GEORGIA'S RACE TO THE TOP APPLICATION

Submitted January 19, 2010

Under CFDA No. 84.395A

List of Materials Submitted

Section	Location
Section III. Race to the Top Application Assurances – Signatures	Included separately (original, copy, and on CD)
Section III. Race to the Top Application Assurances - State Attorney General Certification	Included separately (original, copy, and on CD)
Section IV. Accountability, Transparency, Reporting, and Other Assurances and Certifications	Included separately (original, copy, and on CD)
Section VI. Selection Criteria: Progress and Plans in the Four Education Reform Areas	Pages 4-183 of this document
Section VII. Competitive Preference Priority and Invitational Priorities	Pages 184-200 of this document
Section VIII. Budget	Included in the Appendix (separate file on CD) as *Appendix A30: Budget Narrative*. *Appendix A30* also includes the Indirect Cost page (p. 64 of the RFP Notice)
Section IX. Participating LEA Memorandum of Understanding	Included in the Appendix (separate file on CD) as *Appendix A16: Participating LEA Model MOU and Exhibit 1* Note: All MOUs signed by participating LEAs were identical, therefore we only include one example
Section XVIII. Appendix	Included separately (on CD) Contains full table of contents and all appendices A1-A40, B1-B6, C1-C2, D1-D20, E1-E5, F1-F10, STEM Appendix

Table of Contents

(A) State Success Factors (125 total points)

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

The extent to which—

(i) The State has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that clearly articulates its goals for implementing reforms in the four education areas described in the ARRA and improving student outcomes statewide, establishes a clear and credible path to achieving these goals, and is consistent with the specific reform plans that the State has proposed throughout its application; *(5 points)*

(ii) The participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) are strongly committed to the State's plans and to effective implementation of reform in the four education areas, as evidenced by Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) (as set forth in Appendix D)[1] or other binding agreements between the State and its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) that include— *(45 points)*

(a) Terms and conditions that reflect strong commitment by the participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to the State's plans;

(b) Scope-of-work descriptions that require participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to implement all or significant portions of the State's Race to the Top plans; and

(c) Signatures from as many as possible of the LEA superintendent (or equivalent), the president of the local school board (or equivalent, if applicable), and the local teachers' union leader (if applicable) (one signature of which must be from an authorized LEA representative) demonstrating the extent of leadership support within participating LEAs (as defined in this notice); and

(iii) The LEAs that are participating in the State's Race to the Top plans (including considerations of the numbers and percentages of participating LEAs, schools, K-12 students, and students in poverty) will translate into broad statewide impact, allowing the State to reach its ambitious yet achievable goals, overall and by student subgroup, for—*(15 points)*

(a) Increasing student achievement in (at a minimum) reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;

[1] See Appendix D for more on participating LEA MOUs and for a model MOU.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Georgia's existing reform agenda is strongly aligned with Race to the Top Goals (see *Appendix A1: Letter from Governor Perdue to Secretary Duncan*). Georgia is in a position to pivot quickly to accomplish its Race to the Top agenda as it has all the critical foundational elements in place, thanks to the proactive approach the State took to reforming education in the last decade.

(A)(1)(i) Comprehensive and Coherent Reform Agenda with a Clear and Credible Path to Achieve Goals

Georgia's bold vision is to equip all Georgia students, through effective teachers and leaders and through creating the right conditions in Georgia's schools and classrooms, with the knowledge and skills to empower them to 1) Graduate from high school; 2) Be successful in college and/or professional careers, and 3) Be competitive with their peers throughout the United States and the world. The State has a successful track record of reform—which will enable it to get off the launch pad quickly—and a carefully constructed strategic plan to accelerate its progress toward the goals of increased student achievement, decreased achievement gaps among subgroups, increased graduation rates based on rigorous standards, and increased college enrollment rates. Georgia's substantial record of outcomes-based reform, built on strong partnerships with LEAs and other educational stakeholders, and on environments which promote innovation, provides the conditions to enable Georgia to seed and test innovations early through State, district, and school-level actions, refine what works for student outcomes and discard what doesn't, and lead the way for large-scale redesign across the State and the nation.

Creating Conditions for Reform: Aligned Strategic Plans

A mission of this magnitude requires careful planning, collaborative relationships and structures which facilitate cross-agency work, and conditions which support innovation. The leadership of Georgia's educational agencies, businesses, and community stakeholders has set complementary and aligned goals. State leaders have then worked together to ensure that plans to achieve these goals represent best uses of the expertise of each agency, reduce redundancies in the system, and leverage synergies across organizations. Moreover, **State leadership has attended to the often invisible factors of regulatory and cultural environments which can facilitate or impede any significant reform.** In recent years, the State's educational leaders have reached a clear consensus on what goals and actions matter most for student achievement. The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and State Board of Education (SBOE) started developing GaDOE's strategic plan (SP) in 2003 with the vision of "Leading the Nation in Improving Student Achievement." In 2005 collaborative planning was significantly strengthened when Governor Perdue formed the Alliance of Education Agency Heads (Alliance), made up of the CEOs of the State's seven educational agencies and chaired by State School Superintendent Kathy Cox. Governor Perdue charged the Alliance with collaborating on

policies and programs to prepare Georgia's next generation—from Pre-K to PhD—for the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century. (See *Appendix A2: Organizational Structure of Education in Georgia*). When the Alliance finalized its priority goals in 2006, the GaDOE adopted those five goals and added a sixth agency-specific goal (related to academic and financial accountability). Details are provided in *Appendix A3: GaDOE Strategic Plan.* The SP drives the GaDOE's budget, policy, and strategy decisions, and the GaDOE makes the SP goals, strategies, and initiatives with their corresponding outcome data publicly available on its website to provide transparency and accountability of the GaDOE to all stakeholders. The goals of the State's educational agencies, as stated below, are well aligned with the goals and core strategies of Race to the Top (RT3), as illustrated in *Appendix A4: Alignment Map among Goals of RT3 and GaDOE Strategic Plan*:

- **Goal 1:** Increase the high school graduation rate, decrease the high-school drop-out rate, and increase postsecondary enrollment and success;
- **Goal 2:** Strengthen teacher quality, recruitment, and retention;
- **Goal 3:** Improve workforce readiness skills;
- **Goal 4:** Develop strong education leaders, particularly at the building level;
- **Goal 5:** Improve the SAT, ACT, and achievement scores of Georgia students;
- **Goal 6 (specific to GaDOE):** Make policies that ensure maximum academic and financial accountability.

Georgia embraced the RT3 reform agenda long before RT3 became a national initiative. Both Governor Perdue and State Superintendent Cox have taken on highly visible leadership roles in the national forum, especially in the area of Standards and Assessments, and have contributed immensely to Georgia's status as a reform-oriented, innovative and outcomes-driven state. Georgia's current work in the four assurance areas places the State in the forefront of change in the nation and positions it for quick acceleration. **As Governor Perdue puts it, "Culturally, emotionally, we are prepared to take the next step, and that's to innovate and to create new ideas and new ways of educating students that will have an improved outcome."** RT3 funding will provide an opportunity to strengthen the State's momentum and to take reforms to a larger scale than currently possible with limited State resources.

Creating Conditions for Reform: Facilitating Innovation and Building Partnerships

Georgia has established an outcomes-based environment which helps the State seed and then scale innovative practices, while leveraging the creativity of on-the-ground practitioners. Georgia encourages innovation through a) proactive charter school laws, b) provisions for alternative routes to teacher certification, and c) Investing in Educational Excellence (IE^2) performance contracts that provide increased flexibility to school districts in return for improved achievement outcomes above and beyond NCLB requirements. These innovations are tested on the ground and assessed based on their impact on student outcomes. In many ways, Georgia is a think-tank for education policy: testing, launching, and scaling up creative solutions to systemic problems. The State also recognizes that teamwork is mission-critical for comprehensive reform of education. **The State has a history of successful joint ventures** among its state education agencies, LEAs, business, and philanthropic organizations and has built key collaborative structures and partnerships to facilitate its ambitious Reform Agenda.

- **The Alliance of Education Agency Heads (Alliance)** includes not only the leaders of Georgia's seven state education agencies but implementation teams which include agency senior staff, the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, Georgia's Workforce Investment Board, Governor's Office of Workforce Development, Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Georgia Chamber of Commerce, Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) and Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement. A full-time Director of Implementation coordinates the Alliance's work. The Alliance structure provides the umbrella for intersecting work toward the State's educational goals.
- **The Joint Education Boards Liaison Committee**, with representatives from each of the state's Education Boards, and the Alliance, have joined to work together with one common education vision for the state.
- **GaDOE Advisory Boards** ensure ongoing collaboration with and feedback from the field. Superintendent Cox relies heavily on four **Advisory Committees** (for Teachers, Principals, Students, and Superintendents) to inform GaDOE initiatives and policy and on **Content Advisory Committees** (which include K-12 educators and higher education faculty) to enhance content and content delivery in core subjects.

- The **Local Board Advisory Committee** was convened in 2009 by SBOE Chair Wanda Barrs to address standards for local boards with regard to ethics and operations in response to a push for greater accountability for local school boards.
- **K-12/Higher Education Partnerships** have played critical roles in work which falls in the intersections between K-12 and higher education. Georgia has a strong history of partnerships between LEAs and its two systems of public higher education, the University System of Georgia and Technical College System of Georgia. Georgia's reform plans will continue to leverage these partnerships, which have contributed substantively to the State's progress. See *Appendix A5: K-12/Higher Ed partnerships.*
- **Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs):** A network of RESAs across the State provides professional learning on best practices, offers content support for districts, and supports the work of the GaDOE with schools in NI status. RESAs focus on building capacity of member districts to improve student achievement especially in rural/remote LEAs that lack capacity to provide these services themselves.
- **Strategic Partnerships with leading reform and capacity-building organizations.** The state is deepening partnerships with nationally known external partners, including Teach for America, The New Teacher Project, and UTeach, to bolster state-level and district capacity for reform and to strengthen the pipeline of effective teachers, most notably in the areas of math and science.

Creating Conditions for Reform: Georgia Positioned for Immediate Implementation

Georgia has done more than develop goals and plans—it has already begun the important work of reform. The State's leadership has removed regulatory barriers to innovation, developed organizational infrastructures to support change, and has already made substantive progress in the four education areas described in the ARRA. **Most importantly, Georgia's deployment of key reform strategies is moving the needle on student achievement in the State, with increases in the graduation rate, NAEP mathematics and language arts scores, and the State's Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCTs) and concurrent decreases in student achievement gaps.** See Section (A) (3) for further detail. Many reform strategies have been tested and proven effective for student outcomes and are ready for scale-up. Some strategies have proven ineffective and have been discarded. Participation in RT3 will allow the State to accelerate implementation of successful

strategies while providing the impetus to jumpstart innovative strategies, some of which have been tabled due to lack of resources. Successful reforms which indicate that Georgia is on the right trajectory are summarized below and described in further detail under assurance sections.

Georgia's Reform Agenda: Set High Standards and Rigorous Assessments for All—Leading to College and Career Readiness

Georgia believes in setting high standards, expecting **every** child to achieve them, measuring performance, and providing supports to help all children succeed. In only a few years the State has moved from laggard to national leader in standards and assessment work. Since 2002, Georgia has abandoned weak standards in favor of high performance standards coupled with rigorous assessments, jettisoned its tiered diploma system in favor of graduation requirements which ensure that all students graduate college and career ready, and taken a lead role in national standards efforts, including the Common Core State Standards Initiative.

- **Georgia Performance Standards (GPS).** Since 2002, when a Phi Delta Kappa audit concluded that Georgia's curriculum was too shallow and too wide—and did not even meet national standards—Georgia has moved to the front of the standards movement with the development and implementation of the K-12 GPS, now one of the top-rated curricula in the nation. See Section (A) (3).
- **Rigorous, Robust, and Aligned Assessments.** Georgia's key assessments—the CRCTs, Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHSGT), and End-of-Course Tests (EOCTs)—were redeveloped upon adoption of the GPS, were implemented consistent with the GPS phase-in plan, and have undergone a successful peer review by the US ED. See Section (A) (3) for detail and *Appendix A6: Letter from US ED Peer Review of Georgia's Assessments.*
- **Participation in Key National Initiatives.** Because of Georgia's aggressive development and implementation of rigorous standards, the State has positioned itself as a leader in several national standards initiatives, including the **Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI),** t**he American Diploma Project (ADP),** and the **College and Career-Ready Policy Institute (CCRPI).** See Section (A) (3) for more detail.
- **High School Graduation Rule.** In 2007, the SBOE approved a new Graduation Rule with one set of college and career-ready requirements for **all** students. As partners throughout the development of the new rule, the University System of Georgia (USG)

changed its admissions requirements to align with the new rule, and the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) endorsed the rule. The new requirements, which went into effect for first-time ninth graders in the 2008-2009 school year, replaced Georgia's "tiered" diploma system, which had four different sets of requirements and allowed many students to graduate with minimal requirements in core subject areas and only three units of science and mathematics. The new requirements are for all students to complete a total of 23 units for graduation, including four units of mathematics, English, and science, and three units of social studies. The Graduation Rule also provides for additional content courses, electives, accelerated options, and career-focused courses. See *Appendix A7: Georgia's New Graduation Requirements.*

Georgia's Reform Agenda: College Readiness, Transition, and Success

Once students are ready for college, the State encourages college enrollment and success by offering scholarships, providing a one-stop portal to help students and families plan, pay for, and apply to college, and encouraging Advanced Placement and dual enrollment options which allow students to earn college credit while still in high school.

- **Georgia Academic-Based HOPE (Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally) Scholarship.** Once students have succeeded in high school, the State continues to encourage their academic achievement in postsecondary education through the lottery-funded HOPE Scholarship Program. Eligible students seeking a college degree from a USG or TCSG institution may receive HOPE Scholarship funds covering the full cost of tuition, certain HOPE-approved mandatory fees, and a book allowance of up to $100 per quarter or $150 per semester. The ACCEL program under HOPE provides tuition, certain fees, and a book allowance for students at eligible high schools who wish to take college level coursework for credit towards both high school and college graduation requirements. HOPE grants are also available for high school students who are dually enrolled in TCSG institutions. The HOPE Scholarship is merit-based, with specific academic and standardized 3.0 grade point average requirements. In FY09, 216,227 Georgia students received a total of $552.7 million in HOPE Scholarships. Georgia's HOPE Scholarship Program helps place it among the top five states in the nation in student grant aid on a per capita basis, on undergraduate grant dollars compared to undergraduate full time

equivalent enrollment, and on proportion of total expenditures for state-funded grants compared to appropriations for higher education operating expenditures.[2]

- **GACollege411.** To better meet all the needs of Georgians thinking about college, the State provides www.GAcollege411.org, a free comprehensive online resource to help Georgians throughout the process of planning, applying, and paying for college. Launched by Governor Perdue in February 2005, GAcollege411 helps students explore careers, prepare for the SAT and ACT, compare Georgia colleges, apply for college admission, research and apply for federal and state financial aid. An online application features allows students to fill out one electronic application to send to multiple colleges and to apply electronically for financial aid, including HOPE scholarships and grants. Through State resources and $1.2 million from Georgia's College Access Challenge Grant, the site was upgraded in 2009. Enhancements include 1) redesigned look and feel and better navigation; 2) updated and improved career planning tools; 3) information and resources for middle grades teachers, students, and their parents to help plan their Peach State Pathways curriculum; 4) volunteer resources for the public to use to help increase college participation; 5) resources for middle grades students; and 6) improved resources for adult students. GACollege411 is provided by the Georgia Student Finance Commission.
- **Dual Enrollment Options which allow students to complete college credit while still in high school.** Georgia provides an array of postsecondary options for students who wish to get a head start on college while still in high school. The Alliance has played an active role in promoting such options. Some of these options are available to all students while others are provided within the context of particular school models such as Career Academies and Early Colleges, which are innovative partnerships between local school systems and IHEs, and schools with International Baccalaureate (IB) programs. Early Colleges allow underrepresented students to graduate from high school having earned an Associate's Degree or up to two years of college credit towards a Bachelor's degree. In addition, students may apply for admission to Advanced Academies and the Georgia Academy of Aviation, Engineering, and Science (GAMES), which are residential, early-entrance-to-college programs for gifted and talented high school students. The State also provides financing options for students in "dual enrollment" programs (where they are actually enrolled in an IHE). These include the

2 2007-2008 Annual Report, National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs

ACCEL and HOPE grants referenced above as well as funding through new "Move On When Ready" legislation. See Section (F) (3) for detail. The number of schools offering IB programs is steadily rising in Georgia which now has 54 IB sites and is among nine states with the highest number of IB programs. The IB Programme lists Georgia as one of seven states nationally with supportive IB policies, including IB exam fee subsidies, favorable admissions and credit policies at state universities based on IB diploma or certificate exam scores, and IB courses recognized as meeting high school graduation requirements. The State has also increased participation and success in Advanced Placement programs, which are described below.

