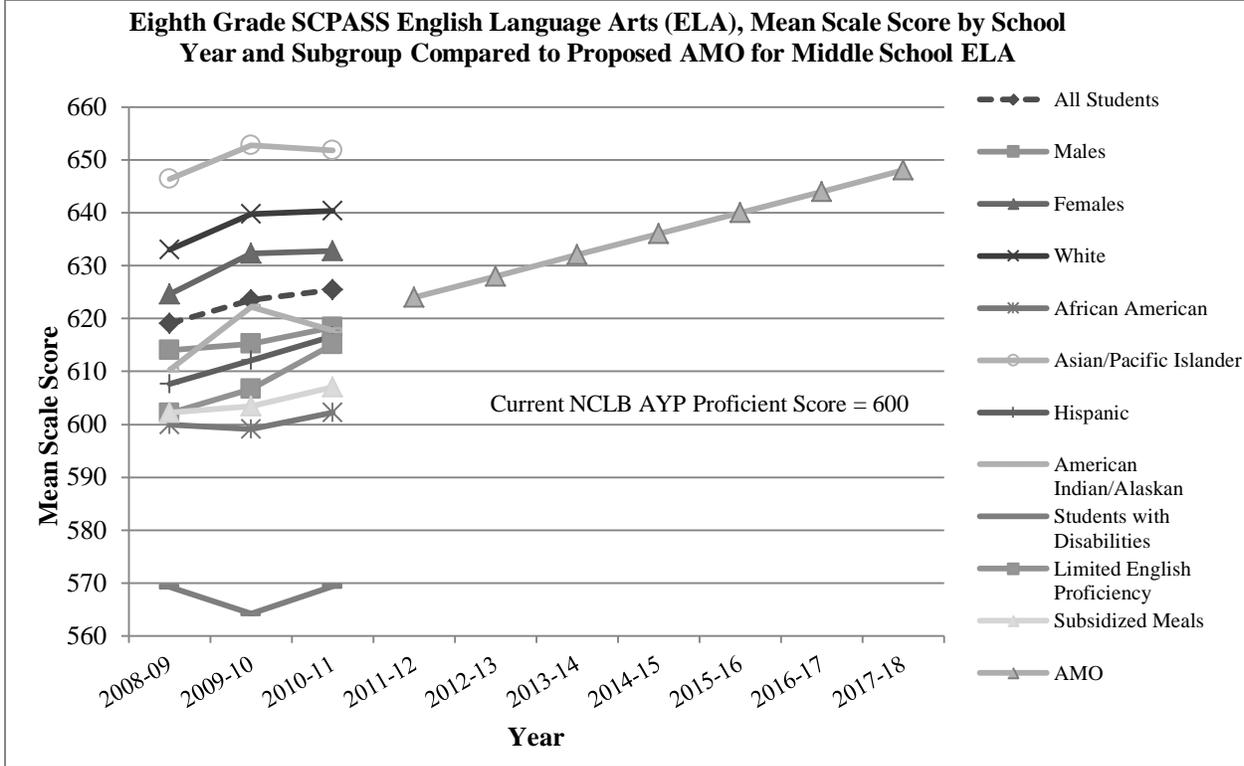
For illustrative purposes and ease of comparison, the trend data presented for elementary and middle schools focuses on fifth grade and eighth grade, the final grade level for elementary schools and middle schools, respectively (to inform decisions about the proposed AMOs, similar analyses and reviews of historical trends were conducted for all grades tested, 3–5 for elementary schools and 6–8 for middle schools).

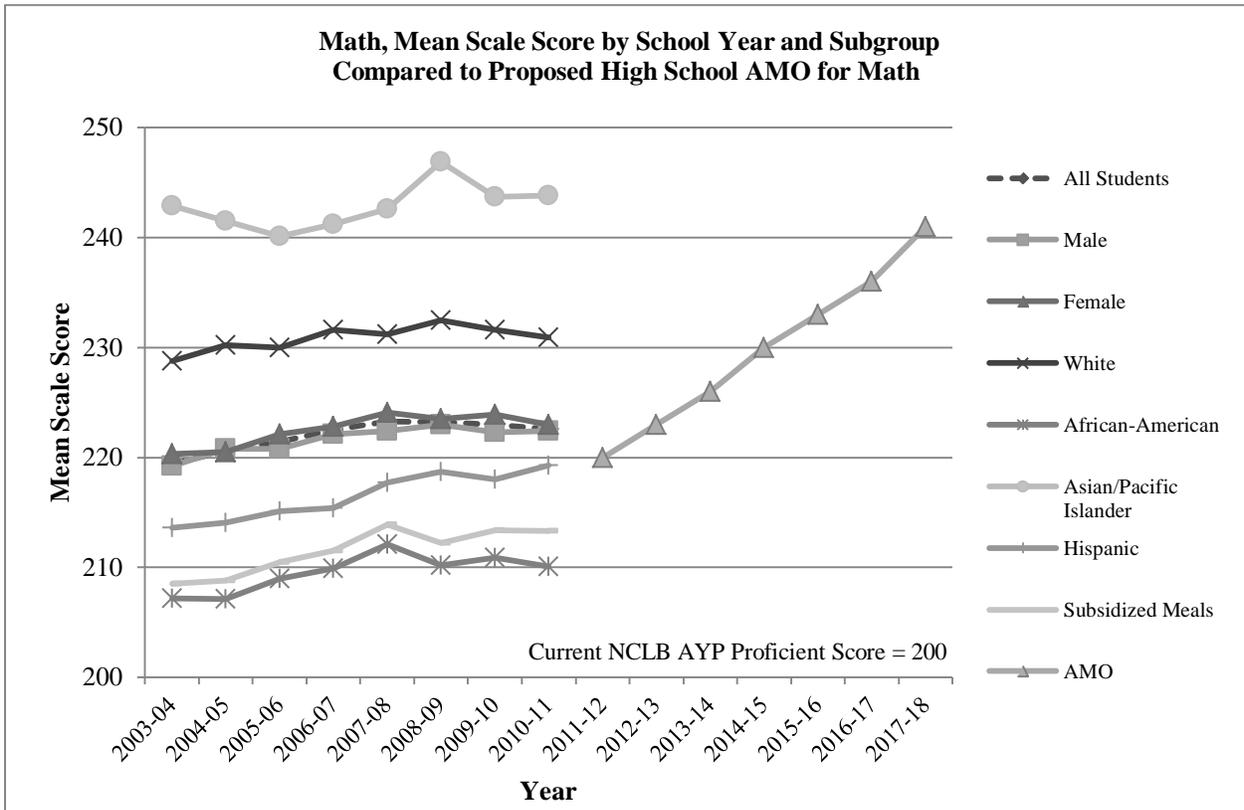
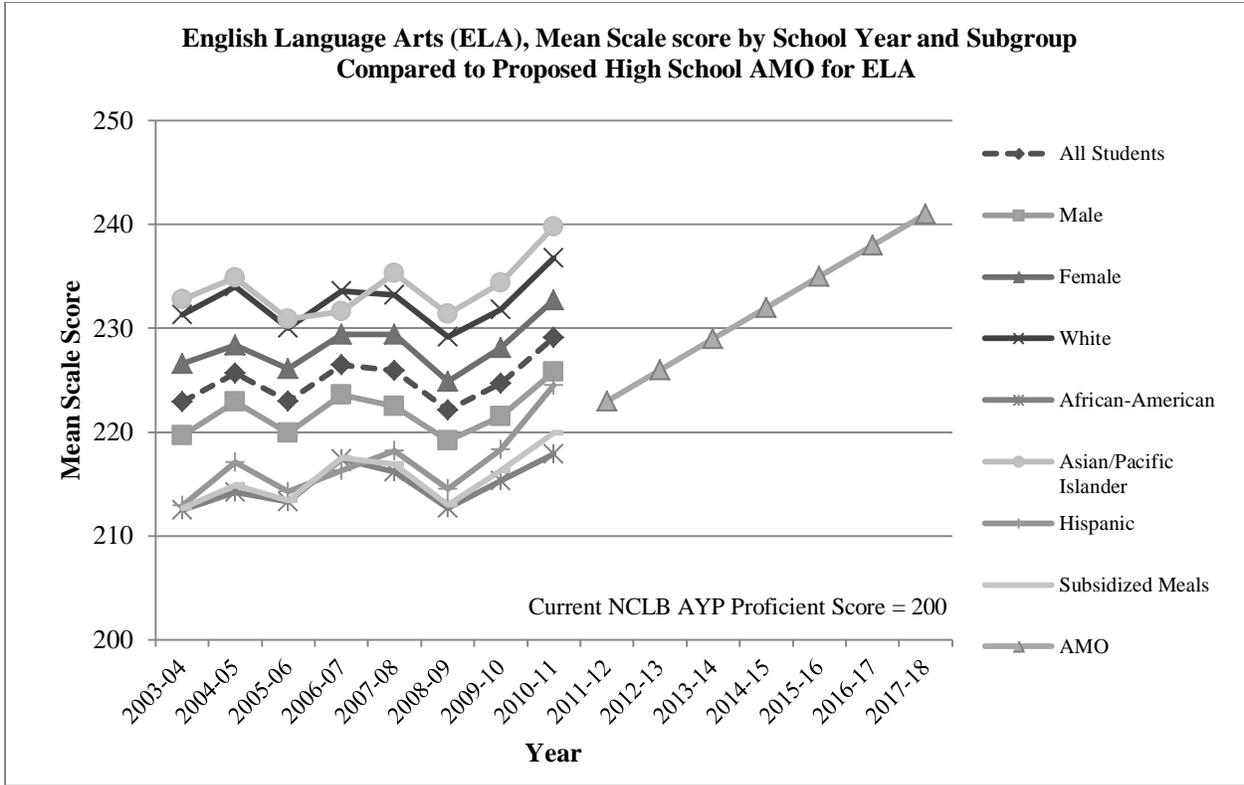
As previously mentioned, the starting points for the proposed AMOs for SCPASS ELA and Math, and for ELA and Math were determined, in large part, by detailed analysis and review of historical trend data, such as these.

Note: The SCPASS field tests of writing were first administered in March 2009 and the SCPASS field tests of reading & research, mathematics, science, and social studies were administered in May 2009. Thus, for elementary and middle schools, only three years of SCPASS data were available at the time. For high schools, eight years of historical data were available, beginning with the 2003–04 school year through 2010–11.

**FIGURES A1-A6:**





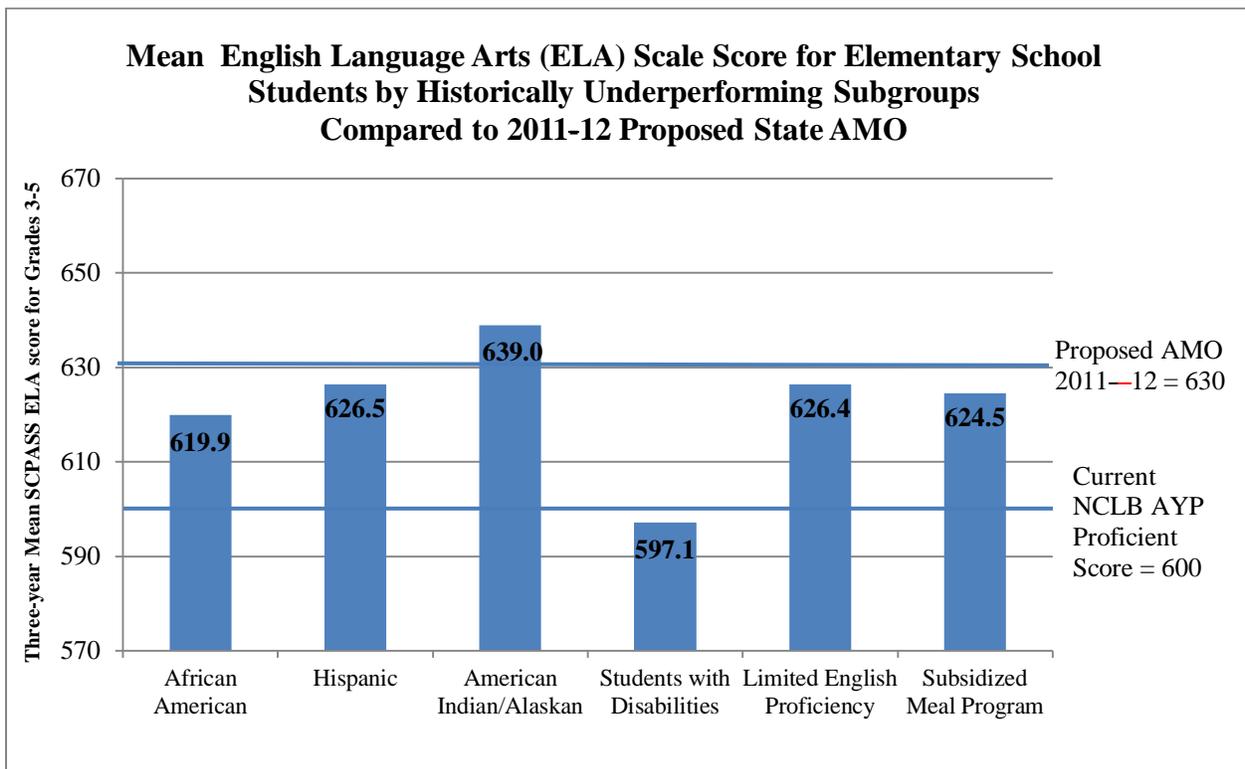


To determine the appropriate and optimal starting point for each AMO, South Carolina also conducted analyses and reviews of SCPASS and assessment scores disaggregated by subgroup.

Mean scale scores by school type and student subgroup are presented in Figures B1–B6.

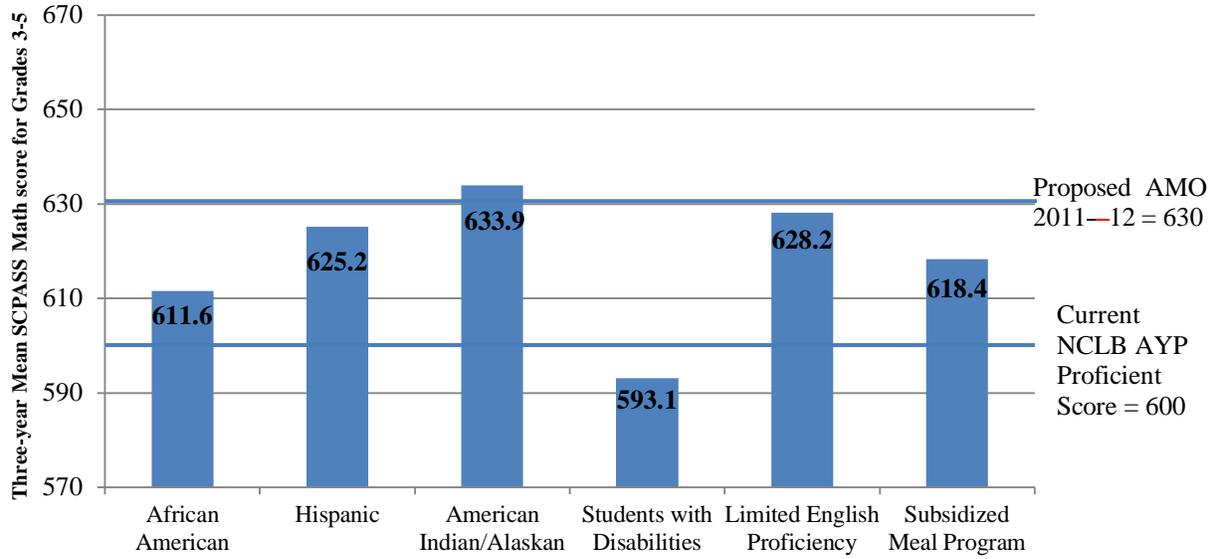
As is evident, South Carolina’s proposed 2011–12 AMOs for elementary, middle, and high schools were above the recent (three-year) mean student performance of all historically underperforming subgroups, (with the exception of one subgroup, American Indian/Alaskan students, at the elementary school level). These data clearly demonstrate that the proposed AMOs for elementary, middle, and high schools were, in fact, both rigorous and ambitious, relative to student subgroup performance on SCPASS.

**FIGURES B1–B6:**

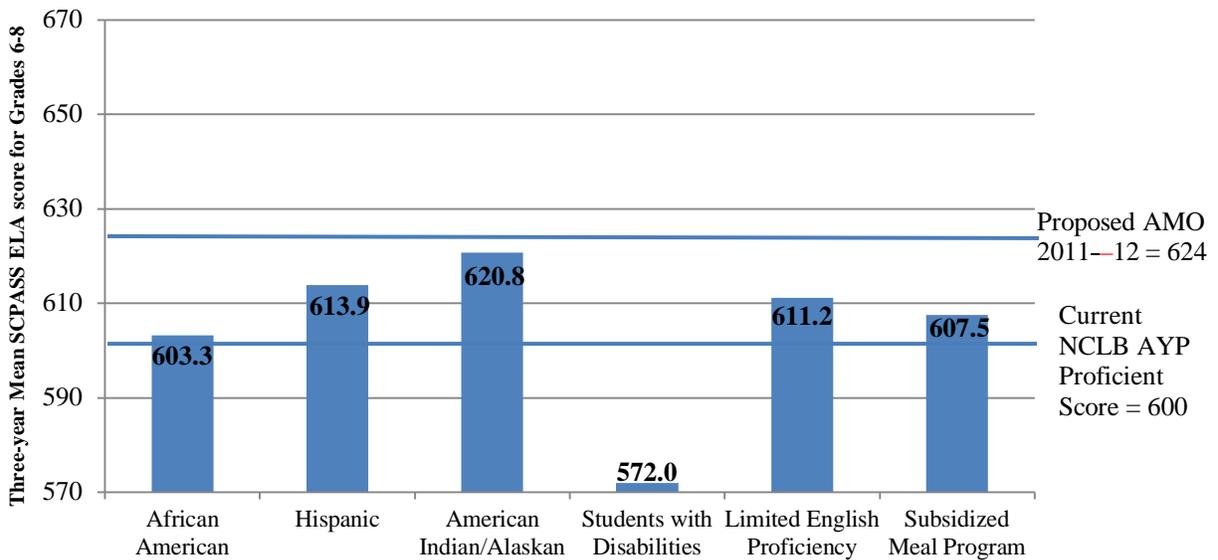




### Mean Math Scale Score for Elementary School Students by Historically Underperforming Subgroups Compared to 2011–12 Proposed State AMO

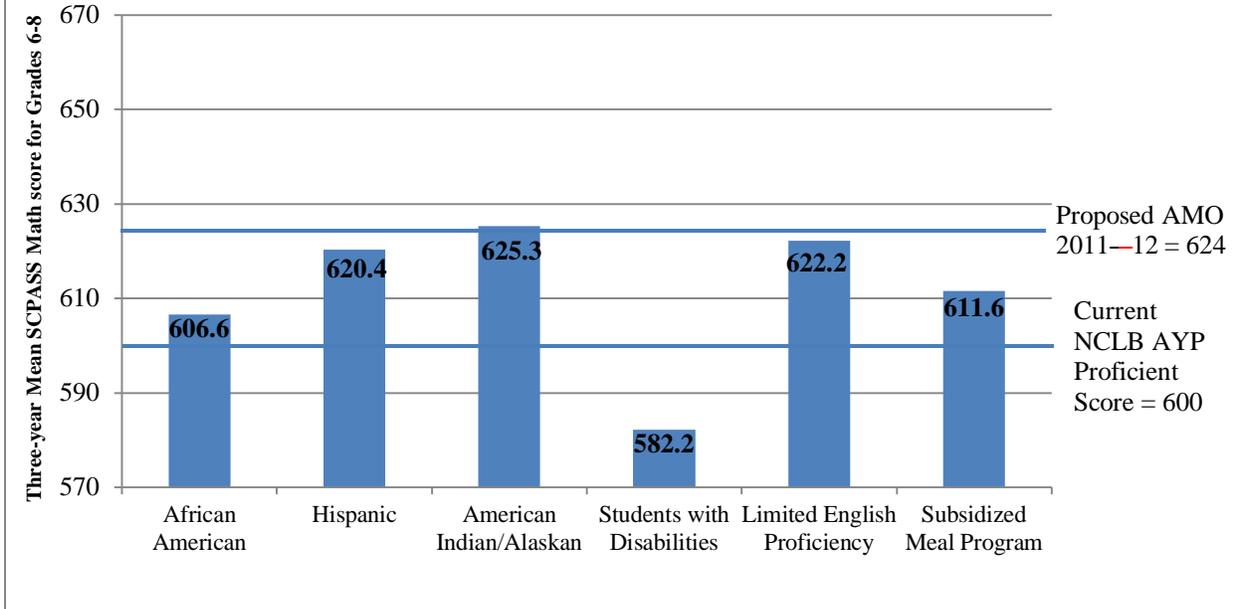


### Mean English Language Arts (ELA) Scale Score for Middle School Students by Historically Underperforming Subgroups Compared to 2011–12 Proposed State AMO

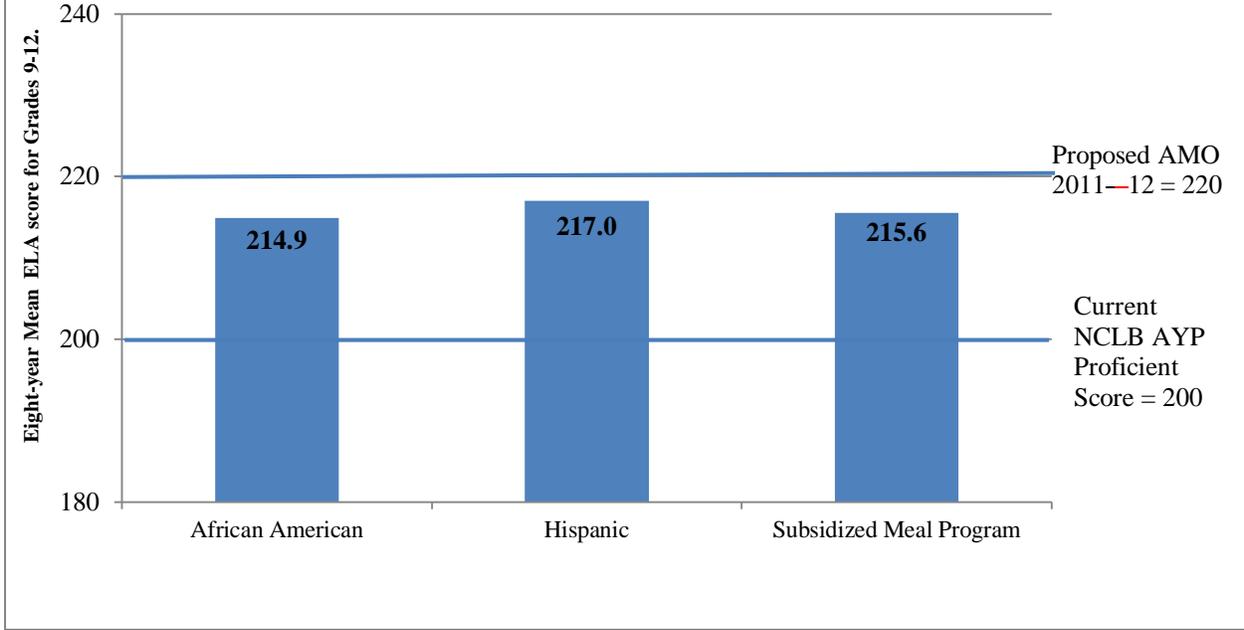


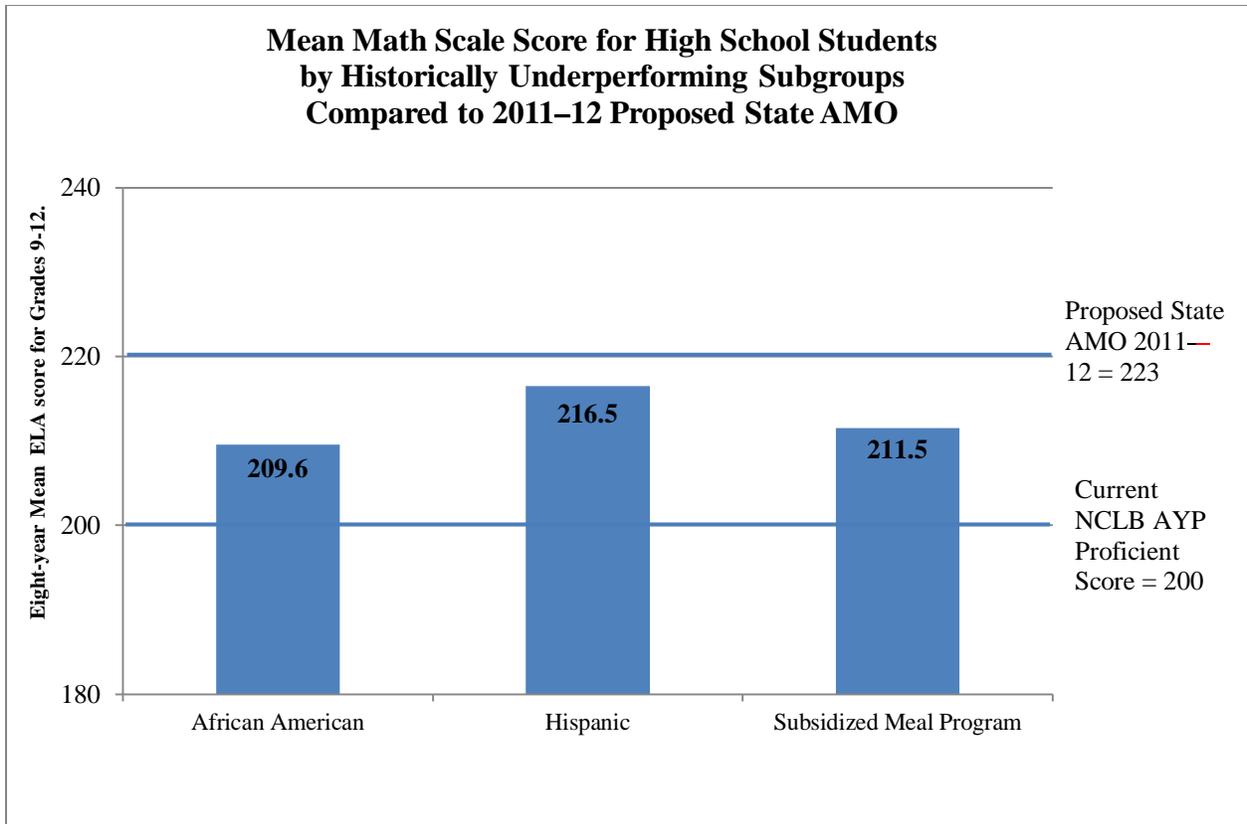


### Mean Math Scale Score for Middle School Students by Historically Underperforming Subgroups Compared to 2011–12 Proposed State AMO



### Mean English Language Arts (ELA) Scale Score for High School Students by Historically Underperforming Subgroups Compared to 2011–12 Proposed State AMO

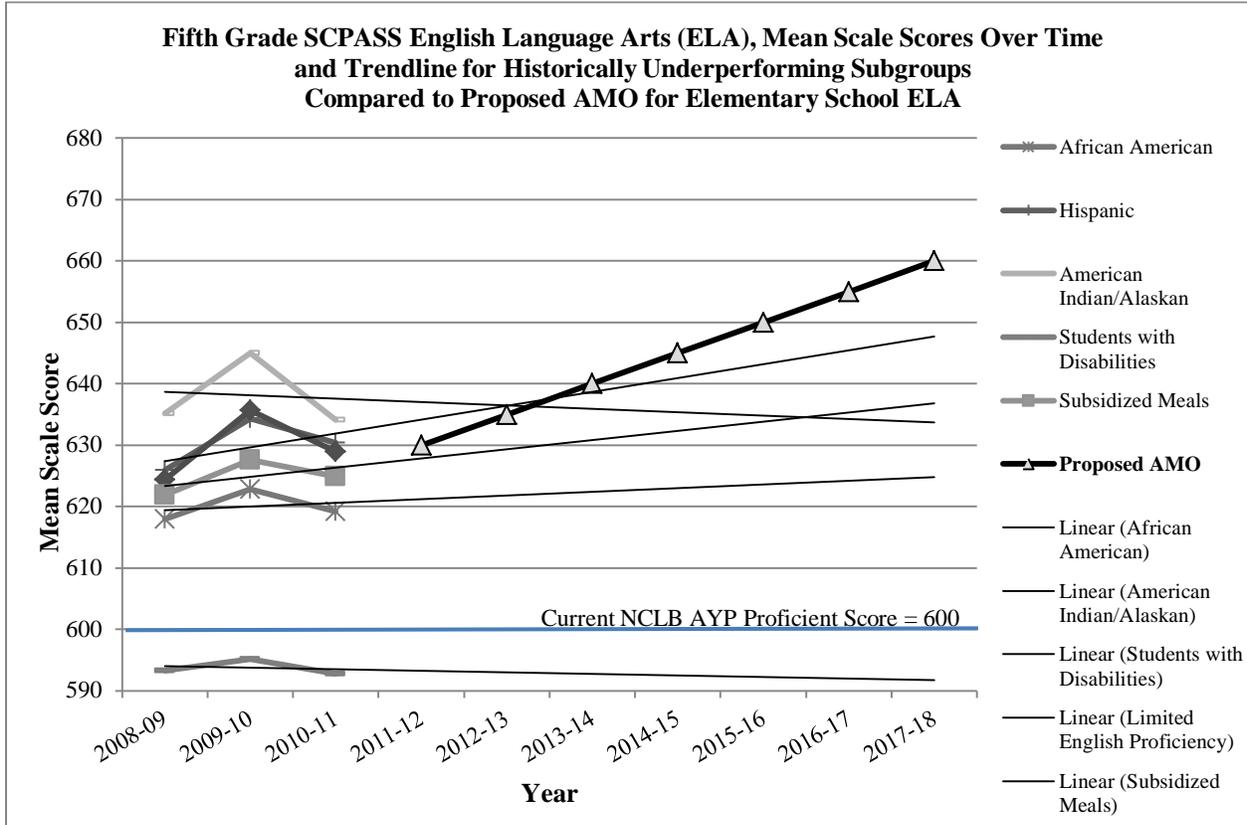




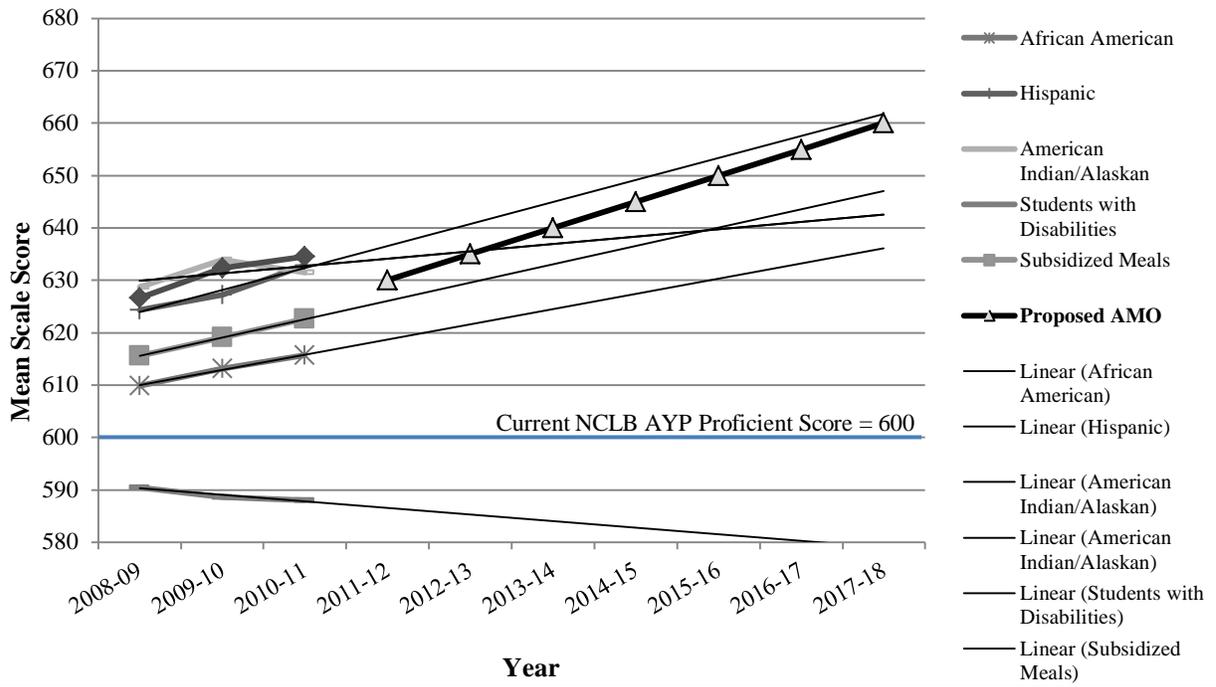
In Figures C1–C6, below, South Carolina’s proposed AMOs for elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools are presented in relation to future projections of student performance based on the past trajectory of SCPASS and scale score means.

Keeping in mind that some of the observed increase (positive slope) from 2008–09 to 2009–10 is likely due to deflated initial implementation year assessment results for SCPASS, in general, the proposed AMOs over time clearly indicate that South Carolina’s annual expectations will set ambitious targets for all schools and all students.

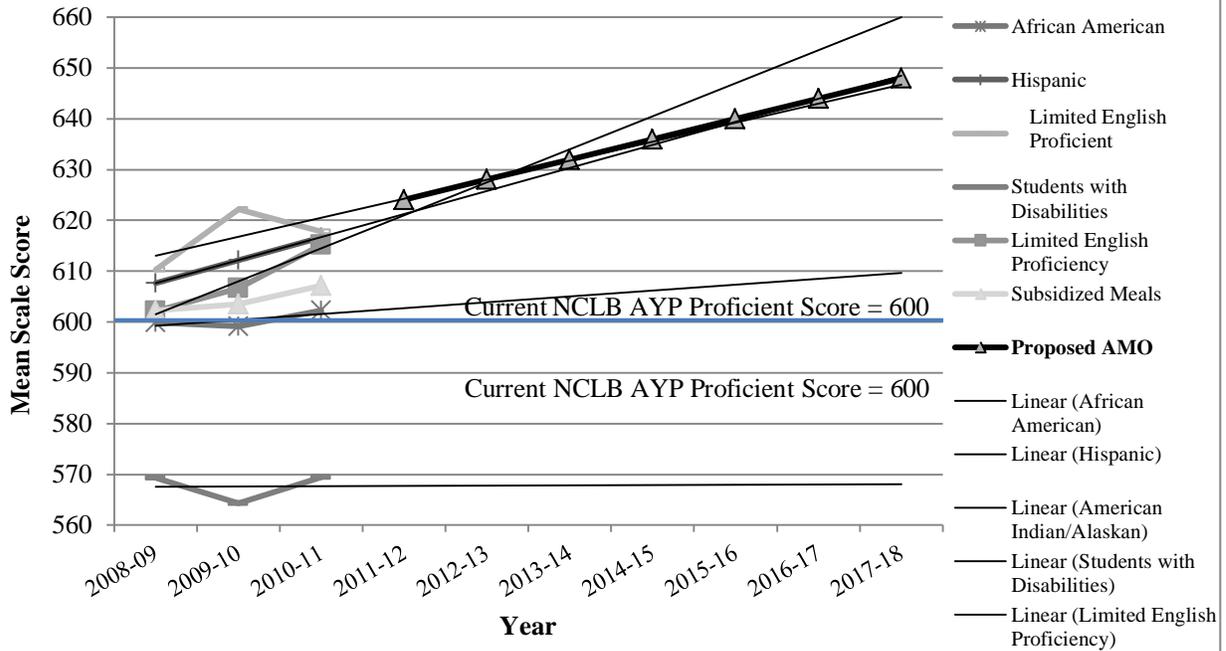
**FIGURES C1–C6:**



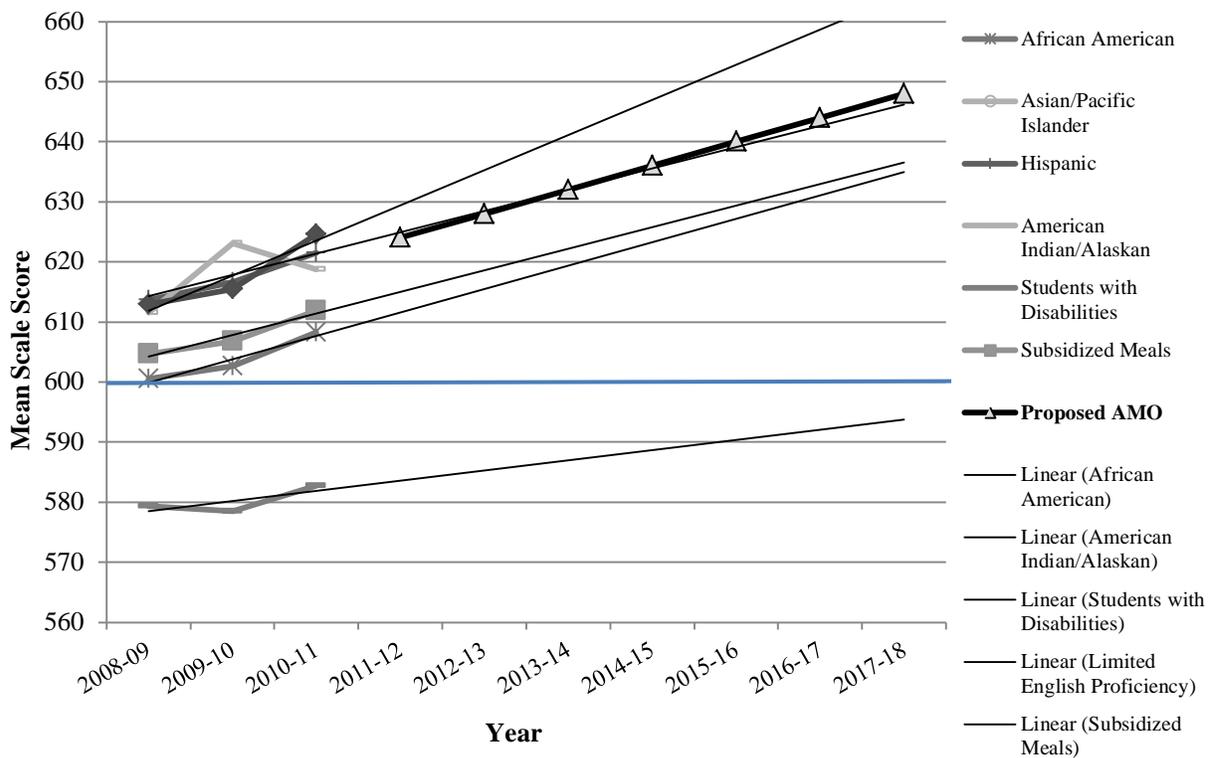
**Fifth Grade SCPASS Math, Mean Scale Scores Over Time and Trendline  
for Historically Underperforming Subgroups  
Compared to Proposed AMO for Elementary School Math**

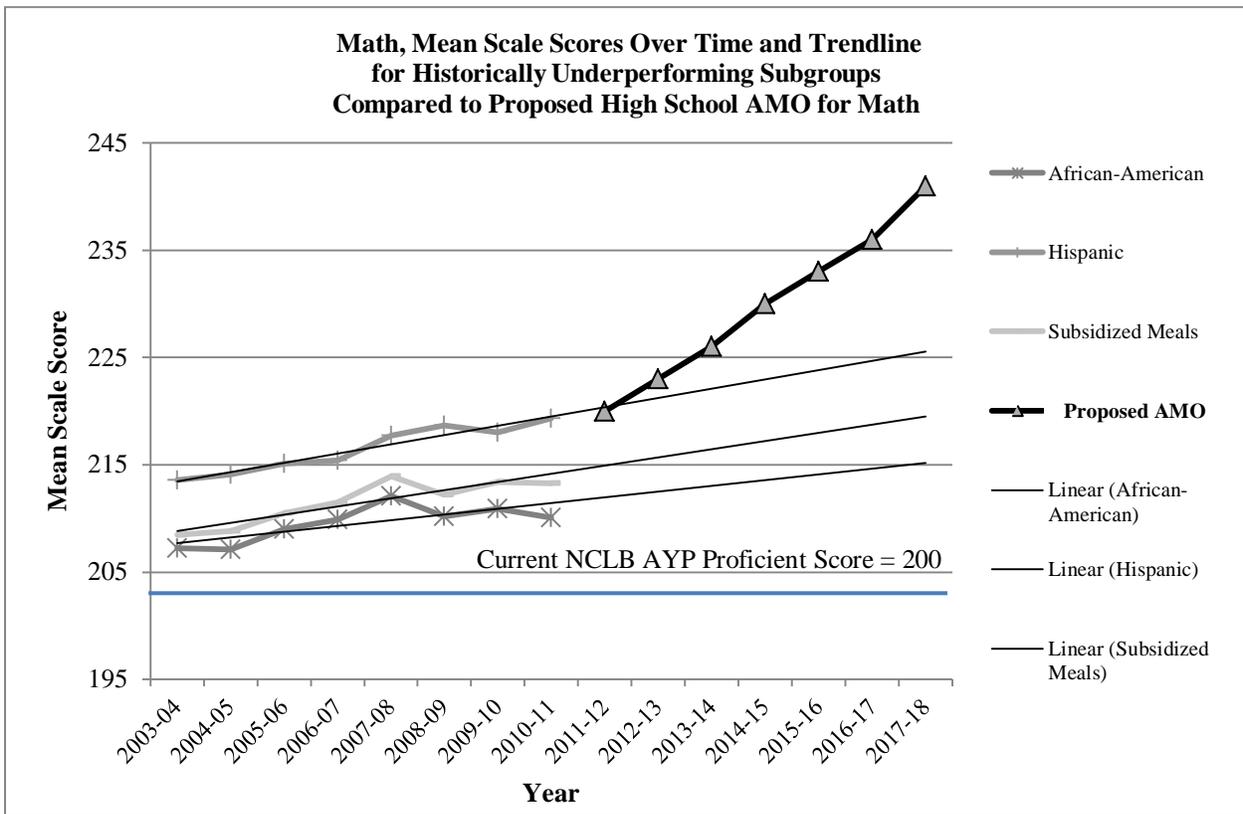
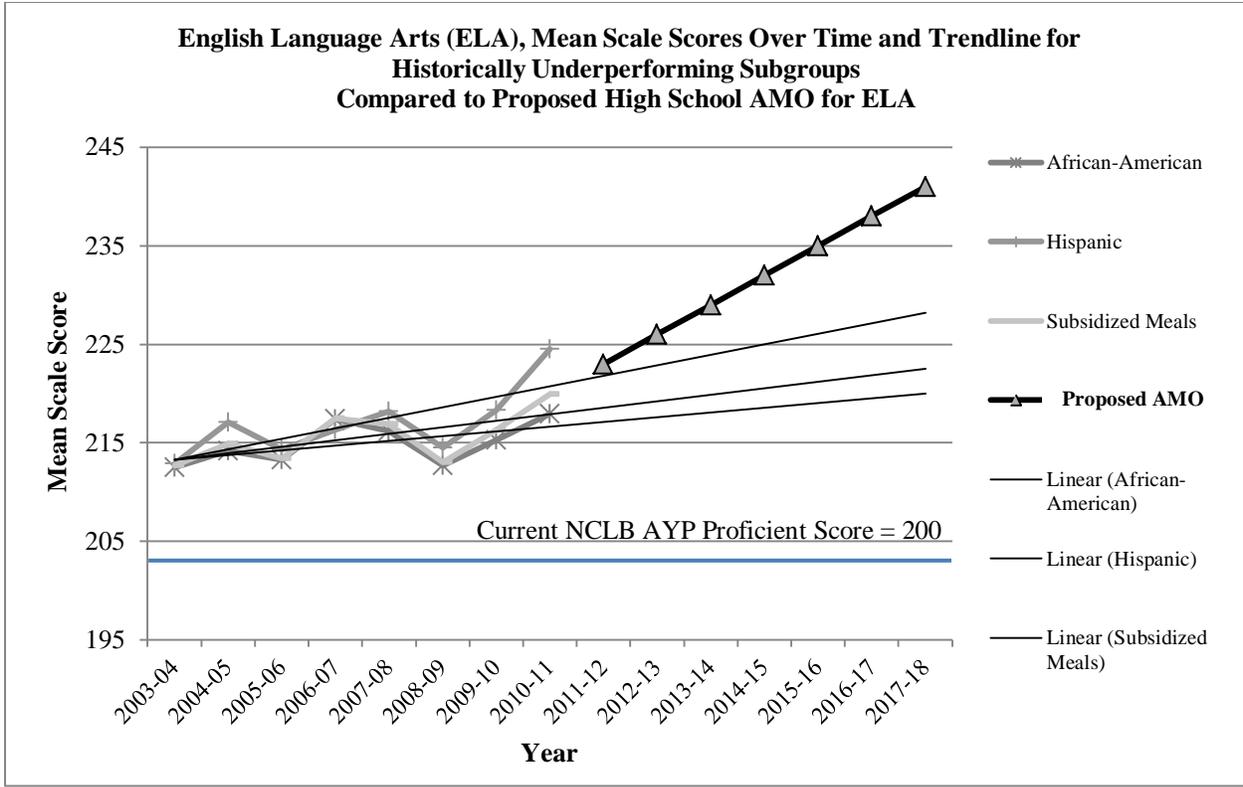


**Eighth Grade SCPASS English Language Arts (ELA), Mean Scale Scores Over Time and Trendline for Historically Underperforming Subgroups Compared to Proposed AMO for Middle School ELA**



**Eighth Grade SCPASS Math, Mean Scale Scores Over Time and Trendline for Historically Underperforming Subgroups Compared to Proposed AMO for Middle School Math**





In the weighted composite index calculation (i.e., in the matrix), a subgroup receives a point for meeting the AMO or a partial point (.6 to .9) to reflect how far each mean (above

Proficient) is from the AMO. A partial point (.1 up to .5) may be received within the appropriate cell if the subgroup mean (that falls below Proficient) demonstrates an increase when compared to the previous year's subgroup mean.