- **Advanced Placement (AP).** Georgia has increased participation in AP programs, diversity of AP test-takers, and success on AP exams. The State provides funding for **all** students to take one AP exam per year and for economically-disadvantaged students to take **each** of their AP exams. The State has further increased access to AP courses by training nearly 400 teachers through AP Teacher Quality Training Grants and sponsoring regional, STEM-focused workshops for AP teachers. In the 2007-2008 school year, Georgia ranked 9th in the nation in terms of overall AP course participation rate (30.3% vs. nation's average of 25%) and 15th in the nation in terms of success on AP exams (16.3% of exam takers scored 3 or higher on an AP exam vs. nation's average of 15.2%). Just under 25,000 Georgia students from the public high school class of 2008 took at least one AP exam in 2007-08, a 13% increase over the previous year. Just under 5,500 African-American public school students in Georgia took at least one AP exam during high school in 2007-08. This number represents more than 22% of all AP exam takers in Georgia and more than 9% of all public school African-American test-takers nationwide. **10.5% of Georgia's African-American high school seniors scored 3 or higher on at least one AP exam. That is third in the nation, and seven points higher than the national average.** Hispanic AP exam takers represented 5.5 % (1,339) of Georgia's all AP exam takers and 6.1% of examinees with at least one AP exam score higher than 3, higher than Georgia's overall Hispanic student population (4.9 % of total population). See *Appendix A8: AP Participation and Scores—Georgia vs. Nation.*

Georgia's Reform Agenda: Data Systems to Support Instruction

Georgia has made important strides with respect to its Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) which now contains all 12 American COMPETES Act elements [detail provided in Section (C) (1)]. The State has recently been awarded $8.9 million under the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems grant and has submitted a proposal for a 2009 IES Longitudinal Data System grant under the ARRA. The State is fully committed to improving its SLDS by extending its reach into postsecondary education and creating a robust, user-friendly, and automated reporting system.

- **Participation in the Teacher-Student Data Link Project (TSDL).** The TSDL Project, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and conducted by the Center for Educational Leadership and Technology (CELT) with guidance and dissemination support from the Data Quality Campaign (DQC), is a five-state effort charged with developing a common, best practice definition for teacher of record and business process for collecting and validating the linked teacher and student data. **The Project will assist Georgia in identifying a common definition for teacher of record, and ways of improving the commonality, quality, and use of the data that the state has amassed.** These improvements will include the creation of business requirements for a prototype application teachers will use to validate their student rosters and a pilot implementation of the prototype application.

Georgia's Reform Agenda: Great Teachers and Leaders

Consistent with its vision, Georgia is working to ensure that all students have access to effective teachers and leaders by: (1) improving overall conditions of teaching and learning; (2) improving the quality of current teachers in the classroom and current school leaders; and (3) increasing the pipeline of highly effective teachers, especially in critical needs subjects, and highly effective principals who are capable of creating a culture of reform and change in their buildings.

- **Classroom Analysis of State Standards (CLASS Keys) Teacher Evaluation System**

  The State has committed significant resources to studying and developing assessment tools which help guide educator development with the goal of all educators becoming highly effective. The CLASS Keys teacher performance appraisal process was developed to

support teachers' work in standards-based classrooms using the GPS to improve student learning. The CLASS Keys' purpose is twofold: improvement and accountability. The CLASS Keys are part of an integrated and comprehensive system of education reform, which ties together the performance standards expected of teachers, leaders (Leader Keys), and schools (School Keys). See Section (A) (3) for further detail and *Appendix A9: CLASS Keys Framework.*

- **Alternative Certification Pathways for Teachers**

  Recognizing that teacher quality is highly dependent on a robust teacher pipeline, Georgia has been reducing barriers to entry into the teaching profession since the first alternative certification law was passed in 2000 and now has some of the most flexible alternative certification regulations in the nation. In 2002, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) initiated a statewide alternative certification program with guidelines for implementation and named the program the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (GaTAPP). Today there are a total of 27 PSC-approved GaTAPP providers who prepare just under 22% of the new teachers in the state. See Section (D) (1) for detail and *Appendix A10: Sources of New Teachers in Georgia.* Georgia has also developed a plan to create an alternative certification pathway for principals. See Section (D) (3) for detail.

Georgia's Reform Agenda: Effective Support for All Schools, Including Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools

Student success ultimately drives the State's efforts. The State begins by asking some critical questions about its students: Who are they? What are their backgrounds, culture, socioeconomic status, needs? Where have they succeeded and where do they need help? Based on the answers to these questions, the State advocates a portfolio approach to school improvement which differentiates among the needs of students and the contexts and capacity of LEAs, and works to create the "right" set of schools under the "right" circumstances. In some cases, the right school may be a charter school or another innovative model, which focuses on the needs and/strengths of specific student populations. In other cases, the State provides supports to the LEA targeted at specific student subgroups or students with a particular interest, need, or ability. And in the case of the lowest-achieving schools, the State intervenes early and intensively. Whatever actions are taken, the State holds to tight standards while encouraging innovation, monitoring outcomes, and stepping in with support when needed.

- **Active Support for Charter Schools with No Charter School Cap.** Georgia **proactively supports charter schools** as a critical component in its efforts to maximize access to a wide variety of high-quality educational options for all students regardless of disability, race, or socioeconomic status, including those students who have struggled in a traditional public school setting. The State has 121 currently approved charter schools and has no charter school cap. Further detail is provided in Section (F) (2). Georgia also supports innovation through **Investing in Educational Excellence (IE^2)** performance contracts, which provide increased flexibility to school districts in return for increased accountability. See Section (F) (3).
- **Georgia Virtual School.** The Georgia Virtual School (GAVS) is an on-line educational program designed to meet the needs of students throughout the state by offering 1) traditional school courses which include the four core content area courses, Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE), several World Languages, and 12 different Advanced Placement courses, and 2) the Credit Recovery (CR) program which allows students who retake academic courses and pass to regain credit for a previously failed course. GAVS has been highly successful, as evidenced by 2009 results: 9,057 students registered for CR this fall, and pass rates for GAVS students are higher than the state average for GAVS students in almost all courses that require an end-of-course test.
- **Graduation Coaches.** The Graduation Coach Program, initiated in the 2006-2007 school year, supports the placement of a graduation coach in Georgia public high schools and was expanded in 2007-2008 to include coaches in middle schools. Graduation coaches work intensively with case loads of students most at risk of not graduating based on key indicators in the student's record and steer them towards a path to graduation. Graduation coaches are an integral and innovative part of Georgia's support system for all students and play critical roles in Georgia's increased graduation rates. Since the program's inception, the high school graduation rate has risen from 71% to 78% while the dropout rate has declined.
- **Career, Technical, and Adult Education (CTAE).** Georgia's CTAE program helps students make the all-important link between the "what" of schoolwork and the "why" for their personal lives. **CTAE creates a direct connection between secondary school education and industries identified by the Governor's Strategic Industries and Innovation Centers Initiative as key to Georgia's future economic well-being.** CTAE's Peach State Pathways provide all students with the opportunity to select at least three

sequenced electives in a career pathway along with recommended academic coursework to prepare them to continue their education at any level or enter the world of work. Most high-demand, high-skilled, high-wage occupations in all Pathways still require education beyond high school. Accordingly, TCSG and USG institutions collaborate with local systems in implementation of career pathways. In FY08, **56%** of all middle school and **64%** of all high school students were enrolled in CTAE courses, and **92%** of CTAE Concentrators who took the GHSGT met or exceeded state standards in English/Language Arts.

- **Georgia Work-Ready Program.** The State is a nationally-recognized leader in workforce development. The Georgia Work-Ready Program, led by the Governor's Office of Workforce Development, has played a key role in increasing the graduation rate by creating for students a clear pathway from diploma to careers. Georgia citizens have earned 70,641, or 24% of the nation's Work Ready Certificates (WRCs), assessments which measure both core skills and work habits and are powered by ACT's nationally-accredited WorkKeys® system. Georgia's Work-Ready Program also includes a job profiling system for employers, and boasts 433 businesses using WRCs for this purpose. Georgia's Certified Work Ready Community initiative recognizes counties as Work Ready when the workforce has earned a threshold number of WRCs and graduation rates have improved. Twenty-two counties (out of 159) have already earned the certification, and there are 139 Work Ready Communities in Progress. Georgia was recently awarded $1.4 million in federal stimulus funds in support of the program.
- **Improving Schools through Differentiated Accountability and Georgia Assessment of Progress on School Standards.** To create the right conditions in Georgia's schools and classrooms for all students, Georgia proactively monitors school and student performance and provides a statewide graduated system of support options based on the Needs Improvement (NI) level of the school. The State's commitment to improving schools and intervening early led to its selection by the US Department of Education **to pilot a Differentiated Accountability (DA) system, which allows Georgia to vary the intensity and type of interventions to match the academic reasons that led to a school's NI identification and to target "resources and interventions to those schools most in need of intensive interventions and significant reform"** (US ED, 2008). See *Appendix A11: Georgia's Differentiated Accountability Approach* for an outline of changes to Georgia's Single Statewide Accountability System as a result of the DA pilot. In a December

2009 report published by the Center on Educational Policy,[3] Georgia was highlighted for its policy on restructuring of schools in the most severe status of NI levels 5 and above. At its November meeting, the SBOE and Superintendent Cox recognized 17 of these State-Directed schools for being removed from NI status and doing what once seemed impossible—making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) two years in a row. The foundation for all school interventions is a data-driven assessment of school performance and student needs, done collaboratively by a 6-8 member State turnaround team and the LEA, and known as the **Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards Analysis (GAPSS).** GAPSS is a highly-regarded strategic diagnostic, an alternative to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) diagnostic. A GAPSS assessment systematically determines strengths and weaknesses of a school regarding the Georgia School Keys (standards for schools) and lays out a roadmap for improvement. The GAPSS process, which includes follow-up monitoring and support by a State team, has been successful in pulling low-achieving schools out of NI status and enjoys wide support from the field, with educators praising the collaborative approach of the State and with many schools voluntarily choosing to participate in the GAPSS process. Participation in GAPSS is mandatory for State-Directed schools in NI levels five and above. Since the mandatory GAPSS were first conducted in SY06, the process has an impressive record of success: 67 of 91 schools (74%) have made AYP following a mandatory GAPSS Analysis; 51% (34) of schools that made AYP came off the NI list. See *Appendix A12: GAPSS Results.*

Georgia's Reform Agenda: Lead the Way in STEM Fields

In the mid 1950s, the space race was on, and America's aggressive funding, recruitment, and education programs enabled the U.S. to pull even and then take the lead in international efforts to explore our newest frontier. The race is on once again, and in 2008, the stakes are dramatically higher. America stands to lose its competitive edge and fall short in today's globally connected economy. Recognizing the economic repercussions of falling behind in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, Georgia promotes an aggressive STEM agenda to ensure

3 *Improving Low Performing Schools: Lessons from Five Years of Studying School Restructuring under No Child Left Behind (NCLB),* Center on Educational Policy, December 2009

that its students are proficient in STEM fields—and equipped to be nationally and internationally competitive. Georgia is home to the Georgia Institute of Technology and other universities with strong STEM programs, is an incubator for STEM-related businesses, and is the site of the nationally recognized Partnership for Reform in Science and Mathematics (PRISM) project, sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF). Georgia's focus on STEM is also evidenced by its world class performance standards in science and mathematics, its adoption of four mathematics and four science courses as graduation requirements, and its proactive strategies to increase the number of effective science and mathematics teachers.

- **Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) Mathematics and Science Curriculum.** The most innovative changes in the GPS occurred in mathematics, where curriculum committees utilized National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), Japan, and Singapore standards as models to create an integrated approach to all of mathematics, but in particular to high school mathematics. The GPS for mathematics have been designed to achieve a **balance** among concepts, skills, and problem solving. For example, Mathematics I at the secondary level incorporates algebra, geometry, and statistics. The curriculum, closely aligned with standards of the NCTM, American Statistical Association, Achieve, and the College Board, stresses rigorous concept development, presents realistic and relevant tasks, and keeps a strong emphasis on computational skills. Georgia is one of only six states in the nation with an integrated high school mathematics curriculum and the only state which mandates it. The science GPS was developed using the *Benchmarks for Science Literacy* by the American Association for the Advancement of Science and received high marks from the Fordham Foundation for its treatment of scientific concepts.
- **Science Mentor Program/Math Mentor Program.** In response to poor science achievement on the GHSGT, the GaDOE developed the Science Mentor Program (SMP) in 2005 and received $2 million in funding from the Georgia General Assembly. The SMP employs practicing science teachers who have demonstrated understanding of inquiry methods and the GPS as Science Implementation Specialists (SIS). In 2005, seventeen SIS were deployed, mostly in rural, economically challenged areas where teachers had the least access to content-rich support. The SIS mentored and coached struggling science teachers, provided support for science teachers, and built capacity throughout the state by establishing teacher leaders within each participating school. SIS worked with 122 of Georgia's

375 high schools in the first year of the program and contributed to the 25% drop in the number of high schools where students underperformed on the GHSGT in science (defined as <70% students passing). Despite a difficult budget environment, the State continues to invest in the SMP, albeit at a reduced rate (10 vs. 17 SIS). The State has also invested in 5 Math Mentors, patterned after the Science Mentor program.

- **Attracting the Best Teachers into the Profession: Differentiated Pay for Effective Mathematics and Science Teachers.** Georgia's aggressive reforms in STEM have increased the urgency of filling critical shortages of qualified mathematics and science teachers. The Alliance created the Math and Science Task Force in 2008 to explore realistic and affordable strategies to increase the number of math and science teachers in Georgia. Noting that Georgia's student enrollment is expected to grow (Georgia is the 3rd fastest growing state in the Nation), that the new high school graduation requirements represent needed and positive change, and that the move to an integrated mathematics program at the secondary level has tremendous potential to positively impact student achievement, the Task Force nevertheless concluded that the changes will significantly impact the teaching workforce, exacerbating current shortages: "the most troubling aspect of this situation is that it will worsen dramatically, unless aggressive and immediate action is taken." The Task Force made eight specific recommendations (see *Appendix A13: Alliance Math and Science Task Force Recommendations*)—related to differentiated pay, increased alternative routes to certification, service cancelable loans for prospective math and science teachers, increased educator preparation programs, and use of technology to support certification and instruction—and state leaders moved quickly to act on seven of these. To address the differentiated pay recommendation, the General Assembly passed House Bill 280 (See *Appendix A14: HB 280*) which provides for new secondary STEM teachers to be jumped on the state salary schedule to a step applicable to that of teachers with six years of service, and for K-5 teachers who receive an endorsement in mathematics, science, or both to receive a stipend of $1,000 per year per endorsement. Additional Task Force recommendations were not moved forward primarily due to funding constraints.
- **Partnership for Reform in Science and Mathematics (PRISM).** PRISM, funded by the NSF, created partnerships among USG universities and 15 LEAs to increase student achievement in science and mathematics, close achievement gaps, and increase the

responsiveness of higher education science and mathematics faculties to the needs of schools. PRISM districts showed clear evidence of success: 1) greater improvement on state achievement tests than for comparable districts; 2) reduction in the Black-White achievement gap in mathematics and science while gaps in comparable districts stayed the same or grew larger; 3) improved percentages of students meeting or exceeding the state average on the GHSGT in science and mathematics; and 4) increased percentage of students taking advanced high school mathematics and science courses. The A, B, C pass rates in college core mathematics and science courses at PRISM institutions were greater than the USG average pass rates. To extend PRISM work, the USG has launched a STEM Initiative to aggressively increase the pipeline of STEM majors, graduates, and teachers. PRISM has increased State capacity by providing tested strategies such as a STEM Teacher Leader program, a STEM public awareness campaign aimed toward parents and students, K-16 STEM learning communities, and a "Work in Schools Policy" which rewards college faculty who contribute to K-12 school improvement and/or teacher preparation.

- **K-12 STEM Advisory Taskforce.** The GaDOE convened the K-12 STEM Advisory Taskforce to identify major issues and barriers involved with STEM education and to recommend possible solutions. The *K-12 STEM Recommendations and Action Plan*, released July 7, 2009, includes action steps to develop real world tasks connecting the GPS and STEM, a clearinghouse/website for STEM curricular resources and activities, a targeted STEM awareness campaign, STEM-specific professional learning for certification renewal, and STEM specialty schools (see *Appendix A15: K-12 STEM Recommendations and Action Plan*).

(A)(1)(ii) <u>The Role of LEAs in enacting Georgia's Reform Agenda</u>

a) Terms and conditions reflect strong commitment by the participating LEAs. LEAs in Georgia have shown very strong support for Georgia's bold reform agenda. 23 LEAs (or 12.7% of all LEAs) have entered into binding RT3 Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the State. As evidenced by the detailed MOU and accompanying Exhibit (see *Appendix A16: Participating LEA Model MOU and Exhibit 1*), the terms and conditions reflect strong commitment by the Participating LEAs to implement the State's plan.

b) Scope-of-work descriptions require participating LEAs to implement all or significant portions of State's RT3 reforms. Georgia has high confidence in its ability to implement RT3 reforms, as **participating LEAs have signed on to all components of the RT3 reform agenda** (the 13 participating LEAs that have lowest-achieving schools are signing on to implement all portions of the State's RT3 plans; the other 10 LEAs are signing on to the State's plan in the reform areas of Standards and Assessments, Data Systems to Support Instruction, and Great Teachers and Leaders). See Evidence Table 1 below and also Evidence Table 2 on the next page.

Evidence Table 1: Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(b)

Elements of State Reform Plans	Number of LEAs Participating (#)	Percentage of Total Participating LEAs (%)
B. Standards and Assessments		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	23	100%
C. Data Systems to Support Instruction		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction:		
(i) Use of local instructional improvement systems	23	100%
(ii) Professional development on use of data	23	100%
(iii) Availability and accessibility of data to researchers	23	100%
D. Great Teachers and Leaders		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance:		
(i) Measure student growth	23	100%
(ii) Design and implement evaluation systems	23	100%
(iii) Conduct annual evaluations	23	100%
(iv)(a) Use evaluations to inform professional development	23	100%
(iv)(b) Use evaluations to inform compensation, promotion and retention	23	100%
(iv)(c) Use evaluations to inform tenure and/or full certification	23	100%
(iv)(d) Use evaluations to inform removal	23	100%
(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals:		
(i) High-poverty and/or high-minority schools	23	100%
(ii) Hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	23	100%
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals:		
(i) Quality professional development	23	100%
(ii) Measure effectiveness of professional development	23	100%
E. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	13 *	57% [100%] *

* 13 of the 23 LEAs have schools on the lowest-achieving schools list. All 13 of those LEAs (or 100%) have signed on to implement the (E) (2) criterion.

Evidence Table 2: Detailed Table for (A)(1)

	LEA Demographics			Signatures on MOUs			MOU Terms	Preliminary Scope of Work – Participation in each applicable Plan Criterion																
Participating LEAs	# of Schools	# of K-12 Students	# of K-12 Students in Poverty	LEA Supt. (or equivalent)	President of local school board (if applicable)	President of Local Teachers Union (if applicable)	Uses Standard Terms & Conditions?	(B)(3)	(C)(3)(i)	(C)(3)(ii)	(C)(3) (iii)	(D)(2) (i)	(D)(2) (ii)	(D)(2) (iii)	(D)(2)(iv)(a)	(D)(2)(iv)(b)	(D)(2)(iv)(c)	(D)(2) (iv)(d)	(D)(3)(i)	(D)(3)(ii)	(D)(5)(i)	(D)(5)(ii)	(E)(2)	
Atlanta	104	47,944	37,962	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Ben Hill	4	3,158	2,507	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Bibb	41	24,449	19,252	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Burke	5	4,438	3,973	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Carrolton	4	4,270	2,270	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	
Chatham	52	33,230	24,182	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Cherokee	36	37,796	10,684	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	
Clayton	62	49,381	40,366	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	
DeKalb	140	96,678	68,328	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Dougherty	26	15,838	12,909	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Gainesville	7	6,296	5,031	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	
Gwinnett	119	158,438	79,468	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	
Hall	34	25,658	14,690	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	
Henry	51	40749	17,985	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	
Jones	8	5,368	2378	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Meriwether	8	3,092	2,689	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Muscogee	56	31,337	19,952	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Rabun	5	2,301	1,480	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	
Richmond	57	31,241	23,450	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Rockdale	18	15,526	9,449	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	
Spalding	18	10,419	7,555	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Valdosta	9	7,422	5,894	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
White	7	3,851	2,075	Y	Y	N/A	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	
Total	**871**	**658,880**	**414,529**	**23**	**23**		**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**23**	**13**	

NOTE: If not legible, please refer to *Appendix A17: Detailed Table for (A)(1)*

c) Signatures from as many as possible of the applicable signatories. All 23 Participating LEAs have provided the two signatures that are required on the MOU—the signature of the LEA superintendent and the signature of the president of the local school board. Since Georgia is a right-to-work state and since LEAs do not employ teachers who are represented by a teachers' union, the signature of the local teachers' union leader is not applicable in the case of Georgia.[4] See Evidence Table 3 below.

Evidence Table 3: Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(c)

Signatures acquired from participating LEAs: Number of Participating LEAs with all applicable signatures			
	Number of Signatures Obtained (#)	**Number of Signatures Applicable (#)**	**Percentage (%) (Obtained / Applicable)**
LEA Superintendent (or equivalent)	23	23	100%
President of Local School Board (or equivalent, if applicable)	23	23	100%
Local Teachers' Union Leader (if applicable)	N/A	N/A	N/A

(A)(1)(iii) Broad Statewide Impact through LEA Participation – Allows State to Reach Ambitious Yet Achievable Goals

As shown in Evidence Table 4 below, 23 LEAs or 12.7% of all Georgia LEAs have self-selected to enter into binding MOUs with the State of Georgia to support the implementation of the State's RT3 plans. **These 23 LEAs represent 871 schools (38% of all schools), 659K students (41% of all students), and 46K teachers (40% of all teachers). Among the students are over 414K students in poverty or 46% of the state total, 327K African-American students or 52% of the state total, and 90K Hispanic students or 48% of the state total.** The LEAs represent a very diverse mix of districts, ranging from small systems to very large systems, from urban to rural, with wide representation from across the State of Georgia. The 23 LEAs also account for 34 lowest-achieving schools (or 55% of all lowest-achieving schools identified by RT3 working committees). Georgia is very pleased with the response rate to its invitation to LEAs to participate in RT3 reforms, and with the broad representation of students through the Participating LEAs. Also, refer to Evidence Table 2 on page 22.

4 Per answer to Question K-17 from the Race to the Top Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions, Addendum 3, issued December 24, 2009.

Evidence Table 4: Summary Table for (A)(1)(iii)

	Participating LEAs (#)	Total Statewide (#)	Percentage of Total Statewide (%) (Participating LEAs / Statewide)
LEAs	23	181	12.7%
Schools	871	2,266	38.4%
K-12 Students	658,880	1,625,745	40.5%
Students in poverty 5	414,529	911,393	45.5%

Appendix A18: Evidence Table 5 / State Goals without RT3 illustrates how the State envisions its goals related to: increasing student achievement (in reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and on CRCTs, the assessments required under the ESEA), reducing student achievement gaps, and increasing high school graduation rates. *Appendix A19: Evidence Table 6 / State Goals with RT3* shows the impact of Participating LEAs on strengthening these goals and making them more ambitious.

a) Impact of LEA Participation on Increasing Student Achievement on NAEP and ESEA Assessments (CRCTs):

- Georgia has kept NAEP goals the same "with RT3" as "without RT3." By design, NAEP results are not available at the school and system levels (other than system level results for those participating in TUDA). According to NAEP's website, "Because NAEP is a large-group assessment, each student takes only a small part of the overall assessment. In most schools, only a small portion of the total grade enrollment is selected to take the assessment, and these students may not reliably or validly represent the total school population. Only when the student scores are aggregated at the state or national level, are the data considered reliable and valid estimates of what students know and can do in the content area; consequently, school- or student-level results are never reported." Because of this lack of data, Georgia has not set performance targets at the system or school levels for systems partnering with the State in Race to the Top.

5 The "students in poverty" measure is the number of children ages 5 through 17 in poverty counted in the most recent census data approved by the Secretary, the number of children eligible for free and reduced priced lunches under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act"

- Reading CRCT: In critical grades (third, fifth and eighth), Georgia already has a high rate of student achievement with 93% to 96% of students (depending on grade level) meeting or exceeding standards in 2008-09. Georgia is projecting that, with RT3 reforms, it will grow overall student achievement by 3 percentage points in third and fifth grades and by 1 point in eighth grade.
- Language Arts CRCT: In 2008-09, Georgia students performed at 87%, 91% and 92% (percent meets and exceeds) in third, fifth and eighth grades respectively. Georgia is projecting that, with RT3 reforms, it will grow overall student achievement by 7 points in third grade, 4 points in fifth grade, and 3 points in eighth grade.
- Math CRCT: In 2008-09, Georgia students performed at 78%, 87% and 80% (percent meets and exceeds) in third, fifth and eighth grades respectively, indicating that there is more room for improvement. Georgia is projecting that, with RT3 reforms, it will grow overall student achievement in mathematics by 8 points in third grade and by 5 points in fifth and eighth grades.
- Science CRCT: In 2008-09, Georgia students performed at 80%, 76% and 64% (percent meets and exceeds) in third, fifth and eighth grades respectively. Georgia is projecting that, with RT3 reforms, it will grow overall student achievement by 9 points in third and fifth grades, and 11 points in eighth grade.

b) Impact of LEA Participation on Decreasing Achievement Gaps between Subgroups in Reading and Math: CRCT targets in Reading and Math "without RT3" indicate actual student performance through SY 2008-09. Targets from SY 2009-10 through SY 2013-14 are Georgia's AMOs as they currently exist within the 2009 Accountability Workbook. Differences between "with R3" and "without RT3" goals are due to expectations that Georgia's RT3 efforts will have a significant impact on student achievement in Georgia, as well as expectations that ESEA reauthorization will take greater account of growth in student achievement, as opposed to hard AMO targets each year leading to 100% of students reaching exactly the same level in SY 2013-14. **With RT3 reforms, Georgia is committing to: a) closing or substantially reducing the race/ethnicity achievement gap** (African-American and Hispanic students are improving at a significantly faster rate than all other students), **b) reducing the poverty achievement gap** (economically disadvantaged students are improving at a faster rate than non-economically disadvantaged students), and **c) reducing the students with disabilities achievement gap.** See details in *Appendix A19.*

- Reading CRCT: The largest increases in student achievement in Reading will occur for African American students in third and fifth grades (8 points and 6 points respectively vs. 3 points and 2 points for all students), for Hispanic students in third, fifth and eighth grades (6, 5 and 5 points respectively) and for students with disabilities in third, fifth and eighth grades (9, 7 and 6 points respectively).
- Language Arts CRCT: The largest increases in student achievement in Language Arts will occur for students with disabilities in third grade (10 points vs. 5 points for students without disabilities), in fifth grade (9 points vs. 0 points) and in eighth grade (10 points vs. 0); for African American students in third grade (10 points vs. 3 for White students), fifth grade (7 points vs. 1) and eighth grade (6 points vs. 1); for limited English proficient (ESOL) students by 8 to 9 points across all grades; and for economically disadvantaged students by 5 to 8 points across all grades.
- Math CRCT: The largest increases in student achievement in Math will occur for students with disabilities in third grade (10 points vs. 6 points for students without disabilities), in fifth grade (9 points vs. 4 points) and in eighth grade (10 points vs. 6); for Hispanic students in third grade (9 points vs. 5 points for White students), in fifth grade (6 points vs. 4) and in eighth grade (8 points vs. 6); for African American students in third grade (8 points vs. 5 points for White students), fifth grade (7 points vs. 3) and eighth grade (8 points vs. 6); and for economically disadvantaged students in third grade (9 points vs. 6 for non-disadvantaged students), fifth grade (6 points vs. 1) and eighth grade (8 points v. 6).

c) Impact of LEA Participation on Increasing High School Graduation Rates[6]: With RT3 reforms, Georgia is projecting it will increase overall high school graduation rates from a 79% in 2008-09 to 85% by the end of 2013-14. Gains will be the largest for the following subgroups: 1) students with disabilities will experience gains of 8.6% (gap will narrow between SWD and non-SWD from 42 to 39 points); 2) African American students will experience gains of 7.9% (gap will narrow from 9 to 7 points compared to white students); 3) Hispanic students will experience gains of 8% (gap will narrow from 12 to 10 points compared to white students); and 4) economically disadvantaged students will experience gain of 9% (gap will narrow from 10 to 8 points compared to non-disadvantaged students).

6 Georgia currently uses the Leaver Rate, one of the federally-approved formulas for calculations, but will move to the Cohort Rate in 2011.

d) Impact of LEA Participation on Increasing College Enrollment and College Persistence:

College Enrollment: Traditionally, Georgia has reported postsecondary enrollment by matching high school graduates rosters produced each year by GaDOE with enrollment records from USG and TCSG. In 2008, Georgia began work with the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) to track the postsecondary enrollment of the State's graduates more broadly. By working with NSC, the State was able to track graduates into postsecondary institutions in Georgia or in any other state, and into both public and private institutions. **For the public high school class of 2008, the postsecondary enrollment rate was 64.7%, according to the NSC results**. 84.6% of the class of 2008 who attended college in the fall of 2008 did so in Georgia, vs. 15.4% who went out of state. 87.5% of enrollees attended public institutions, vs. 12.5% who attended private institutions. The State is currently working with researchers to study K-12 student success factors that promote college enrollment , persistence and completion based on NSC results data provided by GOSA, and with the Gates Foundation and NSC to improve the match rate between the State's graduates' files and the NSC database. As Georgia continues its work with NSC over time, the State will be able to accurately track the enrollment of students who graduate from high school consistent with 34 CFR 200.19(b)(1) and who enroll in an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act, P.L. 105-244, 20 U.S.C. 1001) within 16 months of graduation. Georgia will be able to provide data consistent with this definition for students enrolling in-state or out-of-state, and in private or public institutions, for the first time in the summer of 2010. Please see Table A1 below for College Enrollment targets for Georgia:

Table A1: College Enrollment Targets, 2010-11 to 2013-14

	2009-10 Baseline	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Without RT3	64%	65%	66%	67%	68%
With RT3	64%	66%	68%	70%	72%

College Persistence: Currently, Georgia reports the postsecondary persistence rate by measuring the percentage of fall semester first-time, full-time degree-seeking freshmen that continue enrollment the following fall semester (both at the institution and system levels). The most recent reported data (for freshmen entering in fall 2006 and returning in fall 2007) at USG is 73.2% at the institution level and 79.2% at the system

level. At TCSG, the rates are 53.9% at the institution level and 55.7% at the system level. **For USG and TCSG institutions, Georgia is able to report college persistence as the number of students who complete at least a year's worth of college credit that is applicable to a degree within two years of enrollment in an institution of higher education.** Using NSC data, Georgia can track persistence using the current State method (enrollment in two consecutive fall semesters); NSC currently reports enrollments and degrees, but not credit hours earned. Tracking postsecondary enrollment and persistence are natural fits for Georgia's SLDS project, which spans all seven of the State's education agencies. Plans to incorporate results from NSC enrollment data are included in the state's pending IES LDS application.
See Table A2 below for College Persistence targets for Georgia.