To measure improvement from one year to the next within the index, we analyzed and reviewed student performance by subgroup for each school over the past three years. For example, for high schools we looked at the “All Students” group and each subgroup to see if the mean of each subgroup increased from 2009 to 2010 and from 2010 to 2011. Similarly, we looked elementary schools and middle schools—in every cell of the matrix where a school did not meet the AMO, we looked to see if there had been any improvement at all from one year to the next. What we observed was that when there was some improvement, the typical increase was in the range of 1–8 or 9 points, with very few instances where the increase was more than 9 scale score points.

For example, from 2010 to 2011, while 90 percent of high schools (162 of 180) did not meet AMO in a particular subgroup, some demonstrated an increase in that subgroup on HSAP-ELA. However, 71 percent of the increases were between 1 and 6 scale points, while the other 29 percent had increases greater than 6 points. (From 2010 to 2011, the maximum point increase in HSAP-ELA, was 13 points in one school. Similarly, 68 percent of high schools (73 of 180) had some increase in subgroup performance from 2010 to 2011, with about 90 percent of those increases being in the 1–6 point range. Only 9.6 percent of the -Math increases from one year to the next were greater than 6 scale points, with the maximum observed increase of 8 points (in only 1 school).

Accordingly, while we tested several alternative methods of calculating partial scores for improvement, including calculating partial improvement relative to the distance between the subgroup mean and the AMO, we found that a relatively straightforward method of assigning a tenth of a point for each scale point increase provided a fairly consistent partial score in a given cell of the matrix. Because the distribution of change scores is skewed to the right, that is, the majority of schools that do not meet a particular subgroup AMO, tend to have only a relatively small increase from the previous year. Thus, assigning relative rather than an absolute partial score would result in a relatively small decimal increase.

By assigning a tenth of a point as an improvement score for each scale score point increase, we were able to provide a meaningful reward for improvement and at the same time an easy way for schools and districts to determine how that partial score was derived.

In a similar fashion, we analyzed and reviewed student performance by subgroup for each elementary and middle school, as well, and determined that the same correspondence of one scale point increase to .1 partial improvement point score would suffice.

To ensure that schools or districts do not receive a 1.0 (or higher) by the partial improvement calculation, we limited the possible range of improvement scores from .1 to .9. This also made for a simpler explanation of how improvement would be calculated (than assigning partial scores relative to the distance between the individual subgroup mean and the AMO, which potentially could be different for each subgroup at each school).

The 2013 amendment of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver Request decreased the impact of partial credit for improvement and added a partial score for each mean above Proficient to provide stability in the state, school, or district grade from one year to the next.

## 2.C REWARD SCHOOLS

2.C.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as reward schools . If the SEA’s methodology is not based on the definition of reward schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g. based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.

Through a project of the SCDE’s Office of Federal and State Accountability, South Carolina has long recognized Title I schools that have made improvements in two categories—student achievement and closing or reducing the achievement gap—by designating them as Title I Distinguished Schools. This Title I Distinguished Schools project has been an opportunity to publicly recognize Title I schools for their positive educational achievements. We have refined the system for identifying Distinguished Schools so that the categories reflect the requirements for identifying these highest-performing and high-progress schools as **Reward Schools** at two levels, as defined in the ESEA Flexibility Request Review Guidance.

A school will be designated a Reward School if the school is one of the highest performing Title I schools in a given year or if the Title I school demonstrates substantial progress over a number of years in either the “All Students” group or in subgroups provided there are no significant achievement or graduation rate gaps that are not closing. A school will not receive the highest rating in the SCDE’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system if there are significant achievement gaps or graduation rate gaps that are not closing across subgroups or are closing solely due to a decline in performance of the comparison group.

### Title I Distinguished Schools for Performance

This process recognizes Title I schools that have attained the highest weighted index for two or more consecutive years. To qualify as highest performing, a Title I school must

- attain an index score of 80 or greater in the two most recent school years assessed, and
- have a free/reduced lunch count that is greater than 50 percent (poverty indicator is under review because of community eligibility).

Step 1—Identify Title I schools for both the previous and current school years.

Step 2—Identify Title I schools with at least one tested grade.

Step 3—Identify Title I schools with greater than 50 percent poverty (based on enrollment on the first day of testing—number of students eligible for free or reduced lunch divided by total enrollment).

Step 4—Identify Title I schools that attained an index of 90 or greater in both of the previous two years.

Step 5—Identify highest performing Title I schools.

Step 6—Exclude any Title I schools with a significant achievement gap(s) in one or more student subgroups that are not closing, or are closing only due to decline in the comparison group.

For this purpose, a significant achievement gap in subgroup performance is defined as a gap equal to or greater than one standard deviation above the mean achievement gap for that particular subgroup across all schools of the same type. In other words, if the mean achievement gap for LEP students in middle schools is 15 scale points and the standard deviation is 6.0, then any school with an LEP achievement gap of 21 points or more would be considered to have a significant subgroup achievement gap for LEP students. A significant subgroup achievement gap in any other subgroup will be determined in similar fashion as equal to or greater than one standard deviation above the mean achievement gap for that particular subgroup, across all schools of the same type.

#### Title I Distinguished Schools for Progress

This process recognizes Title I schools that have made substantial progress over a number of years in either the “All Students” group or in subgroups. To qualify as Distinguished School for High Progress, a Title I school must

- attain an index of 70 or greater in the two most recent school years assessed, and
- have a free/reduced lunch count that is greater than 50 percent.

In addition, to qualify as Distinguished School for High Progress, a Title I school must also be ranked in the top 10 percent of schools on improvement from one year to the next in student performance for the “All Students” group or for one or more subgroups, on each assessment measure, and for high schools, also on graduation rate.

To identify Title I High Progress schools:

Step 1—Identify Title I schools for the previous two school years.

Step 2—Identify Title I schools with at least one tested grade.

Step 3—Identify Title I schools with greater than 50 percent poverty (based on enrollment on the first day of testing—number of students eligible for free or reduced lunch divided by total enrollment).

Step 4—Identify Title I schools attaining an index of 70 or greater in the most recent two school years.

Step 5—Identify Title I schools that demonstrate progress in the performance of all students on statewide assessments and at the high school level are making the most progress in increasing graduation rates. [Calculate change in student performance from one year to the next and rank order all schools in the state, by school type, on each assessment measure and for high schools, also on graduation rate. Separately rank schools based on change in student performance for “All Students” and for each subgroup.]

Step 6—Exclude any Title I schools with a significant achievement gap in one or more student subgroups that are not closing or are closing only due to decline in the comparison group.

For this purpose, a significant achievement gap in subgroup performance is defined as a gap equal to or greater than one standard deviation above the mean achievement gap for that particular subgroup across all schools of the same type. In other words, if the mean achievement gap for LEP students in middle schools is 15 scale points and the standard deviation is 6.0, then any school with an LEP achievement gap of 21 points or more would be considered to have a significant subgroup achievement gap for LEP students. A significant subgroup achievement gap in any other subgroup will be determined in similar fashion as equal to or greater than one standard deviation above the mean achievement gap for that particular subgroup, across all schools of the same type.

Step 7—Identify schools that rank in the top 10 percent statewide in progress, on each assessment and graduation rate, for all students and each subgroup.

South Carolina will identify and recognize Distinguished Schools for High Progress annually, in conjunction with the release of the state’s annual school and district performance reports.

The 2014 Reward Schools for Performance are presented at [http://ed.sc.gov/data/esea/2014/docs/Reward\\_Schools\\_for\\_Performance.pdf](http://ed.sc.gov/data/esea/2014/docs/Reward_Schools_for_Performance.pdf).

The 2014 Reward Schools for Progress are presented at [http://ed.sc.gov/data/esea/2014/docs/Reward\\_Schools\\_for\\_Progress.pdf](http://ed.sc.gov/data/esea/2014/docs/Reward_Schools_for_Progress.pdf).

#### Reporting District Performance

The index that the SCDE will apply to districts is for reporting purposes. The SCDE will report district and school performance broadly to local leadership, which includes district superintendents, local school boards of trustees, county legislative delegations, and Regional Education Centers as defined in the Education and Economic Development Act (please see Appendix E). Including the Regional Education Centers will ensure that the leadership within major workforce and economic development entities are informed of overall district performance. The SCDE will also inform major and local media outlets of the performance of districts and schools in their respective communities.

The state does not intend to assign incentives or supports to districts based on the index

districts earn within the system. Our focus is on providing supports and incentives directly to schools as they are the closest point of contact to impact students. We believe that by targeting services to the schools where support or incentives are most needed, the state will be more effective in raising student achievement.

Because South Carolina is implementing a one-year “pause” in the ESEA Waiver rating system, Reward schools will not be identified for 2015–16, but instead, the next cohort of Reward Schools will be recognized in 2016–17 based on 2015–16 data.

2.C.ii Provide the SEA’s list of reward schools in Table 2.

2.C.iii Describe how the SEA will publicly recognize and, if possible, reward highest-performing and high-progress schools.

The SCDE’s Office of Federal and State Accountability will continue its Title I Distinguished Schools project to identify and recognize the Reward Schools. All schools that meet the criteria in 2.C.i. will be considered Reward Schools. The top six schools (three in “highest performing” and three in “high progress”) will be awarded a \$5,000 grant to recognize their hard work. The top school in each category will receive an additional \$10,000 grant. These schools will be expected to serve as models for other similar schools and will present at state and national meetings. As additional administrative funds or 1003(a) Statewide System of Support funds are available, more schools may be allocated awards to assist in sharing best practices as part of providing support and technical assistance to struggling Title I schools. The SCDE will issue press releases announcing the semi-finalists and, later, the two full award winners. Schools that are not among those receiving monetary awards will be considered “honorable mention” schools.

South Carolina recognizes these distinguished schools as models for other Title I schools each year with a celebration during the state Title I association conference, which features a marching band heralding each school. We will continue this public celebration for the Reward School award-winners.

All Reward Schools will be announced via a press release from the SCDE.

The SCDE also recognizes schools through the state’s Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards program. The statutory authority for the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards is from the state statute Educational Accountability Act (EAA), as amended in 2008 (Act 282 of 2008):

*Section 59-18-1100. The State Board of Education, working with the division and the SCDE, must establish the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Program to recognize and reward schools for academic achievement and for closing the achievement gap. Awards will be established for schools attaining high levels of absolute performance, for schools attaining high rates of growth, and for schools making substantial progress in closing the achievement gap between disaggregated groups. The award program must base improved performance on longitudinally matched student data and may include such additional criteria as:*

(1) student attendance;  
(2) teacher attendance;  
(3) graduation rates; and  
(4) other factors promoting or maintaining high levels of achievement and performance. Schools shall be rewarded according to specific criteria established by the division. In defining eligibility for a reward for high levels of performance, student performance should exceed expected levels of improvement. The State Board of Education shall promulgate regulations to ensure districts of the State utilize these funds to improve or maintain exceptional performance according to their school's plans established in Section 59-139-10.

At a minimum, schools that achieve the status of Reward School, Distinguished School, or Palmetto Gold or Silver Awards will be announced via a press release from the SCDE.

## 2.D PRIORITY SCHOOLS

2.D.i Describe the SEA's methodology for identifying a number of lowest-performing schools equal to at least five percent of the State's Title I schools as priority schools. If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of priority schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g. based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department's "Demonstrating that an SEA's Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions" guidance.

### COMMITMENT 2: SOUTH CAROLINA WILL CREATE AND MAINTAIN A PROCESS TO TRANSFORM PRIORITY AND FOCUS SCHOOLS BY BUILDING THEIR CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT.

The SCDE will identify underperforming schools annually on the basis of overall school performance on the AMOs, as measured by the total weighted composite index score for each school. We will rank all Title I elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools by composite index and designate the lowest 5 percent of schools as **Priority Schools**.

Step 1—Identify Title I schools for the previous and current school year.

Step 2—Identify Title I schools with at least one tested grade.

Step 3—Identify Title I schools with enrollment greater than or equal to 30 students in any subgroup used for analysis.

Step 4—Rank order all Title I schools by their total weighted composite index score. Identify the 5 percent of Title I schools with the lowest overall performance as measured by the total weighted composite index score.

Charter Schools that are identified as Priority (or Focus) Schools are eligible for the technical assistance outlined below. Upon plan approval, we will provide charter schools identified as

Priority or Focus Schools with assistance and inclusion in school interventions unless the charters are revoked. Additionally, charter school sponsors are expected to uphold the state revocation requirements for low-performing charter schools. State law has been amended to require that any charter receiving the lowest federal accountability rating for three consecutive years “shall automatically and permanently close” S.C. Code § 59-40-110(E).

Demonstrating Priority Schools

(based on ESEA Simulations and actual 2011–12 Title I or Tier II SIG Schools)

Table P-1 (below) demonstrates that South Carolina has identified the required number of Priority Schools that meet the definition in ESEA Flexibility. In 2011–12, South Carolina had 511 Title I schools. Based on simulations, we have identified the lowest five (5) percent (i.e., 26 Title I schools), based on rank order using total weighted composite index scores. Of those 26 schools, 13 were Title I or Tier II SIG schools. In addition, 2 of the schools with the lowest ranking total composite index score were Title I–eligible or Title I–participating high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent in each of the past 3 years. An additional 11 schools are among the lowest-achieving 5 percent of Title I schools.

Note: Once the ESEA Flexibility Request is approved, South Carolina intends to designate federal Priority Schools and continue to work with any current Palmetto Priority School (PPS) that does not meet current exit criteria by the end of 2011–12. Accordingly, in addition to the projected 26 Priority Schools counted in Table P-1, we estimate that up to an additional 11 schools may be designated Priority Schools, which will bring the total to 47 schools in 2012–13.

**Table P-1**

<b>SOUTH CAROLINA 2011–12</b>	
<b>Category of Priority Schools (lowest 5 percent)</b>	<b>Number of Schools</b>
Total number of Title I schools	<b>511</b>
Total number of Title I schools to be identified as Priority Schools	<b>26</b>
Total number of schools on list generated based on total weighted composite index score (schools whose performance is rated “F”) that are currently served Title I or Tier II SIG schools	<b>13</b>
Total number of schools on list generated based on total weighted composite index score (schools whose performance is rated “F”) that are Title I–eligible or Title I–participating high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent in each of the past 3 years	<b>2</b>
Total number of schools on list generated based on total weighted composite index score (schools whose performance is rated “F”) that are among the lowest-achieving 5 percent of Title I schools	<b>11</b>

Once South Carolina’s request for the ESEA Flexibility is approved and the SCDE begins implementing the proposed new AYP system in 2012–13, we will generate a prospective list of Priority and Focus Schools, based on 2011–12 complete year data, so that we can maintain intervention and support services as schools migrate from PPS and SIG to

Priority School program status. The 2014 Priority School list is at [http://ed.sc.gov/data/esea/2014/docs/Priority\\_Schools.pdf](http://ed.sc.gov/data/esea/2014/docs/Priority_Schools.pdf).

In addition, by generating a prospective diagnostic analysis (projection) of school performance at the beginning of the 2012–13 school year, we can provide additional data and suggestions for interventions and supports to all underperforming schools about their relative strengths and weaknesses. The underperforming schools can then use this information to address identified issues immediately and throughout the school year. During the ESEA Flexibility Waiver extension, we will continue to provide this support.

2.D.ii Provide the SEA’s list of priority schools in Table 2.

2.D.iii Describe the meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles that an LEA with priority schools will implement.

South Carolina has a long history of school intervention and transformation. Requesting this waiver is a natural progression in the state’s efforts to identify, intervene, and improve its lowest performing schools.

In 1998, the South Carolina General Assembly created a system to hold public schools accountable for the performance of their students when it passed the EAA, which specifically outlines *Intervention and Assistance* (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-18-1520 (Supp. 2014); see Appendix B). Technical Assistance (TA) funds from the state have supported strategies and activities, including on-site assistance, principal specialists, teacher coaches, professional development, compensation incentives, homework centers, formative assessments, and comprehensive school reform efforts, to schools being served as expressly outlined in their improvement plans.

South Carolina released its first school report cards in 2001–02, and the first external reviews followed for schools that had absolute ratings of “unsatisfactory” (the term “unsatisfactory” was replaced with the term “at-risk” in 2008), “below average,” “average,” “good,” and “excellent.” An External Review Team (ERT) of three members was assigned to a school that was newly rated “at-risk” immediately after school report cards were released in the fall of each year. The team members included superintendents, principals, and other educational leaders outside the district being reviewed. These ERT members reviewed all aspects of the school operations, in compliance with S.C. Code Ann. § 59-18-1510 (Supp. 2014), in a four-to-five-day period during which they relied on the triangulation of documentation, interviews, and observation. The ERT Report was a compliance instrument that included standards and indicators, with references to regulations, and was divided into four focus areas: Leadership and Governance; Curriculum and Instruction; Professional Development; and Performance. Recommendations for needed changes were made in order for the school to move forward with student academic improvement. This ERT Process was in effect through the 2006–07 school year. On-site TA personnel—content specialists and leadership mentors—were assigned to assist schools that were designated as “unsatisfactory/at-risk,” based on ERT recommendations and school need.

When it restructured operations in July 2011, the SCDE created the Office of School

Transformation to leverage and coordinate internal and external resources to build school capacity through educational options, transformational school leadership and transformational instructional practices and evaluations. This office bridges what we have learned from past experiences in implementing segments of our state accountability system and in providing technical assistance to at-risk schools with the new school transformation principles established by the USED.

Beginning with the 2012–13 academic year, the Office of School Transformation began raising the consciousness of internal and external stakeholders on new paradigms for transforming the conceptual framework for improving student achievement via systemic and sustainable educational options, school leadership, instructional practices, and evaluations in South Carolina’s most challenged, at-risk and Title I schools. Currently, identified Priority Schools are served through participation in the Office of School Transformation’s annual School Improvement Planning Cycle in which the SCDE (1) notifies and provides technical assistance related to data used to identify schools; (2) provides high quality opportunity for root cause analysis and needs assessment, as well as professional development in successful transformation models and strategies; (3) based on root cause and other data, supports school leadership in developing outcomes-oriented, context-specific, and research-based *Challenge to Achieve* (CTA) plans organized around the federal school transformation principles; (4) supports implementation and evaluation of CTA plans on- and off-site with SCDE transformation coaches and/or identified experts, professional development and technical assistance, access to a SCDE-provided data dashboard, and funding; (5) engages schools in self-assessment and planning based on annual outcomes and CTA plan results with the goal of supporting continuous improvement and creating sustainability, and when schools are successful and exit; (6) engages them in a continued relationship to support their continued success as well as state innovation and improvement in other schools. This cycle is designed to eliminate agency silos and duplication of services in favor of a theory of change predicated on coordinated and collaborative technical assistance. It is also designed to ensure that schools exiting identification status have continued contact with the SCDE to maintain their own success and are able to contribute to overall improvement and innovation across schools in the state.