Table A2: College Persistence Targets, 2010-11 to 2013-14

Without RT3	2006-07 (baseline)	2007-08 (not yet available)	2008-09 (not yet available)	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	Change
USG System-wide Persistence Rate	79.2	79.5	79.7	80.0	80.2	80.5	80.7	81.0	**1.8**
TCSG System-wide Persistence Rate	55.7	57.2	58.7	60.2	61.7	63.2	64.7	66.2	**10.5**
With RT3									
USG System-wide Persistence Rate	79.2	79.7	80.2	80.7	81.2	81.7	82.2	82.7	**3.5**
TCSG System-wide Persistence Rate	55.7	58.2	60.7	63.2	65.7	68.2	70.7	73.2	**17.5**

These overall State goals outlined above will be used to set individual goals for each Participating LEA during the action plan development phase. Participating LEAs will need to provide a Final Scope of Work to be attached to the MOU as Exhibit II if the State's RT3 application is funded. The Final Scope of Work will include the LEA's specific goals with respect to increasing student achievement, decreasing the student achievement gap, increasing high school graduation rates, and increasing college enrollment and college persistence.

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

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

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

(a) Providing strong leadership and dedicated teams to implement the statewide education reform plans the State has proposed;

(b) Supporting participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) in successfully implementing the education reform plans the State has proposed, through such activities as identifying promising practices, evaluating these practices' effectiveness, ceasing ineffective practices, widely disseminating and replicating the effective practices statewide, holding participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) accountable for progress and performance, and intervening where necessary;

(c) Providing effective and efficient operations and processes for implementing its Race to the Top grant in such areas as grant administration and oversight, budget reporting and monitoring, performance measure tracking and reporting, and fund disbursement;

(d) Using the funds for this grant, as described in the State's budget and accompanying budget narrative, to accomplish the State's plans and meet its targets, including where feasible, by coordinating, reallocating, or repurposing education funds from other Federal, State, and local sources so that they align with the State's Race to the Top goals; and

(e) Using the fiscal, political, and human capital resources of the State to continue, after the period of funding has ended, those reforms funded under the grant for which there is evidence of success; and

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

(a) The State's teachers and principals, which include the State's teachers' unions or statewide teacher associations; and

(b) Other critical stakeholders, such as the State's legislative leadership; charter school authorizers and State charter school membership associations (if applicable); other State and local leaders (*e.g.*, business, community, civil rights, and education association leaders); Tribal schools; parent, student, and community organizations (*e.g.*, parent-teacher associations, nonprofit organizations, local education foundations, and community-based organizations); and institutions of higher education.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recognizing that a mission of this magnitude is not a solitary endeavor, Georgia has relied on strong leadership supported by dedicated teamwork among major constituencies to develop conditions for reform and to construct its plan. **The State's capacity to implement its plan is based on a history of successful collaboration among the Governor's Office, State education agencies, the business community, and other stakeholders.** This collaborative spirit informed planning for the State's RT3 application, led by the Governor's Office and the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). Teams whose members represented a wide range of partners—the Governor's office, P-12 education, higher education, philanthropic organizations and foundations, informal education organizations, regulatory agencies, school and district-level practitioners, legislators and members of the business community—came together to ask the hard questions, engage in vigorous debate, envision the future, come to consensus on goals and core principles, and lay out carefully constructed plans for achieving a better a future for Georgia's students. Open and honest agreements and disagreements have characterized the development of this proposal, which is grounded in the common desire of all parties to improve the prospects of Georgia's citizens by providing a world-class education for all students. Strong

leadership coupled with dedicated teamwork have been hallmarks of the State's successful reforms to date and will continue to move the State forward through proposed RT3 reforms.

(A)(2)(i)(a) Providing strong leadership and dedicated teams to implement the State's education reform plans

Strong Leadership. The State is proposing an oversight structure and implementation framework designed to ensure that the State's education reform plans lead to successful outcomes. **State leadership will take on implementation of the RT3 plan as a state priority.** The State Executive Board (Governor, State Superintendent, and State Board of Education Chair) will have ultimate accountability for the grant and will oversee implementation of the RT3 plan in the context of overall education reform in Georgia. A Steering Committee (comprised of the Policy Director to the Governor, Chief of Staff to the State Superintendent, Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA), and the RT3 Implementation Director, a newly created position) will make day-to-day operational decisions across the four reform areas with input from task-appropriate Advisory Committees representing the range of constituencies impacted by reform strategies. **The RT3 Implementation Director will be the State's RT3 Project Manager responsible for management, coordination and reporting across state agencies and participating LEAs.** For a visual representation of the oversight structure, please see *Appendix A20: Overall Implementation Framework.* While the RT3 Implementation Director will not have direct functional authority over the various state education agency representatives responsible for their respective sets of reform activities, the Director will have direct project authority over these state employees, and will be empowered by the State Executive Board to make decisions and take actions needed to ensure successful day-to-day implementation of the RT3 reform plan. The Director will defer to the State Executive Board (and the Steering Committee, as their designees) on all policy decisions.

Dedicated Teams. For each of the core activities within each reform plan, State responsibilities to provide data systems, training, resources, support, monitoring, research, and feedback have been delineated and are described in detail in each of the Sections (B) through (E). Lead or co-lead agencies have been assigned responsibility for the core activities proposed and senior staff designated as responsible parties. A list of

the names and acronyms of the relevant agencies, departments, and supervisory personnel is included in *Appendix A21: Agency Names and Acronyms by Reform Area.* Given the complexity of the tasks involved, standing committees are proposed in three out of the four reform areas. Standing committees are comprised of heads of all those agencies (or their designees) that have been designated as playing a lead role in carrying out a set of activities related to the reform area.

- In the area of **Standards and Assessments, the Deputy Superintendent heading the Office of Standards, Instruction, and Assessment (OSIA) at GaDOE, will be responsible for the implementation of all activities within this reform area,** including: organization and development of high-quality instructional resources in support of Common Core Standards; communication and training for the rollout of the Common Core standards and assessments (including development of Professional Learning Unit courses targeted at standards delivery and use of assessments); and development and testing of formative and benchmark assessments aligned to Common Core Standards. Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) will partner with OSIA to raise awareness of new standards and communicate with the field. Throughout the development, testing and rollout process, OSIA will have access to the combined expertise of a standing advisory committee—the Academic Advisory Committee—comprised of representatives from K-12 and higher education fields. See *Appendix A22: Oversight Structure for Standards and Assessments.*
- In the area of **Data Systems to Support Instruction,** a standing committee—the Data Governance Committee (comprised of Alliance Chiefs of Staff and the SLDS Director, a newly created position within GOSA)—will provide general oversight for the new Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), a critical element in the long-term tracking and monitoring of performance and effectiveness measures outlined by the State's RT3 reform plan across all assurance areas. **The SLDS Director (a new position within GOSA) will have primary responsibility for day-to-day implementation of the SLDS, and will be directly supported by a small dedicated SLDS staff and indirectly supported by the CIOs of the Alliance agencies,** which have all signed a data governance MOU (see *Appendix A23: Data Governance MOU*). The SLDS director will work closely with the Data Governance Committee, which will be supported by the Data Management Committee (CIOs of Alliance Agencies), and two advisory committees: the

Information Technology Group (data architects) and the Research Group (researchers will be appointed to this advisory committee by the Data Governance Committee for a term of three years). See *Appendix A24: Oversight Structure for Data Systems*.

- The area of **Great Teachers and Leaders will be co-led by the Office of Education Support and Improvement within GaDOE (OESI) and by GOSA.** Since this area comprises multiple plans and activities which fall appropriately into the responsibilities of various State agencies and other partners, there will also be a standing cross-functional committee—the Educator Effectiveness Committee (EEC)—to facilitate coordination and communication across agencies and partners. The EEC will be comprised of the leaders of the various agencies/divisions responsible for carrying out discrete activities that are part of the larger reform plan. See *Appendix A25: Oversight Structure for Educator Effectiveness*. For example, OESI will lead the development and validation of evaluation instruments for teachers and principals; GOSA will manage the vendor who will develop the State's Value-Added Model, and lead the creating and testing of new quantitative instruments (such as surveys); the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) will implement proposed policy changes relative to certification requirements and improvements in educator preparation programs and will continue to monitor these areas; the University System of Georgia (USG) will lead the effort to enhance educator preparation programs; and GOSA will monitor and evaluate all LEA pilots and programs related to educator effectiveness. An LEA Critical Feedback group (comprised of participating LEA superintendents or designees) will provide consultation and assistance for work related to developing, designing, and testing the new teacher and leader evaluation system within participating LEAs. A Technical Advisory committee (TAC)—a panel of measurement experts—will provide guidance and expertise on measurements of teacher effectiveness.
- The area of **Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools (LAS)** is equally complex and also a multitude of stakeholders, agencies and partners. **A new office—the State Office of School Turnaround (SOST)—will be established within the GaDOE to lead this effort and to give due attention to persistently lowest-achieving schools.** Leading the SOST will be the Deputy Superintendent for School Turnaround (DSST), a new position for which a national search will begin immediately – see *Appendix A26: Letter from State Superintendent Cox to Secretary Duncan.* **The DSST will report to the State Superintendent, work closely**

with the RT3 Implementation Director and will be accountable for turning around lowest-achieving schools. The existing Division of State Directed Schools, focused on all schools at NI-5 and higher levels (all of which are on the persistently lowest-achieving school list) will move over to report to the DSST. The Deputy Superintendent for Education Support and Improvement will continue to be responsible for school improvement in all schools other than NI-5 and higher, and for increasing overall teacher and leader effectiveness. **The DSST will co-lead, with GOSA, the process of intensive and rigorous diagnostics of participating LEAs.** These diagnostics will allow the DSST and the RT3 Implementation Director to develop recommendations re: turnaround model for each school, on behalf of the State. In an effort to coordinate work across multiple divisions, **the DSST will also chair a standing LAS Committee** comprised of the heads of divisions responsible for the implementation of the various core activities that are part of the larger plan in this reform area. See *Appendix A27: Oversight Structure for Turning Around LAS.*

(A)(2)(i)(b) <u>Supporting participating LEAs in successfully implementing the education reform plans the State has proposed</u>

Clear Delineation of Responsibilities. The State will provide direction, structure, resources, and support to the participating LEAs for each assurance area. For each of the core activities within each reform plan, State responsibilities to provide data systems, training, resources, support, monitoring, research, and feedback are clearly delineated in Sections (B) through (E). LEA responsibilities are also clearly delineated in the MOUs signed by the State and participating LEAs at the outset.

Establishment of a System-wide Approach to Effectiveness and Accountability. As depicted in *Appendix A28: System-wide Effectiveness and Accountability*, the State recognizes that a complete vertical alignment of accountability measures and related supports is needed in order to move the whole system forward and change the education landscape in Georgia in a systematic and lasting way. Starting at the top, the State creates and implements policies (standards, assessments, educator certification requirements, AYP requirements, etc.) and monitors student achievement across LEAs, but also provides much needed support to LEAs in the form of funding, professional development and other services. The LEAs in turn implement state and district policies and are responsible for student achievement across schools, but pair these expectations with supports that they provide to school leaders through districts' central office functions (such as recruiting, hiring, and

professional development). School leaders, in turn, provide instructional leadership and manage school operations, are responsible for school-wide performance, and evaluate teachers annually, but also ensure that teachers have appropriate professional development supports to achieve their full potential. Finally, teachers provide instruction to students, teaching to Georgia's Performance Standards and using data to modify instruction, and are responsible for student learning and achievement. **The State of Georgia is making a commitment to establish and maintain this kind of system-wide approach to effectiveness and accountability, not just by creating accountability measures at each level, but also by working closely with LEAs to ensure that the right supports exist at each level to make accountability possible** (e.g., through helping districts build district capacity, school capacity or principal and teacher capacity). The State is committed to using its existing financial resources and RT3 funds to support LEAs in building capacity where needed (e.g., school improvement support provided by OESI; Summer Leadership Academy sponsored by OESI and designed to build central office and school capacity to manage reform and change; increased professional development for teachers in the area of math and science) and is entering into deep partnerships with several well-known organizations such as TFA, TNTP and UTeach to increase the number of effective teachers, especially in hard to staff subjects and hard to staff (geographically isolated) schools.

Identifying and Disseminating Best Practices. The RT3 Implementation Director will work closely with GOSA, OESI, SOST and the Communications Team to identify and disseminate lessons learned and best practices from RT3 reforms (e.g., teacher and principal evaluation practices, turnaround approaches, professional development practices) via a number of forums and communication vehicles such as: (1) annual RT3 summits (which will be part of a broader communications plan and will serve to keep education stakeholders in Georgia apprised of all RT3 developments); (2) Summer Leadership Academies organized by GaDOE for district and school leaders (targeted in particular at lowest-achieving schools, but open to other interested schools); and (3) online publication of RT3 annual reports and case studies related to specific RT3 reforms.

(**A)(2)(i)(c) Providing Effective and Efficient Operations and Processes for Implementing Race to the Top Grant**

All of the items below are captured in the budget model and the budget narrative submitted with this application.

- **Grant Administration and Oversight.** The Georgia Department of Education has capacity for grant administration and oversight, having successfully managed over $7 billion in federal grants over the last five years. In order to effectively manage additional activities related to RT3 reforms in areas such as grant administration and oversight, budget reporting and monitoring, performance measure tracking and reporting, and fund disbursement, the State has formalized an RT3 oversight structure for this area. **At the head of budgeting, fund disbursement, tracking and monitoring, and report creation functions will be the GaDOE CFO.** In order to handle the increased volume of tracking and reporting activities under RT3, the CFO will hire two additional FTEs into the Finance and Business Operations (FBO) Department. These FTEs will disburse, monitor and report on use of RT3 funds. See *Appendix A29: Oversight Structure for Budgeting, Reporting and Evaluating.*
- **Additional Evaluation (Research and Development) Capacity.** All proposed RT3 initiatives and pilots will be carefully tracked and evaluated over the lifetime of the grant to: (1) validate any proposed effectiveness measures; (2) monitor/audit any proposed performance measures; (3) determine impact of initiatives on the four RT3 goals; and (4) determine which initiatives merit continued investment after RT3 funding ends. **The Program Evaluation function will reside within GOSA** and will require four additional FTEs. See *Appendix A29: Oversight Structure for Budgeting, Reporting and Evaluating.*
- **External Technical Assistance to Bridge Implementation Capacity Gaps.** Especially in the first 12 to 18 months of the grant, as the State agencies build their own capacity and help LEAs build capacity, they will need external support from technical assistance firms in the form of: (1) initial project management / implementation management support; (2) development of strategic resource reallocation frameworks and processes, both at the State level and the LEA level; (3) development of toolkits for LEAs to use as they launch their action plans (e.g., teacher effectiveness toolkit; multiple pathways for students toolkit); and (4) building of data analysis capacity at the State and LEA level.

- **Competitive Bid Process.** Georgia is committed to laying the groundwork for RT3 implementation prior to the actual award announcement and RT3 funds disbursement. Successful implementation of Georgia's RT3 plan will require external partners, and the State recognizes that one of the more time consuming processes, at the State level, is the competitive bid process. Some of the proposed RT3 implementation will have to be awarded through a competitive bid process and the State aims to preserve the rigor and integrity of the process as outlined by state law. Fortunately, services that are provided by a non-profit organization or by an intergovernmental agency are exempt from competitive procurement requirements. **A substantial number of Georgia's potential partners/vendors are either non-profit organizations or intergovernmental agencies.** Thus, contract awards can be made immediately to such qualifying partners. In addition, Georgia intends to vigorously begin the RFP process, as soon as the RT3 application is submitted to US ED, to identify and select in a timely manner vendors that are not exempt from the State's competitive procurement requirements. **By starting the process early, Georgia will be able to make awards to selected vendors in August 2010 pending funding from the U.S. Department of Education.** Georgia is committed to this timeline to ensure that the important reform work of RT3 can begin quickly.
- **RT3 Communications Strategy.** A strong and well-planned Communications Strategy is an integral component of the State's RT3 plan, given the imperative to implement major change which directly impacts educators, students, families, and the public. **The State is in preliminary discussions with potential communications / PR providers who will help the State develop an overarching RT3 communications strategy and public awareness campaign.** Key objectives of the campaign will be to 1) enlist public support for RT3 reform efforts; 2) disseminate learnings and results of RT3 reforms (once these become available); and 3) positively influence the perceptions of students about the importance of science and mathematics, and the perceptions of parents and members of the community regarding their role in setting high expectations and conveying the importance of a solid science and mathematics education. **The communications strategy will be implemented by the RT3 Implementation Director and a Communications Specialist** (new position reporting to the RT3 Director). The RT3 Director and Communications Specialist will also lead a Communications Team comprising Agency Communications Directors, Georgia Public Broadcasting, and the PRISM public

awareness director. The Communications Team will develop and implement internal communications and resource delivery for K-12 educators (especially those in participating LEAs), higher education, the Alliance, and other partners.

(A)(2)(i)(d) Using Grant Funds to Accomplish the State's Goals and Meet its Targets

Georgia will look to a variety of financial resources to accomplish its goals and meet its targets under RT3, outlined briefly below.

- **Funds from RT3 Grant:** Georgia's RT3 plan calls for approximately $460 million in RT3 funding over four years (2010-11 till 2013-14). The summary budget narrative and detailed project-level budget narrative is provided in *Appendix A30: Budget Narrative.*
- **Other Federal Sources:** First, Georgia will leverage $120 million in **School Improvement Grants** to provide additional assistance to persistently lowest-achieving schools identified as part of both the RT3 application and the School Improvement Grant application. Second, Georgia will also leverage **SLDS funding to date.** The State has already received $8.9 million in round one of SLDS funding and has applied for an additional $15 million in round two of SLDS funding. (All funds requested for SLDS under RT3 are for activities that are incremental to activities covered by rounds one and two of SLDS funds). Third, Georgia will work closely with participating LEAs to align **Title II A funds** ($75 million annually statewide) with RT3 goals. The state portion of Title II A (5%) can be easily aligned with RT3 goals. Fourth, Georgia will distribute **Title II D funds** ($9 million annually and a one-time $22 million infusion of funds from ARRA) on a competitive basis to LEAs and will align awards to RT3 goals.
- **State Sources:** A significant portion of **existing agency budgets** (e.g., GOSA and PSC) and **existing department budgets** (e.g., OESI and OSIA within GaDOE) will be used in support of RT3-related activities. The State will also secure external technical expertise to conduct a strategic resource allocation review at the State level to optimize the efficiency and effectiveness of spending, and to identify sources of funds that could potentially be freed up over time to sustain reforms identified as promising under RT3. The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) will lead the effort to conduct a strategic review of resource allocations across State Education Agencies, with support from Finance and Business Operations (FBO) within GaDOE and from external technical assistance firms specializing in K-12 strategic resource reallocation.

- **Local Sources:** The State is using a small portion of RT3 funds to invest in strategic resource reallocation review and will make this expertise available to a select number of participating LEAs. The technical assistance partner will help the State develop frameworks, processes and tools that the State will then deploy in other districts as part of the overall effort to 1) optimize use of financial resources in the service of instruction, and 2) facilitate the sustainability of those reforms that prove most valuable beyond the lifetime of the RT3 grant. OPB will lead the resource reallocation effort within participating LEAs, with support from FBO.
- **Private Sources:** Of particular note is the State's plan to establish an **Innovation Fund** which will be available for participating LEAs to seed innovative partnerships with higher education, informal education and non-profit organizations, or businesses for the purpose of increasing student achievement. There are three types of possible activities that will be funded by the Innovation Fund: (1) activities targeted at increasing applied learning opportunities for students (especially in STEM fields); (2) activities targeted at increasing teacher effectiveness (such as innovative teacher induction programs where K-12 school systems and teacher preparation programs take mutual responsibility for the success of a new teacher and successfully bridge the gap between pre-service and in-service); and (3) activities related to expanding the pipeline of effective teachers (e.g., local Grow Your Own Teacher programs). Priority will be given to LEAs with lowest-achieving schools, and the RT3 Steering Committee will encourage philanthropic organizations, non-profits, and businesses, many of which have indicated their support for the State's RT3 application [See Section A (2)(ii)(b) below], to contribute to the Innovation Fund as a continuing source of start-up capital for promising innovations. Once private funds flow to the Innovation Fund to leverage public funds, the State will look into setting up a separate 501 c(3) to manage the mix of private and public funds.

(A)(2)(i)(e) <u>Using the Fiscal, Political, and Human Capital Resources of the State to Continue Reforms</u>

Georgia is fully committed to using its fiscal, political, and human capital resources to continue, after the funding period has ended, those reforms funded under the grant for which there is evidence of success. As mentioned above, over the next several years, Georgia will undertake a strategic resource reallocation review of K-12 state education agency funds to identify potential efficiency and reallocation opportunities that

could help fund initiatives at the State level identified as successful by RT3. In areas such as performance-based compensation for teachers [see Section (D)(2) for details], which is one of the more expensive elements of RT3 reform, Georgia is confident that it will be able to support a statewide performance-based compensation proposal after the use of the RT3 funding ends. Historically, the State of Georgia provides pay raises to teachers (independent of step increases); it is not unusual for the State to provide Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increases in the range of 2-4% (amounting to $120-$240 million), except during times of budget stress. The Governor and Legislature will have the option to use COLA as one of the funding sources to offset the cost of a new performance-based compensation system.

Georgia's plan to ensure sustainability of proposed reforms also relies on political actions. Legislation is currently being introduced (in the 2010 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly) in support of a performance-based compensation system for teachers. In addition, a variety of certification rules will be changed to make way for RT3 forms. More detail on both efforts is provided in Section (D)(2).

(**A)(2)(ii) <u>Support from a Broad Group of Stakeholders to Help the State Better Implement its Plan</u>**

a) Support from the State's Teachers and Principals. As part of overall RT3 communication and recommendation development process, Georgia posted all RT3 information online and invited educators and the broader public to review this information and submit ideas/suggestions to a dedicated email address. In addition, the Governor's Office and the State Superintendent's Office held a webinar session to which all LEA superintendents were invited. Finally, GOSA developed and launched two surveys at the end of November 2009, one targeted at K-12 educators and one targeted at general education stakeholders (non-educators). The surveys focused primarily on questions related to teacher and principal effectiveness. **The response rate on the Educator Survey was very impressive: over 20,000 educators responded, 15,300 of whom were teachers (over 13% of the overall teacher population in Georgia).** Approximately 70% of teacher respondents taught core subjects, and approximately 55% had more than 10 years of teaching experience. Most teachers (80-85%) agreed that there are clear expectations for what constitutes effective teaching but many disagreed that these expectations are being implemented effectively through the evaluation and compensation process. **More than three-fourths of teacher respondents support a common, statewide evaluation system which includes both qualitative and quantitative inputs and peer reviewers.** More than 70% of respondents

believe that such an evaluation system should serve as the basis for recertification, new career advancement opportunities, and additional bonuses in high-need settings, while respondents were divided on using such a system as a basis for performance pay. Four-fifths of respondents believed that teacher preparation programs should be held accountable for the impact of their completers while there were mixed views on how well program completers were prepared within real classrooms and prepared to use data to inform instruction. Almost two-thirds agreed that principals' authority should be linked to principals' effectiveness. See *Appendix A31: Educator and Stakeholder Surveys* for details on survey results.

b) Support from Other Critical Stakeholders. The State convened a **"Critical Feedback Team"—**comprised of leaders from the Georgia General Assembly, the business community, the philanthropic community and local education authorities—to review its RT3 proposal. As indicated above, the teams which crafted this proposal included constituencies from multiple agencies and organizations, both private and public, who all have a critical stake and role in education reform. The following stakeholders have submitted letters of support for this proposal, and, where appropriate, have additionally indicated their commitment to doing their part through specific roles: The Alliance of Education Agency Heads; the State Board of Education; the Joint Education Boards Liaison Committee; the Charter Schools Commission; University System of Georgia; Technical College System of Georgia; Georgia Professional Standards Commission; legislative leaders; business leaders; business/community partnerships; philanthropic organizations; Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries; CEISMC; and partners (TFA, , UTeach). In addition, a number of superintendents have written personal letters of support. And finally, members of the RT3 task forces have also signed a joint letter of support, indicating their commitment to Georgia's vision and to this proposal which sets out a way forward to make the vision a reality. All letters of support are compiled in *Appendix A32: Letters of Support.*

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

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

(i) Make progress over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas, and used its ARRA and other Federal and State funding to pursue such reforms; *(5 points)*
(ii) Improve student outcomes overall and by student subgroup since at least 2003, and explain the connections between the data and the actions that have contributed to — *(25 points)*

(a) Increasing student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA;

(b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA; and

(c) Increasing high school graduation rates.

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

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

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

(A)(3)(i) Significant Progress in Four Education Reform Areas and Use of ARRA and other Federal and State Funding

Georgia has used ARRA and other Federal and State funding to make significant strides in each of the four RT3 reform areas over the past several years. These advances place Georgia in a strategically favorable position to jump start school reform, dramatically improve student achievement, close the achievement gap, and help lead the nation forward.

- **Standards and Assessments.** Georgia is already at the forefront in this area, through adopting rigorous college and career-ready standards and taking a leadership role in national initiatives. The rigorous, nationally and internationally benchmarked **Georgia Performance Standards** (GPS) are vertically aligned with Pre-K content standards at the front end and, because the GPS were co-developed with higher education faculty and business, they are also aligned with college and career readiness standards. The Thomas B. Fordham Institute ranked Georgia's curriculum 5th in the country in 2006 (vs. 21st in 2000).[7] The GPS provide clear expectations for assessment, instruction, and student work and define the level of work that demonstrates achievement of the standards. Implementation of GPS was conducted in phases, by content area, starting with ELA in 2004-05 and ending with high school mathematics in 2008-09. Mathematics has had the longest implementation due to substantial and innovative changes in the content and the need to ensure that K-8 students were thoroughly grounded in the new curriculum before moving to high school (see *Appendix A33: GPS Implementation Schedule*). Each rollout phase was accompanied by two years of training for practitioners to assist them as they adjusted to teaching to higher standards and to approaching each lesson "with the end in mind." The GPS were also incorporated into university-based educator preparation programs to ensure seamless transition of newly-prepared teachers into Georgia classrooms. Fidelity of GPS implementation has been assessed primarily at the building level by districts, except for schools in NI status where GPS implementation is monitored by the State through GAPSS analyses. Georgia redesigned its assessments, including CRCTs, EOCTS and the GHSGT in tandem with the GPS implementation, using a nationally accepted assessment development protocol. Georgia's strong assessment development process has been reviewed and approved by the United States Department of Education (US ED)—one of only a few in the country. Most recently, new EOCTs are under development concurrent with implementation of the

7 "The State of State Standards 2006" Thomas B. Fordham Institute, Washington, DC

GPS in mathematics. (See *Appendix A34: Georgia Assessment Development Process* and *Appendix 35: Establishing Standards for the Georgia HS Graduation Tests*).

Thanks in part to its own commitment to a college- and career-readiness agenda that includes raising students' performance to international benchmarks, Georgia is not just at the table but is **leading national conversations** about raising the bar for student outcomes. Georgia Governor Perdue co-leads the work of the National Governors Association (NGA) in the **Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI).** Under the Governor's leadership, Georgia became an early signatory to the CCSSI and was one of six states invited to provide feedback on Common Core Standards development. (See *Appendix A36: CCSSI press release*). Georgia was also an early (2006) participant in the **American Diploma Project (ADP)**, a national initiative sponsored by Achieve and NGA to raise high school standards, strengthen assessments and curriculum, and align expectations with the demands of college and careers. Achieve found Georgia to have "incredible alignment to Achieve's College and Career-Ready standards." Georgia's participation in ADP led the State to strengthen its high school graduation requirements. (See *Appendix A37: Georgia's ADP Action Plan*). Georgia is also one of eight states selected to participate in the **College and Career-Ready Policy Institute (CCRPI**), a national collaborative effort focused on increasing the numbers of students who graduate college- and career-ready, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and directed by a partnership of well-respected education policy groups, including Achieve., the Data Quality Campaign, EducationCounsel, Jobs for the Future, and the NGA Center for Best Practices. (See *Appendix A38: CCRPI press release*). Georgia's plans for both ADP and CCRPI are currently underway, including redesign of selected high school tests in English and mathematics so that they also serve as readiness tests for college and work. After completing validation studies in 2010, USG and TCSG are expected to adopt policies to allow ELA GHSGT scores at the Advanced Proficient or Honors levels to exempt students from college placement tests for remediation. Similar validation studies for college mathematics will be conducted once the new GPS in mathematics is fully implemented. Development and implementation of the GPS were funded through State and federal dollars. Georgia's participation in ADP and CCRPI was funded through private contributions.

- **Data Systems to Support Instruction.** The GaDOE has worked in recent years to improve its K-12 data collection as a means of improving student outcomes, with the most pressing data needs associated with NCLB reporting requirements. In March 2009, GaDOE was awarded $8.9 million under the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems grant (Georgia's "Chronicle" project). Georgia has also submitted a proposal for a 2009 IES Longitudinal Data System grant under the ARRA. The 2009 IES application complements and builds upon work started through Chronicle and aligns with the opportunities and expectations of the State's current RT3 proposal. Georgia begins this work with a number of strengths, including extensive data collections within Alliance agencies, a willingness to share data, and a history of tracking student achievement and success through interagency agreements. The State's various awards and proposals for federal funding to support development of a SLDS are intended to remedy shortcomings in the current data collection and reporting efforts, and develop timely reporting tools which can support instructional improvement.

  It is worth noting that **Georgia also participates in a National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) Pilot funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.** The NSC Pilot aims to enhance the ability of schools, districts, and states to track high school students into and through postsecondary education, including attendance at public and private institutions both in- and out-of-state. To this end, the Pilot will develop high-quality, actionable, data-driven reports that build on GOSA's work with the NSC to link P-12 and postsecondary data and can be used to improve the college readiness and success of students. The Pilot will also develop online professional development materials and capture lessons learned for going to scale nationally.
- **Great Teachers and Leaders—Evaluation Tools.** Early on, the State recognized the need for a **research-based evaluation tool** that could be deployed statewide to ensure consistency of approach and allow comparisons across districts. Georgia has made considerable headway through development and field-testing of the **Classroom Analysis of State Standards (CLASS Keys)** framework and rubrics. CLASS Keys is aligned to Georgia's school standards (School Keys) and serves to rate a teacher's level of performance on five strands or "keys" to teacher quality: Curriculum and Planning, Standards-Based Instruction, Assessment of Student Learning, Professionalism, and Student Achievement. CLASS Keys was funded with $600,000 in Federal funds for instrument development

(2006-08), $110,000 from a Title V Innovation Grant (2008-2009), $219,711 from Title II Part A (2008-2010), and an additional $50,000 in private funds from the Wallace Foundation. The instrument has been field tested in 176 schools in 55 LEAs with 1,154 participants during the 2008-2009 school year. A first-round reliability study indicated that the instrument meets a standard reliability measure. **Leader Keys** was designed in 2008-09 for school and district leaders and serves as both a formative and summative instrument to rate a leader's level of performance on specific standards. Development of the Leader Keys is not as advanced as the CLASS Keys due to funding constraints. To date, Leader Keys have been funded through a $200,000 Title V Innovation Grant (2007-2008) and $12,113 from Title II Part A (2009-2010). The Leader Keys instrument is currently in the first of two field studies in 37 LEAs with 195 schools and 488 participants. The CLASS Keys and the Leader Keys will be the foundation for Georgia's evaluation tools for teachers and principals. The final instruments will be agreed upon through a collaborative process between the State and participating LEAs. See Section (D) (2).