Excluding the SIG schools that are also Priority Schools, in their CTA plans, the Priority Schools are not required to implement the tenth federal transformation principle calling for the replacement of a school principal. Adoption of the federal transformation principles inherently incorporates the school transformation strategies captured throughout the three principles of this waiver, such as the promotion of customized education and use of test score–based measures of student growth. In addition, the Priority Schools will receive a direct allocation from 1003(a) funds to support the implementation of the strategies in their CTA plans.

Participation in the SCDE School Improvement Planning Cycle is an annual requirement for identified Priority Schools, but the Office of School Transformation also recognizes that schools need differentiated interventions to be successful. To that end, the Office of School Transformation has developed a tiered intervention system. The following levels of intervention are annual, internal designations only. They may be discussed with schools but will not be shared publicly. They are intended to help Office of School Transformation associates target interventions and assistance.

Intervention Level	Description	SCDE Intervention
Level 4	School identified for more than three academic years consecutively. In general, these are schools experiencing <b>long-term low performance</b> and/or have <b>critical needs</b> in terms of school improvement.	Very intense contact and state direction (weekly involvement); less choice in planning and implementation; goal is increased student achievement, development of school understanding that change is possible, and movement toward Level 3.
Level 3	School identified for at least three academic years consecutively. Level 3 schools do not demonstrate awareness of data and a readiness to change. In general, these are schools facing <b>extended low performance</b> and/or have <b>major needs</b> in terms of school improvement.	Required participation of school leadership in SCDE leadership intervention training with goal of building leadership awareness and capacity to change; intense contact and state direction (monthly involvement); goal is increased student achievement, increased leadership awareness and capacity to change, and movement toward Level 2.
Level 2	School identified for at least three academic years consecutively. Level 2 schools demonstrate awareness of data and a readiness to change. In general, these are schools facing <b>extended low performance</b> and/or have <b>major needs</b> in terms of school improvement.	Moderate intensity of contact and state direction (monthly involvement); opportunities to compete for School Improvement Grants and other projects with the goal of building capacity and sustained change; goal is increased student achievement and movement toward Level 1.
Level 1	School identified for the first or second time in the school's history, or again after at least five academic years of adequate performance. In general, these are schools facing <b>temporary low performance</b> and/or have <b>minor needs</b> in terms of school improvement.	Light intensity of contact and state direction (involvement as needed and requested by school); goal is increased student achievement and movement toward sustained non-identification.

In addition, we seek to further align our state and federal accountability systems by subjecting the federal Priority Schools to the longstanding state accountability scheme for transforming low-performing schools as described in S.C. Code Ann. § 59-18-1510 *et seq.* (Supp. 2014). This convergence of state and federal commitments through congruent adherence to guidance already adopted by the state General Assembly and embodied in state statute further strengthens the state's movement to a unified system of accountability.

To align the interventions for the Priority Schools identified under the federal accountability system (the at-risk schools identified under the state system of accountability), the Office of School Transformation promotes seamless technical assistance to all of the groups of low-performing schools through inter-agency collaborations. The following offices have committed to the coordinated and collaborative approach advocated by the Office of School Transformation: (1) Office of Federal and State Accountability; (2) Office of Standards and Learning; (3) Office of School Leadership; (4) Office of Special Education Services; (5) Office of Student Intervention Services; (6) Office of Educator Services; and (7) Office of Virtual Education. Below are examples of the work-product from this technical assistance network.

The SCDE's Office of Special Education Services has provided a great deal of technical assistance to the districts on the strategies and instruction needed to allow students with disabilities to access the general education curriculum. In addition, this office is authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) to make annual determinations of the level of support that districts need in implementing the requirement of IDEA Part B to serve their students with disabilities.

The Office of Special Education Services will work in conjunction with the Office of School Transformation to provide intensive technical assistance to districts that it determines are in the "needs intervention" and "needs substantial intervention" categories for implementing IDEA Part B. Also, as administrators and teachers are identified for participation in more intensive initiatives through the new accountability system and the transition to and implementation of the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards, an increasing emphasis will be placed on instructing students with disabilities in the general education curriculum. Appropriate use of peer-reviewed, scientifically based instruction, coupled with appropriate accommodations and modifications, will lead to closing this achievement gap between students with and without disabilities. The Office of Special Education Services has devoted significant technical assistance to the districts regarding the strategies and instruction needed to allow students with disabilities to access the general education curriculum. As administrators and teachers are chosen to participate in more intensive initiatives through the accountability system, an emphasis will be placed on the instruction of students with disabilities in the general education curriculum. Appropriate use of peer-reviewed, scientifically based instruction coupled with appropriate accommodations and modifications will lead to a closing of the achievement gap between students with and without disabilities.

Regarding English language learners (ELL), we will continue to focus professional development efforts to address areas of concern and training on how to appropriately serve and meet the needs of ELL. Training will be provided to both regular classroom teachers where English learners typically spend the majority of the day learning and to ESOL teachers who support academic content instruction, along with administrators. Other important staff, such as guidance counselors, special education, gifted and talented, paraprofessionals, and others who work with ELL are often included in trainings. The Office of Federal and State Accountability will continue to monitor Title III districts (72 Title III districts out of 84 districts in the state). All Title III districts in South Carolina are also Title I. A major part of Title III monitoring for compliance with Title III and other federal laws includes reviewing the practices of regular classroom and ESOL teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, and others that work with

ELL using interviews, data review, and other components of South Carolina’s Title III monitoring instrument. Technical assistance and additional professional development is provided as needed based on the review. The Office of Federal and State Accountability will continue to analyze data such as the performance of ELL and former ELL across the state, including performance on statewide tests; proportionality in special programs—special education, gifted and talented; grade-retention; and graduation rates.

The Office of Federal and State Accountability will work in conjunction with the Office of School Transformation to provide intensive technical assistance to districts that it determines are in the “needs intervention” and “needs substantial intervention” categories ensure that proper intervention strategies are in place for ELL in compliance with Title III. Also, as administrators and teachers are identified for participation in more intensive initiatives through the new accountability system and the transition to and implementation of the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards, an increasing emphasis will be placed on instructing ELL in the general education curriculum. Appropriate use of peer-reviewed, scientifically based instruction, coupled with appropriate accommodations and modifications, will lead to closing this achievement gap between ELL and other students. The Office of Federal and State Accountability has devoted significant technical assistance to the districts regarding the strategies and instruction needed to allow ELL to access the general education curriculum. As administrators and teachers are chosen to participate in more intensive initiatives through the accountability system, an emphasis will be placed on the instruction of ELL in the general education curriculum. Appropriate use of peer-reviewed, scientifically based instruction coupled with appropriate accommodations and modifications will lead to a closing of the achievement gap between ELL and other students.

As the state moves from a model that largely forces compliance on inputs to one that requires progress to reach attainable outcomes, we will collaborate with each federal Priority School through a memorandum of agreement that clarifies the state’s expectations, the assistance the SCDE will provide, and the school’s, district’s, and local board’s responsibilities.

- 2.D.iv Provide the timeline the SEA will use to ensure that its LEAs that have one or more priority schools implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each priority school no later than the 2014–2015 school year and provide a justification for the SEA’s choice of timeline.

#### Justification for Timeline

In our lowest-performing schools, we want to build local capacity for strong community schools, so that the school district has a board of trustees that recognizes their responsibility to raise student achievement, a district office and school leaders that recognize strong leadership practices to benefit students, and teachers that can provide measurable high-quality instruction. However, the schools identified for priority status are the least likely to have this full capacity. As the state moves from a model that largely forces compliance on inputs to one that requires progress to reach attainable outcomes, we will collaborate with each

Priority School through a memorandum of agreement that clarifies the state’s expectations, the assistance the SCDE will provide, and the school’s, district’s, and local board’s responsibilities.

Annual Timeline

October	Identify Priority Schools.
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notify identified schools/districts.</li> </ul>
November–December	Develop and submit year-long CTA plans.
November–August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor ongoing, year-long CTA plans; and</li> <li>Conduct periodic collaborative professional development aligned to the Turnaround Principles in the CTA plans.</li> </ul>
August–September	Evaluate achievement of goals/implementation of CTA plans.

2.D.v Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement exits priority status and a justification for the criteria selected.

Because the ESEA Index is based on student performance and improvement over time, priority status is comprised of a three-year cycle.

A school will exit priority status when it no longer falls within the 5 percent of the lowest performing Title I schools and has made significant progress in improving student performance. The SCDE defines “significant progress” in relation to improving student achievement as a result of the school’s planning and implementation of the CTA plan.

A school may exit priority status when it meets the following criteria:

- 1) after receiving services for a minimum of three consecutive years;
- 2) when it no longer falls within 5 percent of the lowest performing Title I;
- 3) when it meets the pre-determined outcomes of its most current CTA plan; and
- 4) when it is able to provide an explanation of the strategies used to achieve these gains, as well as how these strategies will be sustained in the future.

These criteria address and define improvement on factors that caused the school to be identified, connect identification with CTA planning and implementation, and emphasize the importance of sustained improvement. Priority School data will be reviewed annually to assess progress.

A Priority School will receive three years of service to ensure sustainability of changes and improvement. Services will be differentiated as intensive and follow-up. Follow-up services will include the option of participating in all or part of the Office of School Transformation’s annual School Improvement Planning Cycle, including support from SCDE

transformation coaches and/or identified experts, professional development and technical assistance, and access to a SCDE-provided data dashboard.

Under the accountability “pause,” the Priority Schools identified for 2014–15 based upon assessments in 2013–14 would maintain their priority status.

## 2.E FOCUS SCHOOLS

2.E.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying a number of low-performing schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State’s Title I schools as “focus schools.” If the SEA’s methodology is not based on the definition of focus schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g. based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.

South Carolina will identify underperforming Title I schools with the largest subgroup performance gaps, and schools with significantly underperforming subgroups will be designated **Focus Schools**.

In analyzing subgroup performance, gap analysis can be calculated in a variety of ways. Based on input from stakeholders, educators, and school district administrators, we choose to look at the average (mean) performance of subgroups across content areas (ELA and mathematics), subtract the subgroup average (mean) scores to determine the performance gap, identify schools that had a significant performance gap in one or more subgroups, and average the significant gaps across content areas to produce a ranking of the significant performance gaps for each school. A school will not receive the highest rating in the SCDE’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system if there are significant achievement or graduation rate gaps that are not closing across subgroups or are closing solely due to a decline in performance of the comparison group.

### Methodology for Identifying Focus Schools

The general approach presented below approximates the method we propose for determining Focus Schools.

Step 1—Annually identify Title I schools for the previous and current school year.

Step 2—Identify Title I schools with at least one tested grade.

Step 3—Identify Title I schools with enrollment greater than or equal to 30 students in any subgroup used for analysis.

Step 4—Identify and exclude Title I schools whose subgroups have met or exceeded all AMOs.

Step 5—Calculate an average performance gap for each Title I elementary, middle, and high school.

- a. Using ELA and math scale scores, calculate for each subject and school an average (mean) score for each subgroup.
- b. By subject and school, subtract mean scores (for example, non-Limited English Proficient subtracted from LEP) to produce the achievement gap score by subject. Exclude negative gaps. Average the mean gaps across both subjects (ELA and math) for each subgroup.
- c. Select schools with significant achievement gap(s) in one or more student subgroups.
  1. For this purpose, a significant achievement gap in subgroup performance is defined as a gap equal to or greater than one standard deviation above the mean achievement gap for that particular subgroup across all schools of that same type state-wide. For example, if the mean achievement gap for LEP students in middle schools is 15 scale points and the standard deviation is 6.0, then any school with an LEP achievement gap of 21 points or more would be considered to have a significant subgroup achievement gap for LEP students. A significant subgroup achievement gap in any other subgroup will be determined in similar fashion as equal to or greater than one standard deviation above the mean achievement gap for that particular subgroup, across all schools of that same type state-wide.
  2. Calculate the difference between the subgroup mean gap and the state mean gap for each subgroup in the school that has a significant gap.
  3. Sum the differences from step B across all subgroups in the school that have a significant gap.
  4. Sum the number of subgroups in the school that have a significant achievement gap.
  5. Divide the results of C3 by C4 to determine schools with the largest significant gaps.

Step 6—Rank order the schools by the significant gaps from largest to smallest and identify schools with the largest significant gap to equal at least 10 percent of the Title I schools in the state. If the number of schools identified using Step 5 does not equal at least 10 percent of the Title I schools in the state, rank order the remaining schools by their average achievement gap from largest to smallest and identify from the remaining schools those with the largest achievement gap to complete the list of Focus Schools to equal at least 10 percent of the Title I schools in the state.

Step 7—At the high school level, identify the Title I schools with low graduation rates (less than 60 percent) for both years assessed.

Step 8—Identify Title I schools that have persistent achievement gaps over a number of years that have not been previously identified in the above steps. For schools with persistent achievement gaps over several years, we propose to use the same achievement gap analysis we currently use for Title I schools.

For achievement gap analysis, the SCDE will compare each subgroup performance with the corresponding non-subgroup comparison group. For example, the performance of African-American students in a particular school will be compared with the non-African-American students and the gap in performance calculated. Similarly, looking at the performance of LEP students, a comparison of the LEP subgroup performance will be made to the performance of non-LEP students. Then, all of the gap differences in all of the subgroups will be calculated and the average of all of the observed achievement gaps will be compared in order to determine the mean achievement gap across all subgroups.

To track the progress (or lack of progress) of schools, and in particular schools with persistent achievement gaps over time, individual subgroup achievement gaps and the average (mean) achievement gap across all subgroups will be monitored. Schools with specific subgroup achievement gaps that persist over time will receive targeted interventions for that subgroup, as part of the overall Focus School interventions.

#### Demonstrating Focus Schools

(based on ESEA simulations and actual 2011–12 Title I schools with largest subgroup achievement gaps)

Table F-1 demonstrates that South Carolina identified the required number of Focus Schools that meet the definition for ESEA Flexibility. South Carolina had 511 Title I schools, so based on simulations of the proposed ESEA methodology, 10 percent have been identified (i.e., 52 Title I schools), with the largest average (mean) achievement gap across all subgroups. Of the 52 schools to be identified as Focus Schools, zero (0) schools were currently served Title I or Tier II SIG schools. In addition, zero (0) schools with the largest average achievement gap are Title I–eligible or Title I–participating high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent in each of the past 3 years. Accordingly, based on 2011–12 data, all 52 schools would come from the ranked list of Title I schools with the largest average achievement gap.

**Table F-1**

<b>SOUTH CAROLINA 2011–12</b>	
<b>Category of Focus Schools</b>	<b>Number of Schools</b>
Total number of Title I schools	<b>511</b>
Total number of Title I schools to be identified as Focus Schools	<b>52</b>
Total number of schools on list generated based on largest subgroup achievement gaps (average) that are Title I–participating high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent in each of the past 3 years	<b>0</b>
Total number of additional Title I–participating high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent in each of the past 3 years and are not identified as Priority Schools	<b>0</b>
Total number of schools on list generated based on overall analysis that have the largest subgroups achievement gaps (average) or, at the high school level, low graduation rates	<b>52</b>

The 2014 Focus School list is at [http://ed.sc.gov/data/esea/2014/docs/Focus\\_Schools.pdf](http://ed.sc.gov/data/esea/2014/docs/Focus_Schools.pdf).

- 2.E.ii Provide the SEA's list of focus schools in Table 2.
- 2.E.iii Describe the process and timeline the SEA will use to ensure that its LEAs that have one or more focus schools will identify the specific needs of the SEA's focus schools and their students and provide examples of and justifications for the interventions focus schools will be required to implement to improve the performance of students who are the furthest behind.

The SCDE will develop a methodology to identify disaggregated data for subsets of students to include race, gender, SES status, disabled, and non-disabled students. The causes of underperformance will be ascertained using historical and current data regarding discipline, teacher retention, academic performance and use of fiscal resources. These data will be coupled with information gathered from the Comprehensive Capacity Assessment (CCA). The CCA will focus on current (1) Teaching and Learning; (2) Fiscal Management; (3) Recruitment, Development and Retention of Effective Teacher Leaders; (4) Physical Plant Operations; and (5) Parent and Community Engagement. Based on a collation of these data, the SCDE can target research-based interventions on root causes.

Currently, identified Focus Schools are served through participation in the same annual School Improvement Planning Cycle that the SCDE's Office of School Transformation requires for identified Priority Schools, in which they develop a CTA plan. Details of this cycle are presented on pages 118–119. Like the Priority Schools, Focus Schools are not required to implement the tenth federal transformation principle (replacement of a school principal) (see page 116).

To serve Focus Schools, the SCDE's Office of School Transformation will use the same tiered intervention system presented in section 2.D.iii. (page 117 ).

We will allocate funds to Focus Schools from 1003(a) and from Statewide System of Support funds to implement interventions to directly address the underachieving subgroups. For the 2012–13 school year, approximately \$5.8 million was allocated on a formula basis and must be incorporated into the school's Title I plan. (See Table F-2 below.) Needs and funding will be reviewed annually to determine funding levels to meet the needs of identified Focus Schools. As the state moves from a model that largely forces compliance on inputs to one that requires progress to reach attainable outcomes, we will collaborate with each Focus School through a memorandum of agreement with the district's school board that clarifies the state's expectations, the assistance the SCDE will provide, and the school's, district's, and school board's responsibilities.

**Table F-2**

<b>1003(a) School Improvement Funds</b>		
	<b>Number of Schools</b>	<b>Average amount of 1003(a) funds per school</b>
2012–13 Focus Schools	52	\$107,945
2012–13 Title I “C,” “D” and “F” Schools	121	\$15,463
2011–12 Schools in Improvement	180	\$46,576
2012–13 Schools in Improvement based on NCLB(projected)	310	\$24,142

The AYP performance requirement subgroup of students with disabilities (SWD) has been problematic for schools and districts in the past. For the 2010–11 school year, only one school district met AYP for the performance of the SWD subgroup. The SCDE’s Office of Special Education Services has devoted a great deal of technical assistance to the districts regarding the strategies and instruction needed to allow students with disabilities to access the general education curriculum. As administrators and teachers are chosen to participate in more intensive initiatives through the accountability system, we will emphasize the instruction of SWD in the general education curriculum. Appropriate use of peer-reviewed, scientifically based instruction, coupled with appropriate accommodations and modifications, will lead to a closing of the achievement gap between students with and without disabilities. The Office of Special Education Services, in conjunction with the Office of School Transformation, will provide intensive technical assistance to districts with identified Focus Schools. In addition, through its federally required State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), the Office of Special Education Services is expanding its technical assistance and professional development to select school districts with achievement gaps. The focus of the SSIP will include intensive support for select focus schools, particularly in the area of reading. By doing so, the state is able to maximize its resources while minimizing duplication of efforts, and work collaboratively to improve the outcomes of South Carolina’s students. In addition, the state will continue its nationally recognized special education teacher training program, SC CREATE, to ensure a highly qualified workforce in South Carolina. Finally, the Office of Special Education Services will continue to provide extensive professional development opportunities to general and special education teachers on serving the needs of the state’s students with disabilities.

The Office of Federal and State Accountability will continue to monitor Title III districts (74 Title III districts out of 84 districts in the state). All Title III districts in South Carolina are also Title I. A major part of Title III monitoring for compliance with Title III and other federal laws includes reviewing the practices of regular classroom and ESOL teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, and others that work with ELL using interviews, data review, and other components of South Carolina’s Title III monitoring instrument. Technical assistance and additional professional development is provided as needed based on the review.

The Office of Federal and State Accountability will continue to analyze data such as the performance of ELL and former ELL across the state, including performance on statewide tests; proportionality in special programs—special education, gifted and talented; grade-retention; and graduation rates. There will continue to be focused professional development efforts to address areas of concern and training on how to appropriately serve and meet the needs of ELL. Training will be provided to both regular classroom teachers where English learners typically spend the majority of the day learning and ESOL teachers who support academic content instruction, along with administrators. Other important staff, such as guidance counselors, special education, gifted and talented, paraprofessionals, and others who work with ELL are often included in trainings.

Additionally, districts and schools can access several resources on our Title III/ESOL website to assist them with supporting the instruction of ELL.  
<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/90/>.

To ensure that all schools that may have achievement gap issues are captured as Focus Schools, data will include those schools that may not be in the bottom 10 percent of Title I schools but have persistent problems with achievement gaps. These schools will receive the same interventions as the required 10 percent of Title I schools.

Annual Timeline

October	Identify Focus Schools.
October	Notify identified schools/districts.
November – December	Develop and submit year-long CTA plans.
November – August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor ongoing, year-long CTA plans; and</li> <li>• Conduct periodic collaborative professional development aligned to the Turnaround Principles in the CTA plans.</li> </ul>
August – September	Evaluate achievement of goals/implementation of CTA plans.

2.E.iv Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps exits focus status and a justification for the criteria selected.

Because ESEA indices are based on student performance and improvement over time, focus status is comprised of a two-year cycle.

The SCDE defines “significant progress” in relation to student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps as a result of the school’s planning and implementation of the CTA plan. A school may exit focus status when it meets the pre-determined outcomes of its plan. A school may only exit if it is able to provide an explanation of the strategies used to achieve these gains, as well as how these strategies will be sustained in the future.