- **Great Teachers and Leaders—Increased Pipeline.** The teacher pipeline system in the State has **improved in both quality and quantity.** Thanks to flexible alternative certification requirements, the State is a **national leader in the number of alternative certification routes and program providers for teachers.** Through 2008, in response to steadily increasing hiring needs, both IHEs and other program providers ramped up production and targeted production more narrowly to critical shortage areas identified by the LEAs and by the State. For leader preparation, Georgia boasts new performance-based programs for school leaders which require that LEAs and IHEs jointly select and prepare school leaders. See Section (F) (3) for further detail. Because alternative routes to certification for school leaders are currently limited, the State proposes development of an alternative pathway for principals within its RT3 application. See Section (D)(3) for further detail.
- **Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools.** Georgia has used its legal authority (Single Statewide Accountability System) to develop a robust and highly-effective school improvement system, grounded in data-based diagnosis, equipped with proven reform strategies and protocols, and executed by highly-trained school improvement specialists and state directors. As a result, Georgia has been able to systematically intervene in its lowest-achieving schools. Since 2005, Georgia has continuously refined its array of school

improvement tools, processes, and protocols to maximize their effectiveness. Starting in 2008, Georgia utilized the State portion of its School Improvement Grant to bolster state-level capacity with a new strategic division of State Directors. State Directors are assigned (on a one to one ratio) to schools in NI -5 or higher status and are responsible for ensuring that these schools (all of which have signed contracts with the State) carry out the action plans designed to help the school meet their AYP goals. Since 2003, Georgia has been quite successful in moving schools out of NI status. Of the cohort of 533 NI schools in 2003, only 33 still remain in NI status. However, much work remains to be done to pull the persistently lowest-achieving schools out of NI status. See Section (E) (2) for further detail on school improvement reforms and accomplishments.

(A)(3)(ii) Improved Student Outcomes Overall and by Student Subgroup since 2003 and Contributing Actions

a) Increasing Student Achievement in Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics. The State improved overall student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics both on the NAEP and on the State's CRCTs required under the ESEA. For comparability, trend analysis data are based on the percent of students scoring at a performance level of Basic and above (Proficient and Advanced) on the NAEP, and on percent Meeting or Exceeding the standard on the CRCTs. As discussed earlier, in 2005-2006, Georgia began phasing out its old curriculum and implementing the new and more rigorous GPS and accompanying assessments. It is important to note that with the move to GPS, Georgia increased the rigor of item construct and also raised cut scores. The first year of implementation and assessment of the GPS varies by subject area and sometimes by grade within subject area. Comparisons on the CRCT are appropriate only when the same assessment program was in place. The phase-in period for each assessment is shaded in the evidence document provided in *Appendix A39: NAEP, CRCT, and Graduation Rates.* While there was an across the board dip in CRCT scores (as measured by percent Meeting or Exceeding) in the first year following the implementation of more rigorous standards, the State has seen a rapid rise in scores in just a few years, demonstrating that higher standards and harder assessments were accompanied by effective professional development for teachers to ensure that they were ready to teach students to these higher standards of performance. **Georgia is extremely proud of it successful GPS implementation, which demonstrates that the State is well positioned to achieve similar results when it rolls out Common Core Standards.**

NAEP Results. Georgia 4th and 8th graders improved on both NAEP reading (2003, 2005 and 2007) and NAEP mathematics (2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009). Overall, the rate of improvement for Georgia's students equaled or surpassed the rate of improvement nationally. See Table A3 below. Also see Figures A1 and A2 on the next page for overall trends in Georgia Reading and Math NAEP scores.

Table A3: Comparison of National and Georgia NAEP Scores 2003-2009

Grade 4 Reading		**Grade 4 Math**		**Grade 8 Reading**		**Grade 8 Math**	
2003-2007		2003-2009		2003-2007		2003-2009	
Nation-up 4 points	216-220	Nation-up 5 points	234-239	Nation-no gain	261-261	Nation-up 6 points	276-282
Georgia-up **5** points	214-219	Georgia-up **6** points	230-236	Georgia-up **1** point	258-259	Georgia-up **8** points	270-278

Math NAEP Results. A highlight of the findings is Georgia's improvement in mathematics. Georgia is one of just 15 states to show significant improvement in eighth-grade mathematics on the 2009 NAEP, the first national results that show the impact of Georgia's new mathematics curriculum. Nearly all the grade 8 students who took the NAEP last school year had been taught using the GPS in mathematics for three years. About two-thirds of Georgia's 8th graders (66%) scored at the basic level or above on the 2009 NAEP—up seven percentage points from 2003—and 27% scored at proficient or above, up two points. The gap between Georgia and the nation closed from six to four points from 2003 to 2009. The fourth-grade students who had been taught using the GPS in Mathematics for only one and a half years at the time of the test still improved at a rate faster than the national rate.

Reading NAEP Results. In Reading, Georgia students also improved at a faster pace than the rest of the nation. Georgia tied the national average in 4th grade for the first time in 2007, thanks in part to the more rigorous Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) in ELA, which were rolled out before Math GPS, thus giving students longer exposure to higher reading standards. 78% of Georgia's 4th graders scored at the basic level or above on the 2007 NAEP, up seven percentage points since 2003.

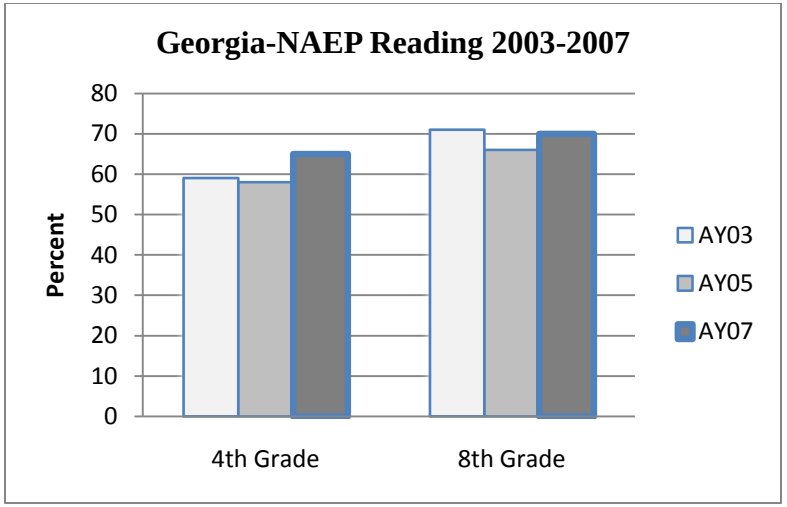


Figure A1: NAEP Reading 2003-2007-Grades 4 and 8-Percent Scoring at Basic or Above

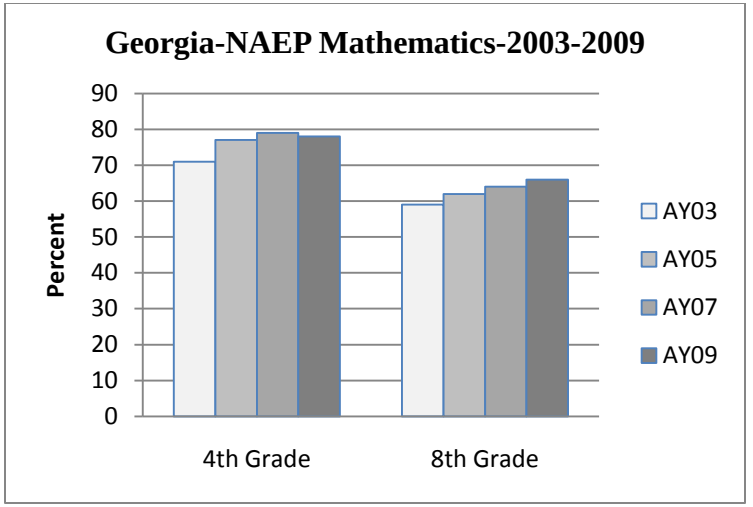


Figure A2: NAEP Mathematics 2003-2009-Grades 4 and 8 Percent Scoring at Basic or Above

Reading CRCT Results. The pattern of increased student achievement in reading shown on the NAEP is also reflected by scores on the CRCT, the State's assessment for grades 1-8 under ESEA. Georgia's students saw gains in reading in all levels prior to implementation of the GPS. Since the implementation of the new GPS in reading in 2005-2006, all grade levels have seen gains in the percent meeting or exceeding standards, ranging from 2.4% gained (Grade 2) to 8.9% (Grade 7) on the CRCT. Overall achievement rates (percent meeting or exceeding standards) ranged from 87.3% (Grade 4) to 96% (Grade 8).

Language Arts CRCT Results. The pattern of increased student achievement in reading shown on the NAEP is also reflected by scores on the Language Arts CRCT. Since the implementation of the new GPS in reading in 2005-2006, all grade levels have seen gains in the percent meeting or exceeding standards, ranging from 3% gained (Grade 2) to 8.2% (Grade 4) on the CRCT. Overall language arts achievement rates (percent meeting or exceeding standards) ranged from 84% (Grade 1) to 92% (Grade 8).

Math CRCT Results. The staggered implementation in mathematics began with Grade 6 in 2005-2006. In the three years since the baseline year for the new assessment, grade 6 students experienced a gain of 13 points in the percent of students meeting or exceeding the standards. In the two years since the 2007 baseline year for grade 7 mathematics, students have experienced an increase of 10 percentage points. See Table A4 for CRCT increases by grade level for both ELA and mathematics since GPS implementation. Shading indicates GPS taught and tested.

Table A4: CRCT Language Arts and Math Scores 2006-2009, Grades 1-8
Shading = GPS Taught and Tested

Language Arts CRCT					**Math CRCT**			
	2006	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**
1st grade	79.44	82.32	84.46	84	90.18	82.33	86.42	87
2nd grade	83.65	83.76	84.13	86.7	87.21	81.35	85.47	87.3
3rd grade	82.12	85.62	87.11	86.5	91.39	90.45	70.92	77.9
4th grade	78.78	84.24	86.21	86.9	79.48	78.44	70.06	75.0
5th grade	84.77	87.64	89.96	91.3	88.62	88.1	84.23	87.0
6th grade	84.28	86.3	87.36	90.5	61.88	64.57	69.28	74.9
7th grade	83.16	89.19	89.72	89.5	80.94	74.04	79.89	83.7
8th grade	86.72	88.41	89.53	91.8	77.48	81.45	78.28	80.0

Science CRCT Results. Georgia students are also increasing their achievement in science. Since the new science GPS were implemented and assessed in grades 3, 4, and 5 during SY07, all three grade levels have experienced gains since the baseline year—10, 6, and 9 percentage points respectively for grades 3, 4, and 5. Students in grades 6 and 7 experienced an increase of 7 and 12 percentage points, respectively, since the new standards were implemented and assessed in SY06.

b) Decreasing Achievement Gaps between Subgroups in Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics. While increasing overall achievement, Georgia has also decreased the achievement gaps between most subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on NAEP, and on CRCTs, with *very positive narrowing trends*. All groups showed increases but targeted subgroups increased at greater rates. NAEP Results. Georgia recently conducted an analysis of 24 comparisons between Georgia and national NAEP results. These comparisons include Grades 4 and 8 Reading and Math for Free and Reduced Lunch; Non-Free and Reduced Lunch; White, Black, and Hispanic students:

- In 96% of the NAEP comparisons, Georgia is improving at the same rate or faster than the nation.
- In 75% of the comparisons, Georgia is improving at a rate faster than the nation.
- In 46% of the comparisons, Georgia is now at or above the national average, as opposed to 29% in 2003.

One highlight which emerges from these comparisons is that in both reading and mathematics, for Grades 4 and 8, Georgia is not only narrowing the poverty-based achievement gap but narrowing it at a faster rate than the nation (see Table A5 below). **The State is especially proud of the mathematics performance of its high-poverty 8th graders, who had been taught using the GPS in mathematics for three years, including the equivalent of Algebra I.**

Table A5: Comparison of GA to Nation—Reducing the Poverty-Based Student Achievement Gap

Grade 4 Reading 2003-2007		**Grade 4 Math 2003-2009**		**Grade 8 Reading 2003-2007**		**Grade 8 Math 2003-2009**	
Free & Reduced Lunch		Free & Reduced Lunch		Free & Reduced Lunch		Free & Reduced Lunch	
Nation-up 5 points	200-205	Nation-up 6 points	222-228	Nation-up 1 point	246-247	Nation-up 8 points	258-266
Georgia-up **7** points	200-207	Georgia-up 6 points	219-225	Georgia-up **4** points	243-247	Georgia-up **12** points	253-265
Non Free & Reduced Lunch		Non Free & Reduced Lunch		Non Free & Reduced Lunch		Non Free & Reduced Lunch	
Nation-up 3 points	229-232	Nation-up 6 points	244-250	Nation-no gain	271-271	Nation-up 6 points	287-293
Georgia-up **4** points	227-231	Georgia-up **8** points	241-249	Georgia-up **1** point	269-270	Georgia-up 6 points	284-290

Similarly, the race-based achievement gap is narrowing (see See *Appendix A39: NAEP, CRCT, and Graduation Rates)*, especially for Hispanic students. From 2003-2009 **on Grade 4 Math NAEP,** white students increased 6 points in the percent scoring at Basic or Above, **black students 7 points,** and **Hispanic students 14 points.** From 2003-2007 on Grade 4 Reading NAEP, white students increased 7 percentage points in the percent scoring at Basic or Above, black students increased 4 points, and Hispanic students increased a substantial **9** points. On Grade 8 reading, white and black students improved 2 points and Hispanic students 7 points. On **Grade 8 Math,** white students improved 4 points, while **black students improved 14 points** and **Hispanic students improved 11 points**. Table A6 below shows changes in average scores by student subgroup and Table A7 shows the actual gap reduction for each student subgroup (as measured by average scores).

Table A6: Comparison of GA to Nation—Reducing the Race/Ethnicity-Based Student Achievement Gap

Grade 4 Reading 2003-2007		Grade 4 Math 2003-2009		Grade 8 Reading 2003-2007		Grade 8 Math 2003-2009	
White Students		White Students		White Students		White Students	
Nation-up 3 points	227-230	Nation-up 5 points	243-248	Nation-no point	270-270	Nation-up 5 points	287-292
Georgia-up **4** points	226-230	Georgia-up **6** points	241-247	Georgia-up **3** points	268-271	Georgia-up 5 points	284-289
Black Students		Black Students		Black Students		Black Students	
Nation-up 6 points	197-203	Nation-up 6 points	216-222	Nation-no gains	244-244	Nation-up 8 points	252-260
Georgia-up **6** points	199-205	Georgia-up 4 points	217-221	Georgia-up **2** points	244-246	Georgia-up **12** points	250-262
Hispanic Students		Hispanic Students		Hispanic Students		Hispanic Students	
Nation-up 5 points	199-204	Nation-up 6 points	221-227	Nation-up 2 points	244-246	Nation-up 8 points	258-266
Georgia-up **11** points	201-212	Georgia-up 12 points	219-231	Georgia-up **5** points	245-250	Georgia-up 8 points	262-270

Table A7: Comparison of GA to Nation—Gap in 2007(2009) vs. Gap in 2003

Grade 4 Reading 2003-2007			Grade 4 Math 2003-2009			Grade 8 Reading 2003-2007			Grade 8 Math 2003-2009		
FRL-Non-FRL	2003	2007	FRL-Non-FRL	2003	2009	FRL-Non-FRL	2003	2007	FRL-Non-FRL	2003	2009
Nation	29	27	Nation	29	27	Nation	25	24	Nation	29	27
Georgia	27	**24**	Georgia	31	**25**	Georgia	26	**23**	Georgia	31	**25**
Black-White	2003	2007	Black-White	2003	2009	Black-White	2003	2007	Black-White	2003	2009
Nation	30	27	Nation	27	26	Nation	26	26	Nation	35	32
Georgia	27	**25**	Georgia	24	26	Georgia	24	**25**	Georgia	34	**27**
Hispanic-White	2003	2007	Hispanic-White	2003	2009	Hispanic-White	2003	2007	Hispanic-White	2003	2009
Nation	28	26	Nation	22	21	Nation	26	24	Nation	29	26
Georgia	25	**18**	Georgia	22	**16**	Georgia	23	**21**	Georgia	22	**19**

Reading CRCT Results. The grade 4 and 8 CRCTs in reading show a similar pattern of very positive narrowing of race-based and poverty-based gaps. In **Grade 4 Reading:** (1) African American and Hispanic students alike have made gains in the percent of students meeting or exceeding standards in grade 4 reading (11 and 13 percentage points respectively) that are greater than the gains made by White students (3 percentage points); (2) Students classified as Migrant or Limited English Proficient have also made substantial gains (18 and 22 percentage points respectively); (3) Economically disadvantaged students have increased the percentage meeting or exceeding standards by 9 percentage points while the non-economically disadvantaged have made gains of 4 percentage points; and (4) Students with disabilities have only made gains of 6 percentage points, highlighting them as a group that needs additional attention. All comparisons were made from the year of implementation and assessment of the new GPS (SY06/SY09). In **Grade 8 Reading:** (1) African American and Hispanic students alike have made gains in the percent of students meeting or exceeding standards (9 and 13 percentage points respectively), that are greater than the gains made by White students (3 percentage points); (2) Students with disabilities, Migrant, and Limited English Proficient students have made significant gains (13, 14 and 21 percentage points respectively); and (3) Economically disadvantaged students have made gains of 9 percentage points while the non-economically disadvantaged have gained 3 percentage points. See *Appendix A39: NAEP, CRCT, and Graduation Rates* and *Appendix A40: Trend Analysis.*

Language Arts CRCT Results. In **Grades 4** and **8 Language Arts,** the gap narrowed for all targeted groups, with the most substantial gains made by the following subgroups: Hispanic students in grade 4 (15 points) and in grade 8 (14 points); African American students in grade 4 (10 points) and in grade 8 (7 points); Limited English Proficient students in grade 4 (24 points) and grade 8 (20 points); and Migrant students in grade 4 (20 points) and grade 8 (14 points). See *Appendix A39: NAEP, CRCT, and Graduation Rates* and *Appendix A40: Trend Analysis.*

Mathematics CRCT Results. Comparisons in Mathematics are possible only for 2007-08 and 2008-09 (since GPS in Math were implemented in SY2008). **Fourth-grade students classified as Migrant and Limited English Proficient experienced substantial gains within that one year on the Math CRCT,** improving 8 and 9 percentage points respectively. White students improved by 5 percentage points, Black students

by 4, and Hispanic students by 3 points. For grade 8, the race-based achievement gaps for Hispanic students and the poverty-based achievement gap are narrowing (3 and 2 points respectively vs. under 2 points for all students). Both trends can be classified as *positive narrowing*. However, gains for African American students (1 point) were not as great as for Whites and Hispanics, pointing to the need for further work with this subgroup. Gaps have also narrowed for economically disadvantaged students (2 points), Limited English Proficient students (4 points), and students with disabilities (almost 3 points). See *Appendix A39: NAEP, CRCT, and Graduation Rates* and *Appendix A40: Trend Analysis.*

c) Increasing High School Graduation Rates. Georgia currently uses the Leaver Rate, one of the federally-approved formulas for calculations, but will move to the Cohort Rate in 2011. Georgia's high school graduation rate has increased **almost 16 percentage points since 2003 from 63.3% to 78.9%, fueled in part by differential increases across African American, Hispanic, and High-Poverty sub-groups.** While White students continue to have higher graduation rates than other ethnic groups, African American and Hispanic students are closing the gap, experiencing an increase of 22 and 23 percentage points respectively between 2003 and 2009 compared to a 12 percentage point increase for White students. Economically disadvantaged students experienced a larger increase (21 percentage points) than non-economically disadvantaged students (15 percentage points). Students with Limited English Proficiency also outperformed, increasing by 17 percentage points. While students with disabilities (SWD) increased 13 percentage points, students without disabilities increased by 16 points, indicating a need for stronger focus on the SWD subgroup. See Figures A3 and A4 below, and *Appendix A39: NAEP, CRCT, and Graduation Rates* and *Appendix A40: Trend Analysis.*

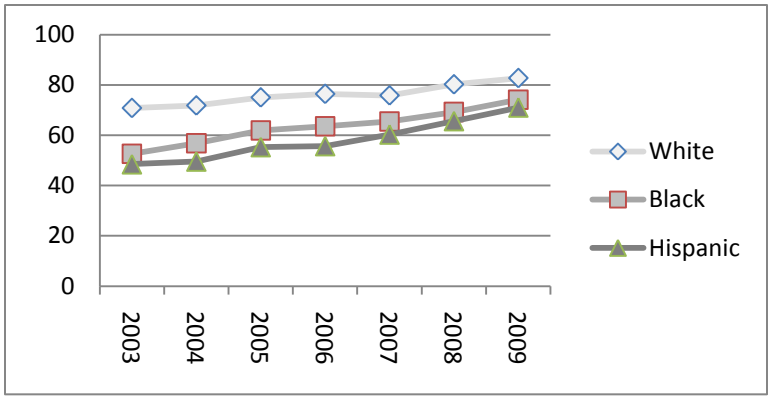


Fig A3: Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity, 2003-2009

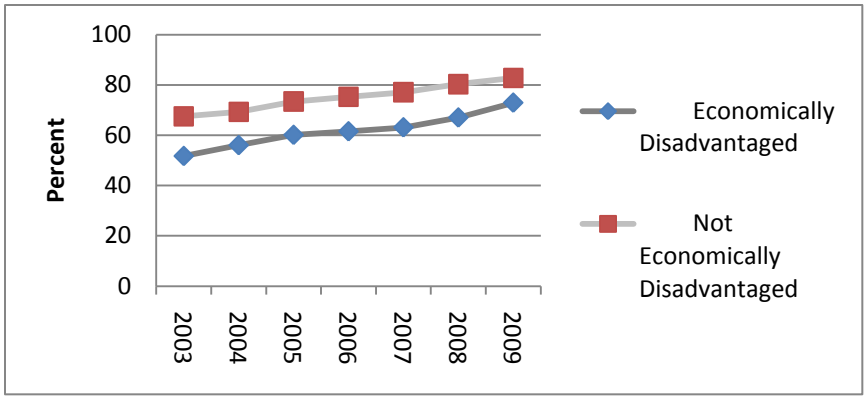


Fig A4: Graduation Rates by Socio-Economic Status, 2003-2009

Contributing Actions. The increases in overall student achievement, decreases in student achievement gaps among subgroups, and increases in high school graduation rates can be attributed to several State-driven actions described in Section A(3)(i). In broad terms, **the implementation of the GPS** with an effective rollout which included professional development, instructional frameworks, and focused financial resources appears to have had a strong positive impact on student achievement. **Local and regional STEM-focused initiatives** (Science and Math Mentor Program; PRISM, Math Science Partnership competitive grant program targeted at improving the content knowledge and teaching skills of 3rd-12th grade math and science teachers) have also contributed to the increases in mathematics achievement. **Effective intervention for Low Achieving Schools** through GAPSS and Differentiated Accountability has contributed to the increased achievement of various subgroups, and especially economically disadvantaged students, who are clustered in schools which have received state support. The **Georgia Virtual School** has had proven success in increasing achievement in upper-level courses, which have helped pull overall achievement higher. **Graduation coaches** have had immediate impact on graduation rates by focusing on students most likely to drop out. A **robust and improving educator pipeline** undergirds and makes all reform efforts possible. **Charter schools** are also important contributors to student success. Finally, **systematic use of data for accountability and school improvement** has led educators to focus more intensively on the students who need the most support.

(B) Standards and Assessments (70 total points)

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

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

(i) The State's participation in a consortium of States that— *(20 points)*
- (a) Is working toward jointly developing and adopting a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) that are supported by evidence that they are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation; and
- (b) Includes a significant number of States; and

(ii) — *(20 points)*

(a) For Phase 1 applications, the State's high-quality plan demonstrating its commitment to and progress toward adopting a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) by August 2, 2010, or, at a minimum, by a later date in 2010 specified by the State, and to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way; or

(b) For Phase 2 applications, the State's adoption of a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) by August 2, 2010, or, at a minimum, by a later date in 2010 specified by the State in a high-quality plan toward which the State has made significant progress, and its commitment to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way.[8]

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

Evidence for (B)(1)(i):
- A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of a standards consortium.
- A copy of the final standards or, if the standards are not yet final, a copy of the draft standards and anticipated date for completing the

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

standards.
- Documentation that the standards are or will be internationally benchmarked and that, when well-implemented, will help to ensure that students are prepared for college and careers.
- The number of States participating in the standards consortium and the list of these States.

Evidence for (B)(1)(ii):
For Phase 1 applicants:
- A description of the legal process in the State for adopting standards, and the State's plan, current progress, and timeframe for adoption.

For Phase 2 applicants:
- Evidence that the State has adopted the standards. Or, if the State has not yet adopted the standards, a description of the legal process in the State for adopting standards and the State's plan, current progress, and timeframe for adoption.

(B)(1)(i) <u>Commitment to Develop and Adopt a Common Set of High-Quality Standards</u>

Participation and Leadership in Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI): Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue co-chairs the CCSSI for the National Governors Association (NGA) and Georgia is one of fifty-one states and territories that has joined the CCSSI jointly led by the NGA and Council of Chief State School Officers (See *Appendix A36: CCSI press release*). As a signatory, Georgia has committed to joining a state-led process to develop a common core of state standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics for grades K-12 which are internationally benchmarked and aligned with college and work expectations. A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement is included in *Appendix B1: Common Core Standards MOA.* As a leader in the CCSI, Georgia has been designated as one of a select group of states given the opportunity to provide early review and feedback for both ELA and mathematics common core standards. Georgia has already submitted comments on the draft standards and reviewed the Standards Sources. These include national and international benchmarking. (See *Appendix B2: Draft Standards in ELA and Mathematics*.) Georgia's participation in the CCSSI is a logical extension of its concerted efforts to strengthen the rigor and relevance of its standards and curriculum. These include development and implementation of the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) and Georgia's work with the American Diploma Project and College and Career Ready Policy Institute. See Sections (A) (1)

and (A) (3). Additionally, Georgia is one of four states selected by national PTA to lead a campaign for common standards. Participants in this campaign have already shown a deep commitment to a common, rigorous set of K-12 standards for all students.

(B)(1)(ii) High-Quality Plan to Adopt Common Standards by August 2, 2010 and to Implement the Standards

Process for Standards Adoption: As a leader in the standards-based movement, Georgia is poised to adopt the common standards quickly with a target date of July 2010. Georgia can move expeditiously because 1) the State has a streamlined process for adoption in place; 2) Georgia is starting from a place of strong standards; 3) gaps between the current and future standards are relatively small, so 4) rapid implementation at scale is reasonable. First, Georgia has an established and streamlined standards adoption process with a total adoption time of approximately six months or less. See *Appendix A34: Georgia Assessment Development Process.* Due to GaDOE's significant involvement in developing and reviewing the Common Core Standards, the State believes that the GPS is already very well aligned to the new standards. The relatively small gaps between the GPS and common core standards can be quickly resolved since the review process is well underway. Once CCSI releases the final standards, the GaDOE will conduct an additional review with its ELA and Math Content Advisory Boards, create draft documents showing the alignment of GPS and Common Core Standards, vet these documents with multiple groups, revise them and recommend them to the Superintendent, Executive Committee, and Cabinet in April 2010. The GaDOE anticipates taking the Common Core Standards to the SBOE as an Item for Information in May 2010 and an Item for State Board Action in July 2010.

Plan for Implementation of Common Core Standards (CCS): Subsequent to the adoption of CCS by the SBOE, Georgia's plan for implementation will begin with briefing and discussion sessions with the GaDOE Academic Standards Council, comprised of members from varied state education stakeholders including all 7 education agencies representing the Alliance, professional organizations, parent organizations, and business partners. The Council will assist with the communication plan and definition of professional learning. Sub-councils in both ELA and mathematics will refine the varied aspects of both communication and training components. Implementation of CCS classrooms will begin in the Fall with the 2011-12 school year dedicated to the alignment of current and future standards, and development of

curriculum materials and classroom resources. Overall, CCS implementation will be very similar to that of GPS described in (A) (3). Prior to formal implementation of CCS, the State will re-evaluate, reorganize, and improve its existing resources on www.georgiastandards.org to ensure that the frameworks, formative assessment items, and core units needed by educators are in place and that educators and the public know about them. The State will develop and require targeted professional learning for educators on high-quality delivery of the standards and meaningful use of assessment data and will help build LEA capacity to ensure fidelity of CCS implementation.

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

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

(i) Is working toward jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice); and

(ii) Includes a significant number of States.

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

Evidence for (B)(2):

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

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

Just as Georgia is committed to raising standards for all students, Georgia is committed to implementing high-quality and rigorous assessments, aligned with CCS, to measure student achievement as a way of ensuring that CCS are taught effectively. At its Annual Policy Forum, the

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) had in-depth conversations regarding development of common core assessments and setting up a possible assessment consortium. Conversations revolved around the potential perpetuated issues surrounding different assessments with different proficiency scores for different regions and states. On December 18, CCSSO hosted a conference call to discuss the assessment consortium. **Georgia believes that significant benefits will derive from a consortium approach to assessment development and welcomes the opportunity to collaborate in a national or regional consortium as evidenced by the attached letter** (see *Appendix B3: Georgia's Letter of Intent*). Additionally, Georgia has signed preliminary MOUs with a number of consortia: 1) the consortium led by CCSSO with 36 states (see *Appendix B4: CCSSO Balanced Assessment Consortium),* 2) the consortium led by Achieve with 27 states (see *Appendix B5: Achieve Letter*), and 3) the consortium led by Florida (see *Appendix B6: Florida Assessment Consortium MOU*). As part of an assessment consortium, Georgia will apply for the additional RT3 grant funds to support the development of a common assessment. Georgia is excited about the opportunity to partner with states to build a new, cohesive, innovative, and rigorous assessment program that directly informs teaching and learning. Georgia is well-poised to inform the development efforts given the State's lengthy history with assessment, including being one of the first states to implement an online assessment program as well as an online repository of high-quality aligned test items for formative use in classrooms throughout the state. Moreover, Georgia has developed a strategic approach to the development of additional assessments, balancing existing assessments with newly developed ones to maximize resources. In the case of CCS, the tight alignment between GPS and CCS should allow the State to use the current assessment system to test the CCS until the common core assessments are implemented. The State will conduct a gaps analysis between its current assessment system and the requirements of the new standards to evaluate the best way to test in the interim. The State will not structurally alter its existing assessments with common core assessments right around the corner, but will instead consider options such as: (1) targeted assessments that test the areas of overlap between common core standards and GPS, or (2) building new items for assessment within current vendor contracts.