A Focus School will receive two years of service to ensure sustainability of changes and improvement. Services will be differentiated as intensive and follow-up. The SCDE's services in the follow-up year will include the option of participating in all or part of the Office of School Transformation's annual School Improvement Planning Cycle, including support from SCDE transformation coaches and/or identified experts, professional development and technical assistance, and access to a SCDE-provided data dashboard.

Under the accountability "pause," the Focus Schools identified for 2014–15 based upon assessments in 2013–14 would maintain their focus status.

## 2.F PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS FOR OTHER TITLE I SCHOOLS

- 2.F Describe how the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system will provide incentives and supports to ensure continuous improvement in other Title I schools that, based on the SEA's new AMOs and other measures, are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps, and an explanation of how these incentives and supports are likely to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

**COMMITMENT 3: SOUTH CAROLINA WILL ESTABLISH A PLAN FOR A STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT TO LEVERAGE THE SERVICES PROVIDED TO OUR LOWEST-PERFORMING SCHOOLS TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT, NARROW ACHIEVEMENT GAPS, AND RAISE THE QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION IN ALL OUR SCHOOLS.**

Schools that receive an index score less than 70 in the system underperformed in either the "All Students" group or one of the student subgroups. The SCDE will target the Title I schools with an index score less than 70 that are not identified as Priority or Focus Schools to receive differentiated support for Support Schools. These schools must conduct a comprehensive needs assessment in existing federal program plan applications to determine root causes of failure to meet state standards either in the "All Students" group or by sub-group.

The identified schools will amend existing federal plans to outline how the school and district will address the issues identified in their comprehensive needs assessments and submit these plans to the SCDE's Office of Federal and State Accountability. Schools and districts must demonstrate that they have the capacity to implement improvement strategies and must illustrate how the school plans to use existing Title I, Part A funds, funds previously used for Choice and SES, other federal formula allocations, and any additional funds made available to meet their needs. As the state moves from a model that largely forces compliance on inputs to one that requires progress to reach attainable outcomes, we will collaborate with each Support School through a memorandum of agreement that clarifies the state's expectations, the assistance the SCDE will provide, and the school's, district's, and local school board's responsibilities.

The SCDE has formerly partnered with SEDL (formerly the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory) to develop an agency-wide approach to serving districts and schools that are identified as needing assistance in improving student achievement. Previously, various

offices within the SCDE have been providing disparate activities based on categorical funding streams or state and federal mandates. The goal of this new effort is to eliminate silos within our structure to facilitate agency-wide awareness and to focus our school improvement efforts across programs to provide coherent, consistent assistance to our customers. Staff from the offices of Special Education Services, School Transformation, Federal and State Accountability, and School Leadership have come together to discuss ways to eliminate duplicative, and often competing, services and to reduce burdensome paperwork requirements (see Principle 4 in Appendix D for more plans to eliminate duplication and reduce reporting burdens).

While the schools identified in this Support category will not receive the same intensive services offered to Priority or Focus Schools, they will nonetheless benefit from a statewide support system driven by responding to individual school needs with appropriate interventions. Our goal is to not lose the momentum we’ve gained over the past several years through our statewide system of support as required by NCLB. In general, these schools have made progress and need continued support to ensure that all their students are provided the means to reach the state’s high standards and be college and career ready upon graduating from high school.

After addressing needs in Priority and Focus Schools, the SCDE will set aside a portion of the remaining 1003(a) funds and/or funds for Statewide System of Support to be disbursed on a formula basis to help the schools address the root causes of their less than “Proficient” student achievement. Funds will be first allocated to Support schools with an index less than 60, and if sufficient funds remain, they will be allocated to the remaining Support schools. Identified Support schools are served through participation in the Office of School Transformation’s annual School Improvement Planning Cycle in which the SCDE (1) notifies and provides technical assistance related to data used to identify schools; (2) provides high quality opportunity for root cause analysis and needs assessment, as well as professional development in successful transformation models and strategies; and (3) based on root cause and other data, supports school leadership in developing outcomes-oriented, context-specific, and research-based CTA plans organized around the federal school transformation principles. Through their improvement plan, a school will detail the actions they intend to take and how the district and school will use the 1003(a) funds to implement the plan.

The SCDE will provide assistance to districts and schools based on the Statewide System of Support used in coordination with other offices within the agency and through contracted services where appropriate. Over time, we will align interventions and support with the new State Superintendent of Education’s vision. As we transition with the new superintendent, we will be moving to support world-class skills, as well as life and career characteristics for South Carolina graduates. The SCDE offices below will coordinate to provide this assistance and support as indicated in the table below.

<b>Assistance and Support to Other Title I Low-Performing Schools</b>			
<b>Division</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	<b>Staff Involved</b>
Innovation & Effectiveness	Federal & State Accountability	English language learners	Crystal Fields
College &	Special Education	Students with disabilities	John Payne

Career Readiness	Services		
Educator Effectiveness	School Leadership	Principals and Assistant Principals evaluations, knowledge, and skills	Bruce Moseley
College & Career Readiness	Standards and Learning	Standards and Learning	Catherine Jones-Stork
Educator Effectiveness	Educator Evaluations & Effectiveness	Teacher Evaluations	Kristin Joannes
Finance	Finance	Allocation of resources	Mellanie Jinnette

Particular emphasis will be placed on student sub-groups that are not meeting the AMOs. For example, SCDE staff will continue to provide high quality professional development to general education and special education teachers in order to assist students in meeting the accountability measures. Key elements for instruction of students with disabilities (SWD) include the following:

- use of research-based, effective instructional strategies both within and across a variety of academic and functional domains;
- differentiation of instruction for all learners, including students performing above and below grade-level expectations;
- instruction in strategic approaches to learning new concepts and skills; and
- continued use of inclusive practices for SWD.

Teachers of English language learners (ELL) will receive support from staff from the Office of Federal and State Accountability through quarterly regional meetings, ongoing intensive professional development, and episodic technical assistance as needed based on the results of the needs assessments. The Office of Federal and State Accountability will continue to monitor Title III districts (74 Title III districts of the 84 districts in the state). All Title III districts in South Carolina are also Title I. A major part of Title III monitoring for compliance with Title III and other federal laws includes reviewing the practices of regular classroom and ESOL teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, and others that work with ELL using interviews, data review, and other components of South Carolina’s Title III monitoring instrument. Technical assistance and additional professional development is provided as needed based on the review. The Office of Federal and State Accountability will continue to analyze data such as the performance of ELL and former ELL across the state, including performance on statewide tests; proportionality in special programs—special education, gifted and talented; grade-retention; and graduation rates. There will continue to be focused professional development efforts to address areas of concern and training on how to appropriately serve and meet the needs of ELL. Training will be provided to both regular classroom teachers where English learners typically spend the majority of the day learning and ESOL teachers who support academic content instruction, along with administrators. Other important staff, such as guidance counselors, special education, gifted and talented, paraprofessionals, and others who work with ELL are often included in trainings.

As they move toward English proficiency, ELL can benefit from many accommodations.

In South Carolina, most school districts use the Individual Modifications/Accommodations Plan (see Attachment M) to document individual student accommodations, including ones used during testing. Because ELL progress toward English proficiency is very individualized, with much growth at the lower levels of English proficiency and slower growth as full English proficiency is acquired, these accommodations are in a pretty constant state of flux for most of these students.

The Office of Federal and State Accountability is offering year-long professional development for the 35 districts in Title III improvement. Sessions will focus on strategies and accommodations for working with ELLs, building academic language, as well as for intensive training on equitable access to the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards with emphasized learning opportunities in reading, writing, and mathematics. The Division of College and Career Readiness will also provide assistance to help teachers address the changing needs of these students.

As is our plan for professional development on the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards (see Principle 1 above), we will customize the assistance to teachers of SWD and ELL based on the data and the identified needs of their students and schools.

## **2.G BUILD SEA, LEA, AND SCHOOL CAPACITY TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING**

- 2.G Describe the SEA's process for building SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning in all schools and, in particular, in low-performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps, including through:
- i. timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools;
  - ii. ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools identified under the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources); and
  - iii. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools.

Explain how this process is likely to succeed in improving SEA, LEA, and school capacity.

The SCDE's Division of Innovation and Effectiveness, Division of College and Career Readiness, and the Division of Educator Effectiveness are collaborating on the implementation, support, and monitoring of the components of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver. The Division of Innovation and Effectiveness includes the offices of Information Technology, Federal and State Accountability, Assessment, School Transformation, Research and Data Analysis, and Student Intervention. The Division of College and Career Readiness includes the offices of Career and Technology Education, Special Education Services, Standards and Learning, Virtual Education, and Adult Education. The Division of Educator Effectiveness

includes the offices of Educator Services, School Leadership, Human Resources, Educator Evaluation and Effectiveness, and Family and Community Engagement. Working together, the three divisions provide comprehensive support to LEAs and schools for raising student achievement and meeting federal and state accountability goals.

The Office of School Transformation and the Office of Federal and State Accountability have direct responsibility for working with Priority, Focus, and low-performing Title I Support Schools. The CTA plans will be used to gauge implementation, and the two offices will monitor and provide technical assistance as appropriate. Funding for implementation and support for low-performing schools will include a combination of state and federal dollars. State Technical Assistance funding, federal 1003(a,) and Statewide System of Support funds will be used to provide support to low-performing schools. The Office of Federal and State Accountability which includes many of the ESEA programs will work with LEAs and schools providing technical assistance regarding the flexibility available to use federal funding streams to accomplish school-wide program goals.

Both offices offer programs that support low-performing schools while ensuring compliance with state and federal laws that hold LEAs accountable for improving student and school performance.

The CTA process for low-performing schools, the reward system for high-performing schools, and the ESEA Index accountability system will improve capacity at the state, district, and school levels. South Carolina believes that the proposed new accountability system will create additional incentives for schools and districts to work diligently to meet high standards and to focus on improving the academic achievement and performance of all students, as well as the achievement and performance of all students in all subgroups, including historically underperforming groups.

## PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

### 3.A DEVELOP AND ADOPT GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding description and evidence, as appropriate, for the option selected.

<p><b>Option A</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has not already developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the SEA’s plan to develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2011–2012 school year;</li> <li>ii. a description of the process the SEA will use to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines; and</li> <li>iii. an assurance that the SEA will submit to the Department a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2011–2012 school year (see Assurance 14).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Option B</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. a copy of the guidelines the SEA has adopted (Attachment 10) and an explanation of how these guidelines are likely to lead to the development of evaluation and support systems that improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students;</li> <li>ii. evidence of the adoption of the guidelines (Attachment 11); and</li> <li>iii. a description of the process the SEA used to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines.</li> </ul>
---	---

For six consecutive years, *Education Week’s Quality Counts* ( 2006–12) ranked South Carolina as #1 in the nation in the Teaching Professions Category. This achievement was due, in large measure, to the state’s widely recognized, statewide systems for evaluating and supporting teacher and principal performance and effectiveness—the system for Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching (ADEPT) and the Program for Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Principal Performance (PADEPP). (See Appendix C for a glossary of acronyms.)

The SCDE has developed and continues to administer, maintain, and make ongoing refinements to the ADEPT and PADEPP systems. These evaluation and support systems provide effective and consistent methods for evaluating and supporting all teachers and principals across the state’s school districts.

Guidelines for ADEPT (Attachment 10) were originally adopted in 2006; they will be further refined to comply with the requirements of the ESEA Flexibility Request Principle 3 as detailed later. PADEPP guidelines are currently presented through the authorizing state regulations (Attachment 11). The SCDE has developed an independent

PADEPP guideline document, similar to the ADEPT guidelines, modified to comply with the requirements of Principle 3. In addition, the PADEPP regulation revision has been approved by the SBE and is pending review in the 2015 legislature. Because PADEPP already had three rating levels, and because the standards evaluated are in SBE guidelines, not the regulation, the SCDE is fully authorized to implement all elements of Principle 3 for principal evaluation regardless of whether the regulation passes.

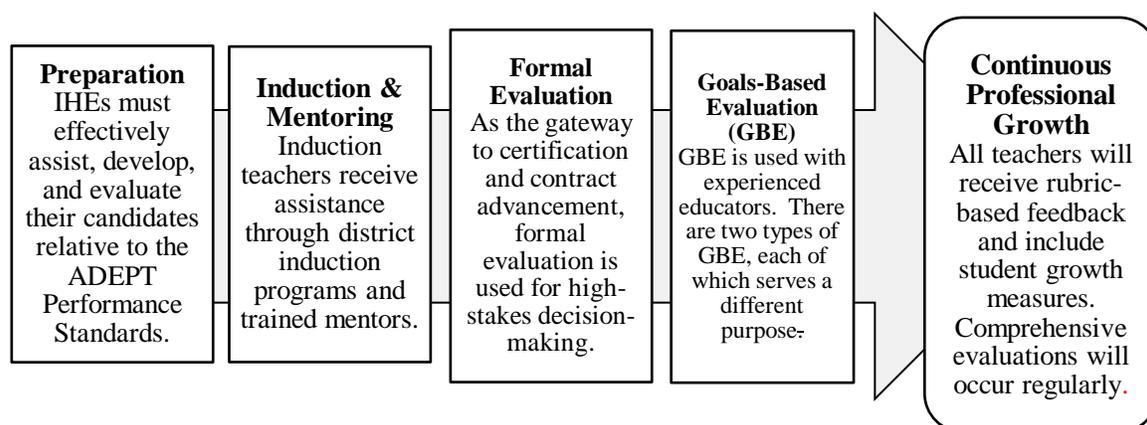
The background of both systems in South Carolina illustrates the shift that has occurred since 1998 from evaluation based on limited methods that varied at the local level to dynamic yet consistent statewide evaluation and support systems that promote effective instruction and leadership. Even prior to the announcement of an ESEA Flexibility Request, the state was progressing with enhancements to the guidelines and frameworks for both the ADEPT and PADEPP systems.

### ADEPT Background

When it was implemented in 1998, ADEPT signaled a shift in South Carolina’s perspective on teacher evaluation. Prior to ADEPT, evaluation instruments had been limited, for the most part, to behavioral checklists and showcase lessons. While almost all teachers “passed” these evaluations, the evaluation process itself did little to reflect or improve day-to-day instructional practices. The ADEPT system was built on the knowledge that effective teaching must be defined, facilitated, and evidenced throughout everyday practice and must ultimately result in a positive impact on student learning.

The purpose of ADEPT is two-fold: (1) to promote teacher effectiveness and (2) to provide quality assurance and accountability via valid, reliable, consistent, and fair evaluations of teacher performance and effectiveness, as indicated in the following diagram:

#### **ADEPT Processes and Functions**



The current ADEPT system is authorized under three primary sources:

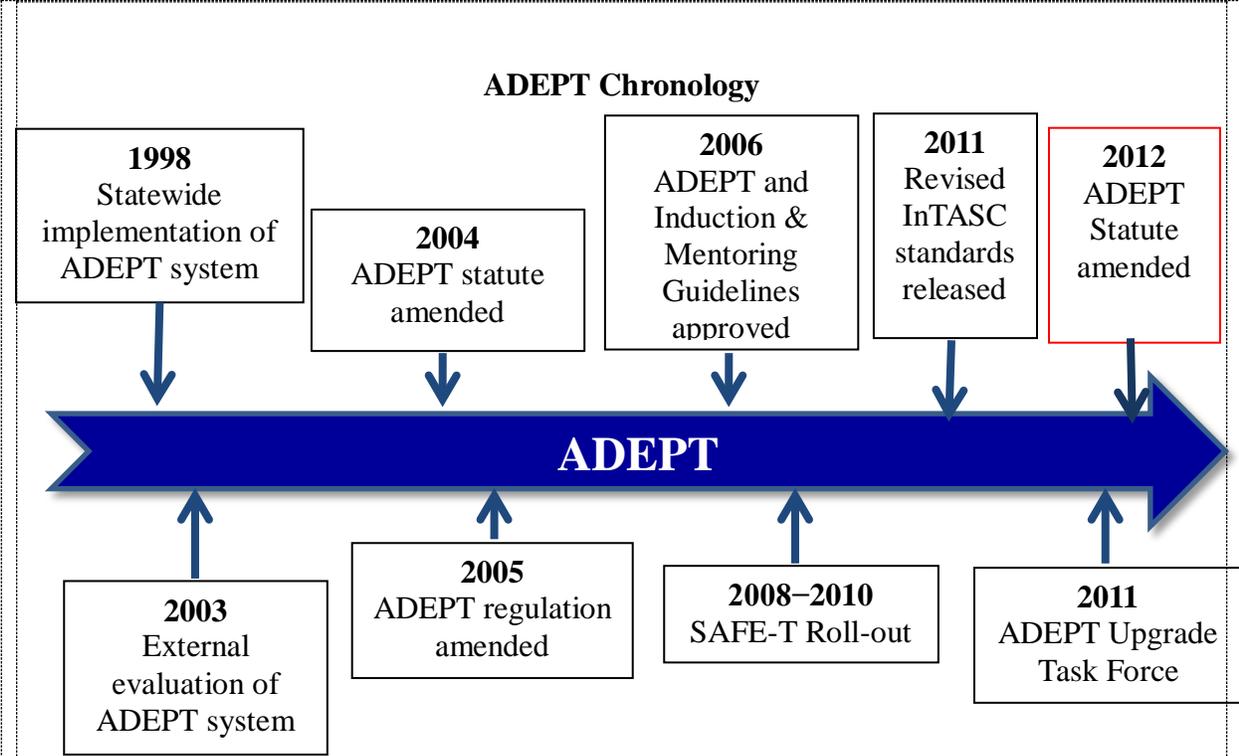
- S.C. Code Ann. §§ 59-26-30 (Supp. 2014) and 59-26-40 (Supp. 2014) (see Attachment 11). Evidence of statewide adoption of this state statute is available online at <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs->

[services/50/documents/ADEPT Statute Amended2012.pdf](http://ed.sc.gov/agency/stateboard/documents/205-1.pdf)

- SBE Regulation 43-205.1 (revised effective June 28, 2013; see Attachment 11). Evidence of statewide adoption of this regulation is available online at <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/stateboard/documents/205-1.pdf>.
- Expanded ADEPT Support and Evaluation System Guidelines (see Attachment 10). Evidence of statewide adoption of these guidelines is available online at <http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/ee/Educator-Evaluation-Effectiveness/documents/EP-01-ADEPTGuideline-Attach-03-15.pdf>. Initially developed by the ADEPT Steering Committee (27 district- and school-level administrators, teachers, representatives from institutions of higher education, and representatives from related professional organizations under the leadership of two consultants) in 2006 the guidelines have been under continuous review and revision based on stakeholder input. (The Expanded ADEPT Guidelines incorporate, when not inconsistent, the 2006 ADEPT Guidelines and the SAFE-T formal evaluation guidelines.)

Another round of significant stakeholder input began in the spring of 2014 when a state-wide call for nominations produced an Educator Evaluation Advisory Team. The team was selected using a rubric-based selection process and a variety of roles were purposely included from classroom teachers to district leadership including Human Resources directors. The Advisory Team met for two-day, face-to-face meetings in April and May. The resulting outcome was a set of ESEA-compliant guidelines which were subsequently approved by the SBE in June 2014. The Advisory Team has continued to meet and provide input on the development of the educator evaluation guidelines. Feedback from the field was also received through conversation as the Educator Evaluation team conducted nine regional trainings on the SLO process between September and November 2014. Every school district sent participants; approximately 1,000 people engaged in face-to-face conversation during these trainings. Upon inauguration of the State Superintendent of Education in January 2015, additional stakeholder meetings have occurred, resulting in incorporation of stakeholder changes that have been requested since 2012.

Because ADEPT is designed to be an iterative process rather than a final product, the system has undergone several major transformations since its inception, including amendments to the authorizing statute and regulations and approval of system and induction and mentoring guidelines (see the ADEPT Chronology below).



### Summary of Changes to Proposed Educator Support and Evaluation System from Stakeholder Input since 2011

Date	Effectiveness levels	Components of evaluation system	Use of student growth in personnel decisions	Criteria for sanctioning of licenses	Frequency of observations
Feb. 2012	2: Not met/Met Task Force recommends move to 4 levels	Observations and written documents (lessons plans, unit work samples, etc.) (100%). Unit work sample includes review of assessment and student growth data. <i>Note:</i> Stakeholder feedback includes consideration of peer evaluations and student surveys as potential types of effectiveness measures.	Originally to begin in 2014–15; SC was granted an extension	Teacher receives a <i>Not met</i> rating in two Annual/Summative	Only required at Induction and Annual/summative evaluations; otherwise at discretion of the school leader
June 2012	Proposed expansion to five levels and label using letter grades (A–F) not approved by the SBE	<u>Statewide “Tested” Grades and Subjects:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADEPT standards (60%)</li> <li>• Classroom Value-add (CVA) (30%)</li> <li>• School-wide Value-add (10%)</li> </ul>		If a teacher receives a rating of D or F on observations for two or more years AND a rating	

		<u>“Non-Tested” Grades and Subjects:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADEPT standards (70%)</li> <li>• School-wide Value-add (30%)</li> </ul>		of D or F on CVA for two or more years, s/he is not eligible for certificate or contract advancement, and district must contract non-renewal.	
Oct. 2013	Letter <b>grades</b> (A–F) (not state approved)	<u>Statewide “Tested” Grades and Subjects:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADEPT standards (50%)</li> <li>• Classroom Value-add (30%)</li> <li>• School-wide Value-add (10%)</li> <li>• Family Input using surveys (10%)</li> </ul> <u>Non-Tested Grades and Subjects:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADEPT standards (50%)</li> <li>• Growth using SLOs (30%)</li> <li>• School-wide Value-add (10%)</li> <li>• Family Input using surveys (10%)</li> </ul>	Deferred to 2016–17.  Approved by USED Jan. 2014		Every teacher four times, every year was suggested by staff
Dec. 2013	Proposal to shift from letter grades to effectiveness levels, based on feedback presented during Dec. 10, 2013, SCDE ESEA Flexibility Virtual Meeting				
Jan. 2014	Proposal to shift from letter grades to effectiveness letters presented on Jan. 8, 2014, at the SBE Education Professions committee meeting.				
April 2014	New effectiveness				

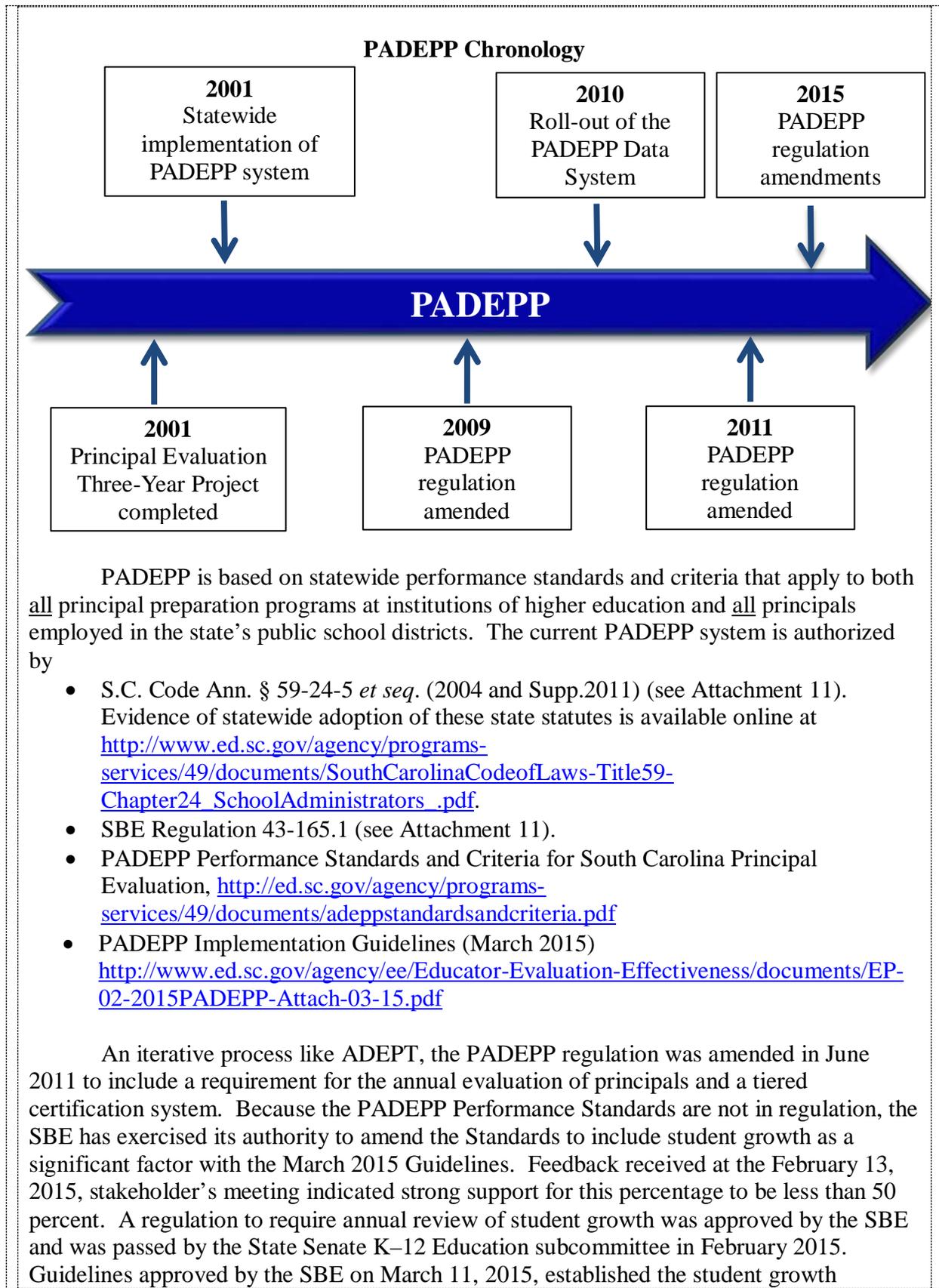
	level labels proposed based on survey (n = 3,471 responses) 5: Exemplary 4: Highly Effective 3: Proficient 2: Needs Improvement 1: Ineffective				
June 2014		<u>Statewide “Tested” Grades and Subjects:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADEPT standards (50%)</li> <li>• Classroom Value-add (30%)</li> <li>• District Choice—optional* (20%)</li> </ul> <u>Non-Tested Grades and Subjects:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADEPT standards (50%)</li> <li>• Student growth using Learning Objectives (30%)</li> <li>• District Choice—optional* (20%)</li> </ul> *If a district measure is not used, this 20 percent would be reallocated to the student growth measure.	Based on multiple academic years.	Determined by cut-off score (policy decision) set by the SBE and reviewed at least annually.	
Oct. 2014			SCDE sent letter to USED to notify of intent to ask for the value-added measures calculated using 2014–15 test scores be provided to teachers and principals as information only.		
Mar. 2015	Revisions to entire system	Student growth at no less than 20%. District choice optional (up to 10–30%) Professional Standards—50% to 80%	Based on multiple academic years. Year 1 is 2015–16 for all	State statute on sanctions continues to apply. Districts use results to	All educators: additional observations at the discretion of the school leader.

		Percentages specified in annual district ADEPT plan. State model plan uses a matrix that is not mathematical. Guidelines at 10.	educators.	inform decisions and incorporate evaluation results into personnel decisions as appropriate.	Induction: at least 2 observations per induction year. Annual: SAFE-T process; at least 4 observations. Continuing Contract: at least 2 observations in the year of certificate renewal.
--	--	---	------------	--	--

The Summative ADEPT Formal Evaluation of Teachers (SAFE-T) is the formal evaluation model for classroom-based teachers that is currently used statewide. InTASC is the Council of Chief State School Officer’s Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, which has developed a set of model core teaching standards. These standards outline what teachers should know and be able to do to ensure every K–12 student reaches the goal of being ready to enter college or the workforce in today’s world. These standards also outline the common principles and foundations of teaching practice that cut across all subject areas and grade levels and that are necessary to improve student achievement. ADEPT standards are aligned with the InTASC standards; thus, the release of the revised InTASC standards in 2011 prompted the work to update the state’s evaluation system (Commitments 1, 2, and 3 below).

PADEPP Background

Similar to ADEPT, South Carolina’s Program for Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Principal Performance (PADEPP) has evolved since it was implemented in 2001.



percentage for principals at no less than 20 percent and based upon a decision matrix.

School-wide and district-wide value-added measures were calculated state-wide using the 2013–14 test scores and made available to district and school leaders via a secure web portal on February 12, 2015. The purpose of providing access to those measures is to allow LEA leadership to make informed decisions regarding the use of a district choice option as well as to begin familiarizing themselves with the data for potential use in instructional decisions.

### **ADEPT and PADEPP: Detailed Background**

As the emphasis of evaluation has shifted from teacher and leader quality to teacher and leader effectiveness over time through the development, use, and continuous refinement of ADEPT and PADEPP, South Carolina is focusing on ensuring that all of its students acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to graduate high school college and career ready and to be well-equipped to succeed in the life path they choose.

The SCDE is expressly taking an integrated approach wherein student learning needs to be addressed from all levels. Existing teachers and future teachers need to be supported in providing effective instruction via college- and career-ready standards set within a student-centered classroom. Such an instructional shift requires that educator evaluation criteria be aligned with new instructional approaches so that effective teaching is facilitated. Educator (both teacher and principal) preparation programs need to evolve in concert with the shifts required by new standards as well as new educator evaluation so that future teachers and leaders are prepared to produce the types of 21<sup>st</sup> century classrooms necessary to produce life-long, 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. Correspondingly, a culture of continuous improvement needs to be infused at all levels to support such continuous learning and professional growth.

In its July 2011 reorganization, the SCDE demonstrated its commitment to placing a high priority on teacher evaluation and support by establishing the Division of School Effectiveness and emphasizing the integration of educator evaluation as a key tool in a continuous improvement model for educator professional development. The reorganization links educator professional development practices to educator evaluations as a way to ultimately improve instructional practices in South Carolina’s classrooms. This change at the state level is indicative of a cultural change that the agency is encouraging across the state. The SCDE has a commitment to high quality feedback and support for the state’s educators. This commitment was further deepened with the re-organization that occurred in January 2015 when Educator Evaluation was elevated to a distinct office within the new division of Educator Effectiveness to reflect the continuing emphasis that the SCDE places on this role at the state level. This division is also charged with ensuring high quality professional development and developing criteria for program effectiveness.

The SCDE is again participating with the CCSSO State Consortium on Educator Effectiveness (SCEE) and continues to benefit from their expertise in the development of this plan.

The development of the educator evaluation plan is informed by lessons we have learned from ADEPT, PADEPP, and our TAP<sup>TM</sup> schools, as well as lessons from work being done in the districts within the state and across the country, to create a more effective and efficient educator evaluation system that provides meaningful information focused on improving the quality of instruction and leading to improved student performance and outcomes and stronger community schools.

The SCDE has conducted two years of partial implementation of the educator evaluation system. In 2012–13, 21 SIG schools that opted into the enhanced ADEPT/PADEPP models all agreed to partner with the SCDE throughout the development process and to serve as a beta test to help inform the work of the Educator Evaluation Stakeholder Committee and support models that are described in this request for ESEA flexibility. The SCDE then expanded the pilot program with 46 schools volunteering to participate in the 2013–14 school year with roughly half choosing to use the Enhanced ADEPT observation tool and the other half piloting a tailored version of the NIET rubric used in the TAP schools. This version was titled “SC Teaching Standards.” All schools piloting SC Teaching Standards in 2013–14 elected to continue with the rubric in the 2014–15 school year as well.

In 2012, the SCDE solicited feedback from the beta participants. A total of 178 teachers, 23 school administrators, and 26 district administrators provided input on the proposed ADEPT standards and performance and evaluation rubrics.

The second of the series of SIG meetings was held on April 26, 2012, with 98 SIG representatives in attendance.

A third SIG educator evaluation development meeting occurred May 2012, and SIG evaluator training began in June 2012.

At the end of November 2012, user feedback forms were sent to principals at each of the 22 schools to provide initial feedback regarding usability, applicability, effectiveness (thus far), strengths, and weaknesses of the program.

In compliance with Assurance 15, South Carolina submitted a copy of the SBE–approved ADEPT and PADEPP guidelines to the USED by the end of June 2014. Revised guidelines were approved March 11, 2015 (see Attachment 10).

Beginning with school year 2015–16, the SCDE will implement student growth measures (test score measures and SLOs) with all classroom-based teachers and principals. In late 2014, 1,000 district staff members were trained on the SLO process. Additionally, the SCDE took the following steps to prepare and support districts in increased efforts to train all teachers for implementation of SLOs within evaluation beginning 2015–16. The SCDE plans to give districts multiple and varied methods to push training to the teacher level throughout the summer and early fall 2015. The Offices of Teacher Evaluation (OTE), Accountability, SC Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), and Special Education Services

collaboratively drafted the following plan which reflects both training and communications:

- 1) Identify the number of teachers trained to date:  
The SCDE requested that the South Carolina Education Association (SCEA) and Palmetto State Teacher Association (PSTA) forward teacher names and Certificate IDs of people they have trained to get a clear understanding of the number of teachers that were trained to date. Additionally, the SCDE requested that districts identify the numbers of teachers already trained, along with anticipated training dates for those remaining within the required Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching (ADEPT) assurance plans due to the SCDE in June 2015.
- 2) Determine the number of teachers that will need training prior to implementation in 2015–16
- 3) Develop a training work plan:  
SC TAP is developing a teacher training “train-the-trainer” work plan that will offer a second series of trainings to districts that will help them use the SCDE’s SLO teacher training toolkit to train teachers should districts choose to deliver training in a face-to-face facilitated manner. These face-to-face trainings will be regional “train-the-trainer” sessions. Our goal is to train a cadre of trainers for each district and “endorse” them from the state level as trainers.
- 4) Training SLO evaluators:  
The SCDE scheduled eleven regional SLO evaluator trainings. To build capacity, districts will send district- and school-level staff for evaluator training.
- 5) Capitalize on existing PD opportunities:  
The SCDE identified several opportunities to train teachers at various conferences during the summer of 2015. They are the Education and Business Summit (coordinated by the Office of Career and Technical Education) in June (the OTE will conduct this training), and the South Carolina Association of School Administrators (SCASA) 2015 Innovative Ideas Institute in June, and the Research to Practice Professional Development Institute in July (Office of Exceptional Children will coordinate this training).
- 6) Create online modules:  
The Office of Virtual Education is working with the OTE on developing the online version of the SLO teacher training toolkit. The OTE created a four-module online version of the toolkit materials. The SCDE will release one module per week, beginning June 8, 2015, through June 29, 2015.
- 7) Communications:  
The OTE established biweekly communications with district leaders to keep them abreast of evaluation updates, training opportunities, and resource releases.
- 8) Teacher train-the-trainer and recorded sessions:  
The SCDE is partnering with the National Center for Improvement in Educational Assessment to provide a ten-day SLO and assessment training session for PreK–3 teachers on translating the 2015 standards (with emphasis on the literacy components) into learning progressions with performance-level descriptors and crafting performance assessments to identify where students land along the trajectory. Individualized student SLO goals will be established based upon the trajectory, and end-of-instruction performance assessments will be used to measure

growth along that trajectory. These teachers, and the recordings from these sessions, will be used to train others in how to combine personalized learning, performance assessment, and educator evaluation growth targets.

The SCDE also offered EVAAS test score measure training. In spring 2015, the SCDE trained district and school leaders on EVAAS and the roster verification process so test score measures could be produced for teachers of subjects and courses with state assessments. In fall 2015, EVAAS test score measures, based on school year 2014–15 data, will be released statewide for information purposes only. EVAAS test score measures will be used for evaluation purposes beginning with the release of 2015–16 reports in Fall 2016.

The SCDE’s timeline for implementing its Expanded ADEPT Support and Evaluation System is as follows:

- March 2015: Release the SLO toolkit with model forms, slides, and script
- March 2015: Announce regional face-to-face EVAAS Roster Verification training available in April 2015
- April–June 2015: Roster verification for 2015 assessments (for information purposes only)
- Spring 2015: Ensure training of all induction teachers (PK–12) on SLO development
- Spring 2015: Ensure training of all teachers of “tested” grades and subjects on EVAAS roster verification; conduct the roster verification; perform quality assurance
- Spring 2015: Decision on procurement appeal heard March 25, 2015, resulting in a finding that a new RFP should be issued, which could result in new assessments in 2016
- April 2015: Re-issue amended RFP for observation rubric and online data system
- April 15, 2015: Statutory (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-410) date for notice of intention not to renew an educator’s employment contract; continuing contract teachers recommended for formal evaluation must be given written notice on or before the date the district issues a formal offer of re-employment (R.43-205(1)(V)(B))
- April–May 2015: Administration of new college- and career-ready assessments
- June 1, 2015: ADEPT and PADEPP plans due from districts for SCDE review and approval
- June 2015: ADEPT and PADEPP results for 2014–15 reported to SCDE
- June 2015: Training of educators on the implementation of the Expanded ADEPT Support and Evaluation System, including measures of student growth, during the SCASA 2015 Innovative Ideas Institute
- Summer and Early Fall 2015: Ensure training of all teachers and principals on SLOs, EVAAS, and the revised system (see table above)
- Summer 2015: Ensure train-the-trainer training sessions for district-level trainers of educators in middle, high, and career-center schools
- Summer 2015: Complete development and post online and recorded resources to assist district-level trainers in segments that can be used for just-in-time refreshers
- Summer 2015: Train all evaluators on new systems and observation instrument(s); conduct calibration to ensure inter-rater reliability
- August 2015: Support districts in implementation of revised systems, as well as

evaluation of induction, annual, and other designated teachers under SAFE-T

- August 2015: All educators continue professional growth and development plans and/or action research plans
- Fall 2015: Support districts in training educators in elementary, middle, high, and career-center schools, and in encouraging SLO development by all educators (~48,865 educators). All teachers and principals collect evidence of student growth for use in their evaluations
- Fall 2015: EVAAS reports from school year 2014–15 assessment data for teachers of “tested” grades and subjects; training on use and interpretation of reports continues (information only)
- Fall 2015: Support implementation of observations and evidence collection
- December 2015–January 2016: Provide just-in-time resources to support mid-year SLO conferences
- Spring 2016: Assurances from districts of training of all educators on the revised evaluation systems
- Spring 2016: Assist districts with review of observation data to analyze areas in which additional training and recalibration may be needed
- Spring 2016: School year 2015–16 SLO data used for formative and summative evaluation purposes
- April 15, 2016: Contract and notice date
- April–June 2016: EVAAS roster verification for all teachers in “tested” grades and subjects
- Summer 2016: Additional training on the new systems and student growth measures; additional evaluator training and recalibration sessions; analysis of evaluation data from 2015–16; report to SBE on possible continuous improvements
- Fall 2016: School year 2015–16 EVAAS assessment data released for teacher and principal evaluation; training on use and interpretation of reports continues.

Training, support, and continuous improvement activities will continue every year.

**3.A.ii Option B: South Carolina is committed to enhancing its current guidelines to create systems that appropriately evaluate and effectively support teachers and principals.**

South Carolina makes the following commitments to enhancing the current ADEPT and PADEPP evaluation systems to comply with the requirements of Principle 3 as follows.

**COMMITMENT 1: SOUTH CAROLINA’S SYSTEMS FOR EVALUATING AND SUPPORTING TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS WILL BE USED FOR CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTION.**

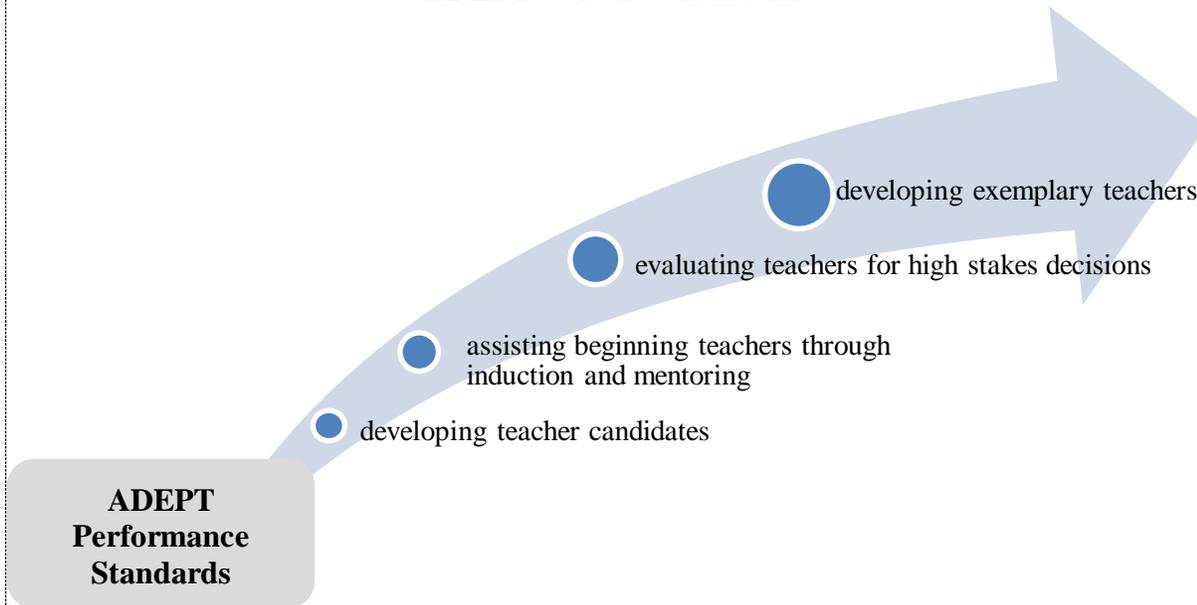
South Carolina continues to redefine its professional standards to reflect educator effectiveness and will work to build educators’ capacities to achieve—and exceed—these standards. These enhanced ADEPT and PADEPP standards focus on improvements to instruction that promote student learning.

Quantifying teacher and principal effectiveness is a necessary, but not a sufficient, requisite to bringing about improved instruction and student achievement. Continuous improvement can only be effected by comparing student performance to instructional practices and learning conditions and by using multiple measures to identify the practices and conditions that are most effective in promoting student-learning gains. These become the standards that set our state's expectations for teachers and principals.

South Carolina believes that established professional standards must serve as the foundation for both the ADEPT and PADEPP systems. These standards must be routinely revalidated and, as necessary, revised.

South Carolina's standards for what teachers should know, be able to do, and accomplish on an ongoing basis are known as the ADEPT Performance Standards (APS). The APS for classroom-based teachers, in place through the 2014–15 school year, are based on Charlotte Danielson's framework for all teachers whose school or district did not elect to use the Enhanced ADEPT, Teaching Standards, or TAP models. For the 2015–16 school year, schools and districts have one of three available options: continue to use the existing SAFE-T instrument for classroom observations; continue using one of the two pilot instruments (South Carolina Teaching Standards or enhanced ADEPT); or implement an approved, alternative-aligned, district-developed teacher observation instrument. The SCDE is re-issuing an RFP that requires whatever tool is selected as the winning award to align to the four domains—Planning, Instruction, Environment, and Professionalism thereby maintaining consistency of the framework for ADEPT and alignment with the InTASC guiding principles. The APS define the expectations for teacher effectiveness throughout the entirety of a teacher's career, beginning with their preparation as teacher candidates and continuing through each stage of their practice.

## ADEPT Career Continuum



In the initial phase of ADEPT system enhancements, the 2011 ADEPT Upgrade Task Force began the revalidation process for the APS. As part of this process, the Task Force reviewed 13 sets of nationally recognized professional teaching standards from

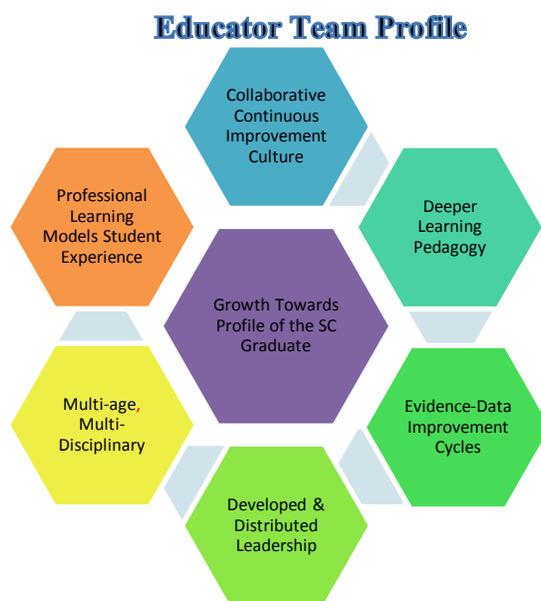
- Colorado;
- Connecticut;
- Georgia;
- Harrison County, Colorado;
- Hillsboro County, Florida;
- InTASC (the 2011 revised Model Core Teaching Standards);
- Kentucky;
- Louisiana;
- Marzano Evaluation Model Standards;
- Montgomery County, Maryland;
- Teacher Advancement Program (TAP™);
- Tennessee; and
- Washington, DC (IMPACT).

The Upgrade Task Force conducted a gap analysis by developing crosswalks that compared each set of standards to the APS. For example, the completed crosswalk between the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards and the ADEPT Performance Standards is included in Appendix N and is available online at <http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/50/documents/InTASCStandardsCrosswalk.pdf>.

The gap analysis revealed no significant gaps between the 2006 APS for classroom-based teachers and other sets of current, nationally recognized teacher performance standards. However, the Upgrade Task Force recommended updating the language in

several APS descriptors and establishing clearer, deeper, and more meaningful standards by adding a stand-alone student growth standard, combining several of the other standards, and reducing the overall number of key elements from 34 to 17. As mentioned previously, the SCDE will continue to convene the Educator Evaluation Advisory Team and actively solicit feedback from the when proposing continuous improvements to the guidelines with the SBE each year.

The SCDE is developing a Profile of S.C. Educator Teams to complement and support the Profile of the S.C. Graduate. As we change the learning systems to support college- and career-ready students with world-class skills and life characteristics, the expectations for our educators and teams of educators will also change. The ADEPT system for evaluation will also adjust to support and provide feedback to educators in the transformed systems.



The PADEPP system includes nine principal performance standards that are aligned with the 2008 Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards:

<b>PADEPP Standards</b>
1 – Vision
2 – Instructional Leadership
3 – Effective Management
4 – Climate
5 – School-Community Relations
6 – Ethical Behavior
7 – Interpersonal Skills
8 – Staff Development
9 – Principal’s Professional Development
10 – Student Growth

The tenth standard focused on school-wide student growth measures was added in the 2014 and 2015 guidelines. South Carolina plans to review the refreshed 2015 ISLLC standards (expected spring 2015) for possible continuous improvement of the state's leader standards.

In summary, the standards for teachers and principals must clearly establish the state's expectations in terms of

- competence—the knowledge and skills the educator must possess,
- performance—what the educator does as part of his or her practice, and
- effectiveness—the impact the educator has on intended student growth and performance.

Central to all three of these components are the academic standards for students (e.g., the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and mathematics and the state academic standards for other content areas) and multiple student assessment measures. That is, educators must have a strong working knowledge and understanding of the academic standards and their subject area (i.e., *competence*); they must create conditions that increase the likelihood that students will achieve these standards (i.e., *performance*); and they must analyze formative and summative assessment results to determine the extent to which their efforts have resulted in positive student gains (i.e., *effectiveness*).

Likewise, these three components are essential to equity—the commitment to educate all students, including English language learners (ELL), students with disabilities, and low-achieving students. To meet the unique needs of all students, educators must have a thorough knowledge and understanding of their particular students (i.e., *competence*), they must implement strategies designed to meet the diverse needs of their students (i.e., *performance*), and they must demonstrate that their efforts have resulted in positive learning gains for every student (i.e., *effectiveness*).

Ensuring the continual improvement of instruction also involves a systemic approach to capacity-building. ADEPT and PADEPP systematically assess and analyze an educator's professional practices, as well as their impact on the learning, achievement, and overall well-being of their students. Systematically providing feedback compels educators to reach successively higher levels of efficacy as they progress through the various stages of their career continua (see ADEPT Career Continuum graphic on page 148).

Both the ADEPT and PADEPP standards are infused into the preparation programs at the institutions of higher education (IHEs) in South Carolina as is required by statute. Integration of the PADEPP and ADEPT systems are included in the accreditation process for colleges of education in the state. The seamless use of these systems from preparation, induction, professional growth, and evaluation helps ensure continuity and consistency for educators.

Teachers and principals continue in their respective evaluation and support system through their induction experience. South Carolina requires that teachers and principals have an induction experience upon entering professional practice; this induction experience

must include formative feedback from supervisors on each of the performance standards, coaching support from mentors, and participation in a formalized induction program.

In 2012, the South Carolina General Assembly approved a change in statute and Regulation 43–205.1 to allow an optional expansion of the induction period for teachers to up to three years, at the discretion of LEA leadership.

Throughout the entirety of their careers, teachers and principals are required by statute to collaborate with their respective supervisors to establish annual professional growth and development plans. These personalized learning plans are designed to identify and build upon each educator’s strengths as well as target and address any weaknesses that may have been evidenced (see Commitment 5 below for more on professional growth and development plans).

Note regarding Charter Schools: The SCDE will require that all charter schools’ boards of directors and authorizers submit an annual written statement to the SCDE Charter School Program outlining their chosen method of teacher evaluation by September 1 of each year. The assurance will guarantee that a charter school adheres to one of two options as specified below:

In accordance with the ESEA Flexibility Waiver Principle 3, all charter schools in South Carolina must guarantee that they will adhere to one of the following options regarding teacher evaluations:

A. As a South Carolina public charter school, we agree to adopt and implement the principles of the state approved ADEPT teacher evaluation system.

*Or*

B. As a South Carolina public charter school, we will develop and implement teacher and principal evaluation and support systems that meets all of the elements of Principle 3 in the document titled ESEA flexibility, as follows:

- a. Will be used for continual improvement of instruction;
- b. Meaningfully differentiates performance using at least three performance levels;
- c. Uses multiple valid measures in determining performance levels, including
  - i. data on student growth for all students (including English Learners and students with disabilities) as a significant factor
  - ii. other measures of professional practice (which may be gathered through multiple formats and sources, such as observations based on rigorous teacher performance standards, teacher portfolios, and student and parent surveys);
- d. Ensures that all measures included in determining performance levels are valid measures (meaning measures that are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance) and are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner across schools within an LEA;

- e. Evaluates teachers and principals on a regular basis;
- f. Provides clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development; and
- g. Will be used to inform personnel decisions.
- h. Is an otherwise approvable Evaluation System.

As part of South Carolina’s commitment to providing local flexibility to allow for systems to be tailored to the unique needs of each LEA, school districts maintain the option to propose alternative, aligned, district-developed evaluation systems which meet all of the criteria specified in Principal 3, statutes, regulations, and SBE guidelines. Alternative systems are proposed via a district’s annual submission of its ADEPT plan. Annual submission of ADEPT plans is one of the SCDE’s mechanisms for assuring fidelity of implementation and maintenance of these guiding principles at the local level.

**COMMITMENT 2: SOUTH CAROLINA’S SYSTEMS FOR EVALUATING AND SUPPORTING TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS WILL DIFFERENTIATE PERFORMANCE USING AT LEAST THREE PERFORMANCE LEVELS.**

ADEPT’s bimodal (*Met* and *Not Met*) rating scale did not adequately identify either developing or outstanding teachers. To address this need, the 2011 ADEPT Upgrade Task Force reviewed 13 sets of nationally recognized performance rubrics (see Appendix O). Based on this review, the Task Force recommended creating a four-level rating scale for teacher performance—*Exemplary*, *Proficient*, *Needs Improvement*, and *Unsatisfactory*—and developing rubrics to describe teacher performance at each of these levels. The SCDE convened the Educator Evaluation Stakeholder Group to consider these recommendations further and gather additional input based upon the beta and pilot years.

In stakeholder meetings held in January and February 2015, districts urged the adoption of a four-level scale: Exemplary, Effective, Needs Improvement/Developing, and Ineffective. The greater the number of levels, the greater is the possibility of not having inter-rater reliability. In the March 2015 Guidelines, the number of levels changed to four in response to these concerns.

The PADEPP Principal Evaluation Instrument (available online at <http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/49/documents/PrincipalEvaluation.pdf>) includes rubrics for each principal performance standard.

COMMITMENT 3: SOUTH CAROLINA'S SYSTEMS FOR EVALUATING AND SUPPORTING TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS WILL USE MULTIPLE VALID MEASURES TO DETERMINE PERFORMANCE LEVELS, INCLUDING, AS A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR, DATA IN STUDENT GROWTH FOR ALL STUDENTS (INCLUDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES), AND OTHER MEASURES OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE.

Both the ADEPT and PADEPP systems include multiple valid measures to determine performance levels. Currently, the ADEPT evaluation model for classroom-based teachers includes the following measures:

- the teacher's *long-range plan(s)*;
- classroom *observations* (a minimum of two visits per year for induction, annual, and re-certification teachers that must each include an entire lesson, or at least 50 minutes if the lesson exceeds that length of time. Additional observations are permitted and encouraged.);
- teacher *reflections* following each classroom observation and post-conference;
- *professional performance review*, completed by the principal (or designee) and other supervisors on all performance dimensions; *professional self-assessment*, completed by the teacher as the first step to developing the teacher's professional growth and development plan;
- the teacher's *professional growth and development plan*; and
- *multiple academic years of student growth evidence*, in the form of SLOs, test-score measures, or both.

Districts also have the option of including in their annual ADEPT plan a *district choice* measure, which may include research-based (e.g., student surveys) or innovative measures (e.g., portfolio on students' skills development).

Documentation for each of these measures becomes part of the teacher's dossier, which is reviewed and judged by an evaluation team of at least two trained, certified evaluators as part of the summative evaluation process. Classroom observations will be structured by the use of an empirically tested rubric.

The award for this rubric was protested. The SCDE will release a revised RFP for a teacher observation instrument and data management system aligned to the scope of the Expanded ADEPT Support and Evaluation System. Once the contract is awarded and finalized, the SCDE will begin planning trainings on the new system in collaboration with the successful vendor. Meanwhile, districts have the options of using rubrics from the pilots or the ADEPT SAFE-T rubric.

The PADEPP Principal Evaluation Instrument (available online at <http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/49/>) requires superintendents (or their designated evaluators) to use appropriate methods for gathering data and to present evidence of performance relative to each of the nine performance standards.

Stakeholders who attended the November 2011 ESEA Flexibility Request Stakeholder meetings expressed interest in exploring other methods of evaluating performance such as peer evaluations and student surveys. As a result, the SCDE added an optional District Choice component to teacher evaluation. Guidance on how to construct District Choice options that support and enhance student learning was provided to districts in the form of a District Choice template in September 2014.

Student growth is an essential part of examining teacher and principal effectiveness. The SCDE is looking to the 69 schools and districts that anticipate in South Carolina’s Teacher Advancement Program (SC TAP™)—through a federal Teacher Incentive Fund Grant—to serve as incubators for value-added assessments for teachers, as well as for principals, in tested subject areas and grade levels.

In 2014, South Carolina issued a contract for EVAAS calculations on all state-wide assessments. State-wide roster verification will occur in April–June 2015. Roster verification is the process by which teachers allocate responsibility for student test scores based on student attendance, local context, and other locally known factors for the purposes of value-added measures to be calculated. Principals verify rosters to ensure that students are appropriately allocated and not under-represented or over-represented. Through this state-wide roster verification, teacher-level, value-added measures can then be calculated using the 2014–15 test scores and made available on a “For Information” basis in early fall 2015, as indicated would be requested to the USED in October 2014. In 2015–16 and at least for the term of that contract, roster verification and value-added measures for ESEA-required assessments will continue to be generated and incorporated into the student growth measures so that they may inform personnel decisions beginning in 2016–17. Reports for additional assessments (e.g., social studies) will also be available to educators.

In 2015–16 and at least for the term of that contract, roster verification and value-added measures for ESEA-required assessments (grades 4–8 ELA and mathematics) will continue to be generated and incorporated into the student growth measures so that they may inform personnel decisions beginning in 2016–17. Reports for additional assessments (e.g., social studies) will also be available to educators.

For teachers in all grades and subjects, *Alternative Measures* may be used; however, those in courses requiring *ESEA Test Scores* must use the state-selected *ESEA Test Score* measure as a component of student growth. The vehicle for compiling evidence of student growth based upon *Alternative Measures* is the SLO. Teachers with EVAAS test score measures who are not in a grade or subject for which ESEA requires assessment (e.g., social studies) may use the EVAAS test score measure as evidence of student growth, or may use an SLO, or may use an SLO that includes the EVAAS test score measure as one evidence point for establishing student growth.

As a best teaching practice as well as ESEA-compliant student growth measure, the SCDE is encouraging teachers in all subject areas and grade levels—regardless of whether required under ESEA section 1111 (b)(3)—to develop and implement SLOs focused on

college- and career-ready knowledge, skills, and life characteristics as described in the standards and the Profile of the SC Graduate.

SLOs are teacher-driven, student-centered, data-informed, standards-based goals that measure an educator's impact on student learning growth within a given interval of instruction. The use of SLOs can promote collaboration among teachers, administrators, and support staff to make data-informed academic decisions about students. SLO development is an iterative process that encourages teachers to identify the most important learning standards for the year or semester, review and analyze available student data, select aligned pre- and post-assessments or other methods for measuring growth, make informed decisions about instructional strategies, set academic goals for students, and evaluate student progress toward those goals. It also supports a mindset shift from solely focusing on student proficiency to also emphasizing student growth.

SLOs, as a measure of student growth and teacher effectiveness, have been used in a number of states and districts around the country beginning in Denver, Colorado, in 1999. Research studies suggest that SLOs have a positive effect on student learning and educator collaboration. For example, in Denver, rigorous and high-quality growth objectives were associated with higher levels of student achievement. Additionally, in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina, students in classrooms where teachers developed and implemented SLOs demonstrated more academic growth than students who were in classes where SLOs were not developed and implemented (Community Training and Assistance Center. 2013, February. *It's more than money: Teacher Incentive Fund-Leadership for educators' advanced performance Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools*. Boston, MA. Retrieved from <http://www.ctacusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/MoreThanMoney.pdf>). SLO implementation also encourages educator collaboration and gives teachers a degree of ownership in their evaluations.

Even though SLOs are used for teacher evaluation, the true benefit of SLOs is to *enhance* student learning in every classroom and provide evidence of the educator's instructional impact on student learning. SLOs therefore can be a critical evidential link between teacher actions and student outcomes. Teachers engaged in the SLO process can better formalize and account for their success with students, while using the information gathered through the process to improve their practice. SLOs provide an opportunity for teachers to inform the way in which their practice is evaluated. Teachers work together in teams alongside their evaluators to determine priorities around content and to establish expectations around how learning is measured. By setting growth targets based on student data, teachers are linking the evaluation of their practice directly to the impact they have on their students over the course of a semester or year. The SLO process encourages collaboration between educators at various levels—teachers, administrators, and support staff. Through this process, educators engage in professional conversations around professional practice, student performance data, and efforts to positively impact student learning outcomes.

Both teacher and principal evaluation will use multiple valid measures. Teacher evaluation will use rubric-based classroom observations supported by coaching, reflection,

and feedback on planning and professionalism to provide the support needed for continuous professional growth. Continuous use of student growth measures will assist teachers in tying changes in their instructional practice to student outcomes to allow for continuous improvement in student learning. Principals will have a similar focus on feedback on their professional practices and annual measures of student growth. Adding student growth to principal evaluation links principal evaluation to teacher support and will hopefully build greater collaboration and teamwork within schools.

#### COMMITMENT 4: SOUTH CAROLINA WILL EVALUATE TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS ON A REGULAR BASIS.

South Carolina statute currently requires annual formal or informal evaluations for both teachers and principals. The extent of those evaluations may vary depending on the educator's contract level and performance. While the components of these evaluations will be refined and improved, this requirement will remain. The ADEPT system requires that teachers be evaluated continuously, either formally (i.e., summatively) or informally (i.e., formatively). Teachers in their first induction year receive a mentor and a formative evaluation process. If additional induction years occur, those years are likewise formative. A successful year-long summative evaluation is required for a teacher to advance from an annual to a continuing contract. Once a teacher receives a continuing contract, the teacher may be evaluated through a full summative evaluation, a partial summative evaluation (Competence-Building Goals-Based Evaluation), or a formative evaluation (Research and Development Goals-Based Evaluation) at the discretion of the employing school district. These options will continue; however, every teacher completes student growth measures every year, and continuing contract teachers in their certification year receive a full summative evaluation. Note that part of the notion of continuous professional growth occurs by the intersection of the components of the support and evaluation system. The three conferences which occur between school leadership and teachers in planning, monitoring, and assessing growth through SLOs are part of the continuous feedback process provided to teachers. Determination of student needs, monitoring of student progress, and assessment of student outcomes being integral portions of classroom teaching, the SLO process is designed to provide additional support to teachers which should be evident in the observations of their teaching as well.

Below are the minimum requirements. LEAs are encouraged to provide additional feedback and support mechanisms whenever possible.

<b>Minimum Requirements for Educator Evaluation</b>			
<b>Educator Type</b>	<b>Level of Impact</b>	<b>Observations: type and frequency</b>	<b>Observer</b>
Induction	School district employment; number of induction years; contents of the professional development plan	<p><u>Each induction contract year:</u>  <math>\geq 1</math> – Integral classroom observation per semester with feedback to be provided at mid-year and end-of-year consensus conference (at a minimum). Additional informal observation and feedback at the evaluator’s discretion.</p> <p><u>Induction Year 1:</u>            Depending on district procedures, mentors may provide informal observation and formative feedback</p> <p><u>Additional Induction Years:</u>            Mentors at option of district</p>	<p>Principal or trained administrative designee</p> <p>Trained Mentor</p> <p>Trained Mentor</p>
Annual contract	School district employment; SC certification; possible highly consequential evaluation; contents of the professional development plan	<p><math>\geq 1</math> - Integral classroom observation per semester done separately by at least two observers (4 total; at least one unannounced) with feedback to be provided at mid-year and end-of-year consensus conference (at a minimum). Additional informal observation and feedback at the evaluator’s discretion. (See separate rules for certified teachers from out-of-state.)</p> <p>Additional Informal or Walk-Through classroom observation per semester is encouraged.</p>	<p>Principal or trained administrative designee</p> <p>Trained observer</p>
Continuing Contract	School district employment; additional formal evaluation; contents of the professional development plan	<p><math>\geq 1</math> - Integral classroom observation per semester by at least two observers with feedback to be provided at mid-year and end-of-year consensus conference at a minimum during recertification year.</p> <p>Informal and Walk-Through classroom observation and feedback during non-recertification years are encouraged for all educators every semester to provide continuous feedback.</p> <p>Additional Integral classroom observations and formal evaluation at the principal’s discretion.</p>	<p>Principal or trained administrator designee</p> <p>Principal, trained administrator designee, or peer review</p>

The PADEPP system requires that principals be evaluated annually. A successful evaluation using all PADEPP standards is required for a principal to advance from a Tier 1 to a Tier 2 certificate. Once the principal advances to a Tier 2 certificate, a full evaluation using all PADEPP Performance Standards must be conducted at least every third year. On years between the full evaluations, principal evaluations must still include student growth

measures, any Performance Standards that were rated as *Needs Improvement* in the previous year, and any additional Performance Standards identified for growth in the Principal's Professional Development Plan (PDP). Full evaluations may be conducted every year at the discretion of the superintendent. Fully updated PADEPP regulation 43-165.1 is posted at [http://ed.sc.gov/agency/stateboard/TOC\\_Regulations.cfm](http://ed.sc.gov/agency/stateboard/TOC_Regulations.cfm).

**COMMITMENT 5: SOUTH CAROLINA WILL PROVIDE TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS WITH CLEAR, TIMELY, AND USEFUL FEEDBACK, INCLUDING FEEDBACK THAT IDENTIFIES NEEDS AND GUIDES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.**

Both the ADEPT and PADEPP systems require that formative feedback be provided relative to each performance standard during each educator's induction period. During summative evaluations, a conference must be held at least twice during the year to present written and oral consensus feedback to the educator on his or her performance relative to each standard.

Additionally, both systems require the development of an annual Professional Growth and Development Plan for every educator, based on his or her identified strengths and weaknesses. Principals' professional growth plans also must relate to their School Renewal Plans. Each educator's Professional Growth and Development Plan must be individualized to meet their unique needs and must be developed in collaboration with the educator's supervisor. Feedback regarding the educator's progress and performance must be provided at least annually and more frequently if problems are evidenced.

The educator's individualized Professional Growth and Development Plan also serve as the basis for renewal of his or her teaching credential that must be revalidated every five years. By successfully completing and implementing strategies that relate to the goals in his or her approved plan, the educator can accrue certificate renewal credits for certificate revalidation purposes.

Reflection and self-assessments are important components of the growth and development processes. The ultimate goal is to help each educator transform from externally mandated to internally motivated professional development that is relevant, meaningful, and effective in promoting student success.

Further, South Carolina's intent is to procure an online data management system which will afford much greater awareness of educator's professional growth needs as well as facilitate that growth via a library of teacher observation videos for both professional growth and evaluator certification training.

**COMMITMENT 6: SOUTH CAROLINA'S TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS WILL GENERATE DATA THAT WILL BE USED TO INFORM PERSONNEL DECISIONS.**

South Carolina supports two Web-based systems for collecting and reporting data on the annual performance of every teacher and principal in the state.

In 2014–15 and earlier, the ADEPT Data System (ADS) was the means by which school districts reported the following information on an annual basis for each teacher:

- the teacher’s contract level for the current school year and the ADEPT process in which the teacher participated (e.g., induction, formal/summative evaluation, or goals-based evaluation);
- the teacher’s ADEPT results for the current school year (including, for teachers who underwent a full formal/summative evaluation, the results for each of the current 34 key elements);
- the teacher’s hiring status for the following school year (e.g., rehired, resigned, retired, workforce reduction); and
- the teacher’s recommended contract level and ADEPT process for the following school year.

Beginning in 2015–16 South Carolina intends to transition to a online data management system. The requested system which will maintain the functions described above and could allow three or more effectiveness ratings to be reported. The SCDE has requested an opinion from the S.C. Attorney General on whether personally identifiable evaluation ratings and sub-components must be released under the Freedom of Information Act when in the SCDE’s possession. To ensure candid evaluation and feedback, the SCDE believes non-disclosure is essential to an effective system. If personally identifiable information is not collected, districts will report “met” or “not met” per teacher as is currently provided and will provide a report with de-identified data on overall and subcomponent ratings.

This information generates a chronological ADEPT history for each teacher—an ongoing record of the teacher’s employment status and performance. A teacher’s ADEPT history may be accessed online by the teacher, the teacher’s employing school district, and any public school district in the state to which the teacher applies for teaching employment. School districts rely on ADEPT histories and other types of ADEPT documentation to help make re-employment decisions, and they also use ADEPT histories to assist in making decisions about hiring teachers who apply from other districts.

<b>ADEPT History</b>					
<b>Year</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Current Contract</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Hiring Status</b>	<b>Next Year Contract</b>
2012	Richland 01	Continuing - GBE	No Data	No Data	No Data
2011	Richland 01	Continuing - GBE	Met or Ready	Rehired	Continuing - GBE
2010	Richland 01	Annual - Formal 1	Met or Ready	Rehired	Continuing - GBE
2009	Richland 01	Induction	Met or Ready	Rehired	Annual - Formal 1

The ADEPT Data System also generates reports that enable districts to compare the performance of their teachers at each contract level with the overall statewide data. The

SCDE presents an aggregated report annually to the SBE.

South Carolina requires that beginning teachers complete an ADEPT induction period and that they successfully complete an ADEPT formal/summative evaluation during a subsequent (annual-contract) year in order to be eligible for certificate and contract advancements. Additionally, the SBE must suspend the teaching certificate of any teacher at the annual-contract level who is unable to successfully complete the ADEPT formal/summative evaluation process after two attempts (years).

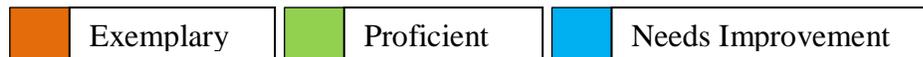
The state provides data to each teacher preparation program regarding the performance of its graduates once they enter their second year of teaching employment. The ADEPT pass rate for each institution of higher education (IHE) is included in the IHE's Fact Sheet and is published as part of the Title II—Higher Education reporting requirements. Additionally, IHEs use the IHE Portal System to obtain a standard-by-standard report on the performance of their graduates to help the IHE determine programmatic strengths and weaknesses in order to guide their program improvements.

In 2010, the SCDE partnered with Clemson University to pilot Project HEAT—the Higher Education Assessment of Teaching. This project provides value-added data to Clemson on their teacher preparation program graduates who teach in TAP™ schools. Clemson uses this data to inform instructional offerings and practices. Project HEAT is providing a foundation for moving forward with more actionable data for colleges of education and teacher preparation programs.

The second Web-based data system, the PADEPP Data System (PDS), is used to collect and report the annual performance of all principals in South Carolina. Beginning with the 2011–12 school year, school districts are using PDS to report principal ratings for each of the PADEPP performance standards. Following the end of each school year, annual reports, similar to the ADEPT reports, will be generated and published.

### PADEPP Data System Report





PADEPP results not only help guide local employment decisions, but they also serve as the gateway to certificate advancement. The amended (2011) PADEPP regulation provides for tiered certification for principals. To advance from a Tier 1 to a Tier 2 certificate, a principal must complete the state's Principal Induction Program during his or her first year of the principalship and must then receive an overall rating of *Proficient* or greater on a full PADEPP evaluation during a subsequent principalship year.

Reports generated via the PADEPP Data System also help identify performance strengths and weaknesses for individual principals, for local school districts, and for the state. The report above is an example of a statewide data report on principal performance for each of the nine PADEPP standards.

**COMMITMENT 7: SOUTH CAROLINA WILL PROVIDE ONGOING TRAINING TO ALL TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS, AND EVALUATORS TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSES OF THE EVALUATION SYSTEMS, THE ELEMENTS OF THE EVALUATIONS SYSTEMS, AND THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN IMPLEMENTING THESE SYSTEMS.**

Through their holistic approaches to assisting, developing, and evaluating the performance and effectiveness of teachers and principals, the ADEPT and PADEPP systems embed training throughout every stage, beginning with the educator preparation programs and continuing through induction and the formal/summative evaluations.

As specified in regulation 43-205.1, prior to the beginning of the formal/summative ADEPT evaluation process, each teacher scheduled for this type of evaluation must receive a comprehensive orientation. At a minimum, this teacher orientation must include written and oral explanations of the ADEPT Performance Standards, the evaluation process, the evaluation timeline or calendar, the criteria for successfully completing the evaluation, and the intended use of the evaluation results. Also, each teacher must be informed of the names of the members of his or her evaluation team prior to the beginning of the evaluation.

All ADEPT evaluators must hold evaluator certification. To become evaluator-certified, an educator must meet the evaluator eligibility requirements (i.e., the educator must hold a South Carolina professional teaching certificate and be recommended for evaluator training by a district or school administrator), must successfully complete the evaluator training in its entirety, must satisfactorily complete all required assignments, and must receive a passing score on the online examination. ADEPT training is accomplished via a train-the-trainer model through which the SCDE provides training for all trainers while the certified trainers, in turn, provide training for the evaluators.

Previously, there were 7,914 certified ADEPT/SAFE-T evaluators in South Carolina

with a pass rate for the evaluator examination of 94 percent. As the stakes for the educator evaluations rise, the evaluator certification system will improve because the certification requirements will be based on actual observations of teaching with scores correlated to those produced by master raters as requested in the RFP for the potential new system. The RFP requests a performance assessment of actual teaching calibrated to trained raters of known inter-rater reliability. The SCDE will work with the successful vendor receiving the award to refine the evaluator training and certification system to help ensure the best possible inter-rater reliability.

All PADEPP evaluators must have successfully completed the SCDE’s PADEPP training before evaluating principals. The SCDE provides this training for all district superintendents and other designated principal evaluators.

To ensure that principals are prepared to meet the state’s professional expectations, all administrator preparation programs must integrate the PADEPP standards throughout their curricula.

All first-year principals are required to complete the state’s Principal Induction Program. A detailed overview of the PADEPP standards and criteria, the principal evaluation instrument, and the PADEPP regulation (R 43-165.1) is included as an integral part of this program for beginning principals.

Prior to evaluating a principal, the employing school district must ensure that the principal receives awareness training that includes (1) the PADEPP Performance Standards and Criteria for Principal Evaluation, (2) the PADEPP principal evaluation instrument, and (3) the PADEPP regulation (R 43-165.1).

Like ADEPT, the principal evaluator certification system will be refined to ensure the best possible inter-rater reliability across the state.

<b>Plan for Implementation</b>					
<b>Key Milestone or Activity</b>	<b>Detailed Timeline (given in document)</b>	<b>Party or Parties Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence (Attachment)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Significant Obstacles</b>
Work with SEDL and CCSSO to get input and advice on the SC proposed educator evaluation system.	11/2011–15	Division of School Effectiveness	Record of communications between SEDL, CCSSO, and the Division of School Effectiveness	Educator Evaluation Stakeholder Group, working groups, and staff time.	NA
Appoint and convene the Educator Evaluation Stakeholder Group to assist in the revisions to South Carolina’s	2/2012–6/2012	Division of School Effectiveness	Names of Committee members Posted to <a href="http://www.ed.southcarolina.gov/agency/se/Educator-evaluations">http://www.ed.southcarolina.gov/agency/se/Educator-evaluations</a>	Staff time to organize and conduct meetings; reimbursement for group member travel	Availability of key stakeholders to serve on the stakeholder committee

Guidelines for Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching (ADEPT) and the development of the Guidelines for the Program for Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Principal Performance (PADEPP)					
Provide data to teachers and principals on the growth of their students in reading/language arts and mathematics in grades 4–8 for teachers in the beta and the pilot.	Value-added measures are available via the secure web portal approximately 4-6 weeks after SAS receives the test score data from the SCDE (usually September of each year for the preceding school year).	Office of Data Management and Analysis	SCDE Data Reports	Staff time IT Support Funding	2012–13 and 2013–14 teacher-level data available to beta and pilot participants. All district and school-wide value-added measures from the 2013–14 year made available Feb. 2015 via the secure web portal.
Determine additional methods for calculating “student growth” for all students, including ELL students and students with disabilities for teachers in tested subject areas and grade levels, teachers in non-tested subject areas and grade levels, and on a school-wide basis	August 2012–January 2014	Division of School Effectiveness  Division of Accountability	Description(s) published to SCDE website <a href="http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/se/Educator-Evaluations">http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/se/Educator-Evaluations</a>	Staff time to research available models (e.g., value-added and other options) A request for proposals (RFP) or other similar process may be required	Student growth (value-added) data is only available for approximately 25%–30% of all teachers.  In fall 2015, teachers in grades 4 and higher in all courses with state assessments will receive EVAAS measure data for information purposes only (see page 154).
Appoint and convene a PADEPP work group to network with their constituencies	Summer 2013 until Implementation is complete	Division of School Effectiveness	Names of the PADEPP Work Group Members posted to the SCDE website	Staff time to appoint and convene the work group  Staff time to facilitate the	PADEPP position was not filled in OEE until 12/17/12.  Current PADEPP needs revisions to

and assist in revising the PADEPP evaluation model, consistent with the approved 2013 PADEPP Guidelines				work group meetings to guide the development of the revised evaluation model	make better connections to the evaluation system.
Revise the PADEPP evaluation model consistent with the 2013 Guidelines	August 2013– June 2014	Division of School Effectiveness	Group Members and Educator Evaluation Progress Reports posted to the SCDE website <a href="http://www.ed.s.c.gov/agency/se/Educator-Evaluations/">http://www.ed.s.c.gov/agency/se/Educator-Evaluations/</a>  Meeting agendas	Staff time to develop the revised principal evaluation materials  IT support for the development and management of the upgrades to the PADEPP Data System	Internal capacity Funding
Select and train a sub-group of school districts to participate in the pilot of the revised ADEPT and PADEPP evaluation models	May 2013– August 2013	Division of School Effectiveness	List of schools/districts in pilot project  District invitation letters; data analysis	The SCDE has engaged with the Office of Program Evaluation at the University of South Carolina ( <a href="http://www.sc.edu/ope/">http://www.sc.edu/ope/</a> ) to provide external evaluation of the pilot. Areas of focus include educator perceptions of the Enhanced ADEPT and SC Teaching Standards rubrics as well as qualitative feedback on educator’s understanding of value-added measures. Reports have been provided to the SBE at least annually from external evaluator.	Internal capacity funding Tight timeline for developing the pilot project training and evaluation materials.
Monitor the ADEPT and PADEPP pilot project implementation; conduct and analyze data and collect statewide feedback	Spring 2014	Division of School Effectiveness	Pilot Project Report		Internal capacity Funding  Changing TOPS and or the weightings, will significantly affect the data and outcomes
Revise the Guidelines and present to SBE	Approved June 2014	Division of School Effectiveness	Minutes of the SBE meetings	Staff Time	Legislation is before the 2012 South Carolina

for approval by June 30, 2014.			SBE approved ADEPT Guidelines		General Assembly to increase the length of teacher induction from the current one year period to a three-year period. Since induction is a component of the ADEPT system this legislation will have an impact on the ADEPT Guidelines.
Develop the PADEPP Guidelines and present to the SBE for approval Note: The PADEPP Guidelines must be approved by the State Board of Education by June 30, 2014	Approved June 2014	Division of School Effectiveness	Minutes of the SBE meetings  The SBE approved PADEPP Guidelines	Staff time	Staff time to facilitate the development of the Guidelines and ensure the Guidelines meet the requirements of the state's ESEA Flexibility Waiver Request
Appoint and convene an Educator Evaluation work group to network with their constituencies and assist in revising the educator evaluation model, consistent with the approved 2014 Guidelines	Summer 2013 until complete	Division of School Effectiveness	Names of the Educator Evaluation Work Groups will be posted on the SCDE website.	Convene the work group  Staff time to facilitate the work group meetings to guide the development of the revised evaluation model	Staff time
Revise the educator evaluation model consistent with the approved 2014 Guidelines	June 2014– Present	Division of School Effectiveness	Educator Evaluation Progress Reports	Educator Evaluation System materials	Staff time to develop the revised teacher evaluation materials  IT support for the development and management of the upgrades to the ADEPT Data System

Assist LEAs in developing their plans to implement the Revised evaluation models	June 2014 Until Complete	Division of School Effectiveness	Pilot Project Report	Staff time	Building out internal capacity
Implement the revised aspects of the approved Evaluation models. Engage educators to build awareness on the newly approved system and its impact on instructional practices.	August 2014– June 2015	Division of Educator Effectiveness	Evaluation materials published to the SCDE website  Nine regional two-day workshops held Sept–Nov 2014; approximately 1,000 district representatives trained on SLOs.	Funding to districts to support the adoption and implementation of the revised evaluation models	In previous iterations of the ADEPT and PADEPP formal Evaluation models, the state has staggered implementation over a three-year period. Full scale implementation (i.e., all school districts) in a single year will present a major challenge.
Provide technical assistance to LEAs, and monitor the implementation of the valuation and support models	August 2014– June 2015	Division of Educator Effectiveness	Evaluation materials published to the SCDE website End-of-year data reports published to the SCDE website.	Funding to districts to support the adoption and implementation of the revised evaluation models	
Collect, analyze, and report data on teacher and principal performance and effectiveness	August 2014– June 2015	Division of Educator Effectiveness	Evaluation materials published to the SCDE website End-of-year data reports published to the SCDE website.	Funding to districts to support the adoption and implementation of the revised evaluation models	
Inform and provide guidance to local boards of education, boards of directors, boards of trustees, and district offices on using effectiveness ratings to inform personnel decisions	January 2015– June 2016	Division of Educator Effectiveness	Evaluation materials published to the SCDE website.	SCDE Staff Time	
Use new effectiveness ratings to inform personnel decisions	August 2016	LEA personnel administrators	Evaluation materials published to the SCDE website.  New evaluations system data collection and	SCDE staff time  Local district office staff time	Ensuring that the proper supports are in place as district offices and local boards make decisions.

			reporting system.		Assisting educators in understanding how the new evaluation system provides reliable, valid, and fair information on an educator's effectiveness.
--	--	--	-------------------	--	---

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Party Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Significant Obstacles</b>
3.A Develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	Initial Guidelines approved by the SBE, June 2014  Updated Guidelines, March 2015	Office of Educator Evaluation and Effectiveness (OEEE) and SBE	<a href="http://ed.sc.gov/agency/se/Educator-Evaluation/">http://ed.sc.gov/agency/se/Educator-Evaluation/</a>	Guidelines, March 2015  Value-added measures contract awarded to SAS EVAAS and procurement completed.  District and School-wide VAM released Feb. 12, 2015	Observation rubric and online data management system award still pending. Protest ruled valid on February 3, 2015. If contract not awarded in sufficient time, teacher contracts will be awarded without knowledge of evaluation system, violating state law, OR implementation will be delayed.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Party Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Significant Obstacles</b>
3.B Ensure LEAs implement teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	2014–15 value-added measures implemented as “for information only” item. LEAs to conduct Roster Verification in Spring 2015.  2015–16 SLOs and District Choice options to be implemented (request phase in as described above)  2016–17 student growth implemented with all educators	OEEE	Monitoring of observations in online data management system.  Monitoring of District Choice letters of intent submissions.  Monitoring of ADEPT plan completeness and content when submitted in June 2015.  Monitoring of roster verification process for full participation in May 2015.	Nine Regional SLO trainings (2 days each) completed November 7, 2014. All districts participated according to registration/sign-in sheets.  District Choice guidance issued Sept 29, 2014.  Alternative, aligned, district-designed Professional Practice systems to be submitted by June 1 with annual ADEPT Plans.  SLO tool kit March 27, 2015	ADEPT plans must be submitted to the SCDE on June 1, 2015. Given the small size of the Educator Evaluation team, review of these plans may extend into the summer.  SCDE is concerned about capacity of the agency and districts to implement for all schools if a phase in approach is not approved. Educators have new standards, new assessments, and new literacy requirements as well as evaluation



					changes.
--	--	--	--	--	----------

### 3.B ENSURE LEAS IMPLEMENT TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

3.B Provide the SEA’s process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, including mechanisms to review, revise, and improve, high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA’s adopted guidelines.

South Carolina already has a well-tested and validated statewide system for evaluating and supporting teachers (ADEPT) and principals (PADEPP)

Prior to the beginning of the 2013–14 school year, the SCDE piloted with a subgroup of 47 schools from throughout the state using a choice of two observation rubrics (Enhanced ADEPT and SC Teaching Standards) as well as PADEPP formal evaluation models. A contract for a formal, external evaluation was also awarded to the Office of Program Evaluation at the University of South Carolina. As the state works to implement the new evaluation system, the SCDE will work with districts to provide a sound transition so that districts thoroughly understand the new evaluation system, implement the proper supports for the system to have its intended impact on instructional practices, and properly use the educator effectiveness ratings generated by the new system to inform personnel decisions. With 2015–16 implementation, districts may begin to use the additional sources of information as another component of the decision-making process to inform personnel decisions in the 2016–17 school year.

Currently, the SCDE uses several methods to help ensure that school districts follow the prescribed guidelines for evaluating and supporting teachers and principals through ADEPT and PADEPP. To verify the school district’s intent to maintain the fidelity of implementation of the teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, South Carolina requires each school district to submit an annual ADEPT plan and PADEPP assurances.

Because both ADEPT and PADEPP are statewide systems, proposed variations to the standard evaluation models and/or support processes have been rare. However, if a district does propose any changes, the SCDE’s established process requires that the district describe the changes in detail in their ADEPT or PADEPP plan; the SCDE will conduct a comprehensive review of the plan to ensure that the technical criteria for validity, reliability, and maximum freedom from bias have been met and that the district has fully complied with all requirements of the educator evaluation guidelines. The SCDE must approve the district’s plan prior to its implementation.

To help ensure adherence to the evaluation system guidelines, districts are required to enter data annually into the ADEPT Data System (assuming a successful procurement,

beginning in 2016–17, the new data management system will allow districts to report teacher effectiveness on a 4-level scale) and the PADEPP Data System. Based on the data reported by the school districts, the SCDE provides annual district and statewide reports to the SBE.

The March 2015 Guidelines amend reporting requirements to provide data for continuous improvement and support. All districts conduct an evaluation and improvement plan (Expanded ADEPT Guidelines at 32), “including fidelity of implementation, program effectiveness, district strengths in promoting teaching effectiveness; planned changes to increase process effectiveness; and suggestions for continuous improvement of the State systems.”

The SCDE maintains ongoing communications with and technical assistance to the districts regarding the evaluation systems, which helps the agency monitor the fidelity of implementation of the ADEPT and PADEPP systems. Although each district is required to assign ADEPT and PADEPP coordinators, and these are the liaisons who most frequently interact with SCDE staff, other stakeholders—including teachers, principals, superintendents, district personnel administrators, and legal counsel—call SCDE staff for assistance on a regular basis. Additionally, the Division of Educator Effectiveness uses the SCDE website, face-to-face and virtual meetings, and e-mails to communicate information to its stakeholders. The state’s evaluator and trainer trainings further support these technical assistance efforts.

The SCDE invites input and feedback and responds to suggestions regarding ways to improve the ADEPT and PADEPP systems on a continual basis. Formal feedback is solicited in response to the annual ADEPT plans and PADEPP assurances, and informal feedback is obtained via the staff’s frequent stakeholder contacts. By encouraging this ongoing dialogue, the SCDE seeks to ensure district implementation, not out of mere compliance, but rather through the commitment that these evaluation and support systems hold tremendous potential for promoting the effectiveness of teachers and principals, improving the quality of instruction, and improving education for all students in South Carolina.