Section B(3) – Reform Plan Criteria

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

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

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

(B)(3) <u>Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments</u>

Key Components of Transition Plan: To support the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments, Georgia builds on a strong foundation of developing high standards and implementing them effectively and in a timely manner. Georgia has gained extensive expertise in effective implementation of new standards through its recent multi-year implementation of the comprehensive GPS, which began in the 2004-2005 school year and is in the final phase-in cycle for high school mathematics. The State understands that successful transition to new standards requires the following: 1) development of and access to high-quality instructional materials, resources, and assessments; 2) targeted professional development informed by seamless information on student and teacher performance; 3) a communications plan which enlists widespread support and use of resources; 4) a methodology for ensuring fidelity of implementation; and 5) alignment of high school

exit criteria with college and work readiness. To support the transition to the Common Core, Georgia also plans to develop two additional resources for teachers: 1) a formative assessment tool kit, and 2) benchmark assessments. The formative assessment tool kit will comprise high-quality aligned test items (of different types), projects, and questioning techniques designed to inform teaching and learning as it is taking place. The Office of Standards, Instruction and Assessment (OSIA) within GaDOE will deliver significant professional development to educators to support successful and meaningful use of the toolkit by classroom teachers. SIA will develop benchmark assessments, aligned to the standards, to be given at intervals throughout the year. These will be low-stakes assessments designed to provide information on students' preparedness for the end of the year assessment. Data from the benchmark assessments will not be used in value-added models to determine teachers' impact on student growth, but rather to inform teachers and administrators, as well as students and parents, about where the student is on the pathway to proficiency.

Proficiency-based Advancement: Georgia is highly interested in instituting proficiency-based advancement rules that will require rigorous standards for student performance in the classroom. While no proven national model exists today, several states have created proficiency-based advancement policies (some targeted at subject-specific progression, others at whole-grade progression, based on proficiency rather than seat time), and are beginning to "experiment" with actual programs that may support these policies. Georgia believes it needs more time to garner stakeholder support (e.g., districts, superintendents, school boards, parent communities) and to develop programs that will allow Georgia students to advance when ready rather than based on seat time. In the meantime, Georgia will promote **a provision in State Board Rules allowing districts to apply for a waiver from seat-based credit requirements, thus allowing students the opportunity to earn credit through proficiency-based advancement.** Georgia school districts can use the Instructional Program Request from Section (c) in SBOE 160-1-3-.02 to apply for a seat time waiver from SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.48 regarding high school graduation requirements specified in Section (3)6.(i). Section (3)6.(i) stipulates that a unit of credit for graduation be awarded to students only for successful completion of state-approved courses of study based on a minimum of 150 clock hours of instruction provided during the regular school year, 135 clock hours of instruction in an approved block schedule during the regular school day, or a minimum120 clock hours of instruction in summer school. SBOE Rule 160-

1-3-.02 Suspension of Rules and Laws (waivers) provides districts with the requirements and process for requesting a waiver. Georgia will also encourage the use of **The Move On When Ready Act** (O.C.G.A. §20-2-161.3), a strong indicator of Georgia's intent to build students' college and career readiness. Passed in 2009, the legislation enables 11th and 12th grade students who have demonstrated readiness for college-level work to leave their assigned high schools to attend a college or technical school fulltime to complete high school graduation requirements while earning college credit. State funding for secondary education follows the students to the postsecondary campus, thus ensuring that students do not tap into limited HOPE Scholarship eligibility.

STEM-Specific Focus: The State believes that one major policy change will stimulate a beneficial cycle of STEM as an instructional focus. **The State will require that all elementary and middle schools make Science their second AYP indicator.** The rationale for this strategy is two-fold: First, student interest in and preparation for science in high school must begin at the elementary school level. Unfortunately, teachers and principals often de-emphasize science, partly because of the strong focus on reading and mathematics, where distinct accountability consequences are in place, and partly because many elementary and middle school teachers lack strong content knowledge in the sciences. Second, since what is measured matters, requiring Science as a second AYP indicator will put an instructional focus on teaching and learning the subject. Policy change is a first step which will be accompanied by appropriate professional development supports provided by the State to LEAs. Additional activities specific to STEM-related Standards and Assessments are embedded within the action plan that follows and include: raising educator awareness of STEM resources, promoting a STEM culture in schools, developing and disseminating applied STEM modules that promote a problem-based inquiry approach to STEM, and initiating STEM applied learning partnerships.

Before diving into the details of Georgia's action plan for supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments, it is useful to look at the overall organization of the RT3 implementation effort in the area of Standards and Assessments in Figure B1 below.

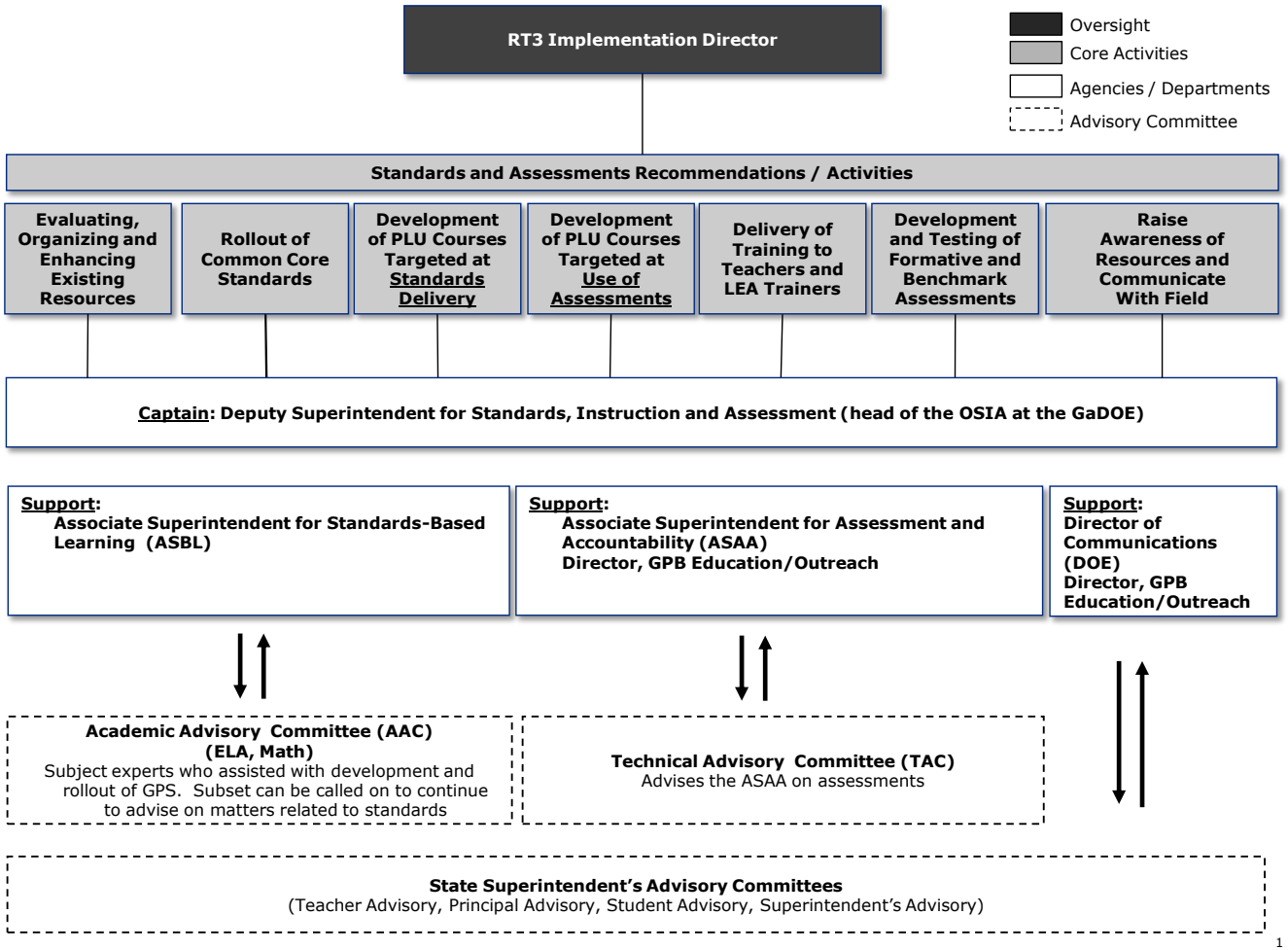


Figure B1: Oversight Structure for the Standards and Assessments reform area under RT3

Georgia's detailed action plan for supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments follows on the next page.

GOAL 1: Use current assessment system to test common core standards until common core assessments are implemented. *Rationale: Conserve assessment resources for common core assessment reforms.*		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	**TIMELINE**	**RESPONSIBILITY**
ACTIVITY (1): Perform gap analysis to determine adjustments to current assessments necessary to test common core standards. Structure of current assessments will not change.	Jan-Jul 2010	ASAA
ACTIVITY (2): Determine measure necessary to use current assessments to test common core (i.e. test only areas of overlap, develop select new items under current vendor contract)	Aug 2010-Jun 2011	ASAA
ACTIVITY (3): Test common core	Starting in April 2012	LEAs
GOAL 2: Organize, evaluate, and improve existing resources in preparation for Common Core Standards Implementation. *Rationale: Enable educators to locate and use resources more effectively.*		
ACTIVITY (4): Engage the existing Academic Advisory Committee (AAC), comprised of subject experts and agency reps, in determining site content. AAC currently advises OSIA on curriculum and content-related decisions.	May-Sept 2010	DSSIA
ACTIVITY (5): Hire 6 (3 for each of the Common Core subjects) teachers on loan and 3 online development specialists to develop new frameworks, formative assessments items (see formative assessment toolkit activity) and core units.	Aug-Sept 2010	DSSIA
ACTIVITY (6): Design new Common Core content for existing site (www.georgiastandards.org)	Sept 2010-Dec 2010	Teachers on Loan (OSIA)
ACTIVITY (7): Update existing curriculum content for alignment with Common Core standards	Sept 2010-May 2011	Teachers on Loan (OSIA)
ACTIVITY (8): Use IT resources at DOE to create advanced search engine	Aug 2010-May 2011	OSIA/Operations Analyst (IT)
ACTIVITY (9): Conduct evaluation of content through regular surveys to teachers (to measure usefulness of resources, extent to which teachers find the information accessible, helpful and easy to use in the classroom, etc.). After teachers have had a chance to use the resources.	Starting in Spring 2012	OSIA
ACTIVITY (10): Conduct maintenance / implement updates to website to ensure currency and usefulness of site to educators	Ongoing	OSIA Program Managers, GeorgiaStandards.org Program Specialists

GOAL 3: Raise awareness of existing resources and new standards in preparation. *Rationale: Facilitate statewide use of best and emerging practices in implementing standards.*		
ACTIVITY (11): Notify district superintendents of new standards and training with a letter	April 2011	OSIA Program Managers
ACTIVITY (12): Notify principals of new standards and training with an email	May 2011	OSIA Program Managers
ACTIVITY (13): Conduct a webinar for curriculum instructors	May 2011	OSIA Program Managers, OESI Trainers
ACTIVITY (14): Utilize existing monthly newsletters distributed to schools (district central offices – curriculum and learning teams; principals; and teachers) by program managers to promote revamped website and resources.	By May 2011	OSIA Program Managers
ACTIVITY (15): Promote resources to teachers in training sessions (teachers will be required to take a new type of training in the area of standards and assessments, especially developed by GaDOE – more on this below).	July-Aug 2011	OSIA Program Managers
ACTIVITY (16): Utilize reach of Georgia Public Broadcasting to promote www.georgiastandards.org nationally and locally to educators.	Ongoing	GPB, OSIA Program Managers
GOAL 4: Ensure that all Georgia students have equal opportunity, through classroom instruction, to achieve mastery of standards by equipping Georgia teachers with the knowledge and skills to teach to the common core standards and use data (through assessments aligned to standards) to modify instruction and enhance student learning.		
GOAL 4A: Develop and require Professional Learning Units (PLU) courses targeted at high quality delivery of standards and meaningful use of assessment data to renew certification. *Rationale: Provide incentive and resources for teachers to teach to standards in the most effective manner and to use data appropriately to modify instruction based on emerging practice.*		
ACTIVITY (17): Design and develop content and format of online PLU courses in new standards. One 10-hour PLU course on standards. Differentiated approach depending on group of teachers (new teachers will receive online training on standards that involves facilitator; veteran teachers will receive online training without facilitators)	May 2010-June 2011	Program Managers and Assessment Specialists (OSIA)
ACTIVITY (18): Enlist assistance of Academic Advisory Committee throughout PLU development phase	May 2010-June 2011	DSSIA and Program Managers (OSIA), AAC
ACTIVITY (19): Notify educators of new PLU (content, training logistics, timing) by emailing press releases and invitations to targeted distribution list	April 2011-May 2011	OSIA Director of Communications

ACTIVITY (20): Disseminate online PLUs via Georgia Virtual School (GAVS). New teachers receive online training on standards with facilitators; veteran teachers without facilitators. Assessment-related training is delivered with facilitators.	Starting in July 2011, then ongoing	OSIA Program Managers, GAVS specialists, Facilitators
ACTIVITY (21): Track participation in online PLUs by district, school and content area	Ongoing	OSIA Program Managers, PSC (recertification requirements)
ACTIVITY (22): Conduct teacher survey on usefulness of PLU. Adapt content of PLU based on feedback.	Ongoing	Project managers (OSIA)
GOAL 4B: Ensure fidelity of standards implementation by supporting LEAs in delivering appropriate professional learning to teachers. *Rationale*: Effective implementation of new standards at school level is critical for widespread impact.		
ACTIVITY (23): Deliver face-to face training to local / district resources at regional meetings (4 participants/trainees per school) to provide ongoing professional development support to teachers in the area of new standards and use of assessment data. Hold regional training sessions for 3 days.	May-June 2011	OSIA Program Managers
ACTIVITY (24): Video tape training as a resource and post video-taped training on the website for use by stakeholders	May-June 2011	OSIA Program Managers, GAVS
ACTIVITY (25): Include Standards & Assessments items in new teacher evaluation tool to be developed by State in collaboration with participating LEAs	Evaluation tool will be validated June 2010- June 2011	OESI, GOSA, CFG, TAC, Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (26): Implement teacher evaluation tool in participating LEAs, and then expand implementation to additional districts	Ongoing, beginning in September 2011	Participating LEAs, OESI, GOSA
GOAL 4C: Create formative assessment toolbox for use by educators. *Rationale: Give educators the resources to develop formative assessments and use them real time in order to improve classroom instruction.*		
ACTIVITY (27): Hire 4 new assessment specialists to develop 10-hour PLU on use of assessments and data to modify / improve instruction, and to manage vendor on formative and benchmark assessments.	May-Aug 2010	ASAA
ACTIVITY (28): Engage existing Program Managers, Technical Advisory Committee (advises ASAA on assessments) and Academic Advisory Committee to act as sounding board for formative assessment development ideas. Leverage what already exists in the field through the Academic Advisory Committee (includes LEA representation)	May-Aug 2010	ASAA
ACTIVITY (29): Determine specifications and write Request for Proposal (RFP) to select vendor to develop items for inclusion in formative assessments, and select vendor	Aug-Dec 2010	ASAA and AAC

ACTIVITY (30): Develop formative assessment toolkit items	Jan-Sept 2011	4 assessment specialists and assessment vendor
ACTIVITY (31): Incorporate training on assessments into PLU course (see above)	Aug 2010-June 2011	Program Managers in OSIA
ACTIVITY (32): Train LEAs on design and use of formative assessments so that they are able to provide ongoing professional development support to teachers in the area of formative assessments	April-May 2011	OSIA Program Managers
ACTIVITY (33): Train teachers on design and use of formative assessment (incorporated into 10-hour online PLU course)	Starting in July 2011 - ongoing	OSIA Program Managers
ACTIVITY (34): Field-test formative assessment items with 1,000 students / item	Aug 2011-June 2012	ASAA and Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (35): Make formative assessment toolkit available online	Aug 2012	ASAA
ACTIVITY (36): Issue communication to field / educators – use targeted distribution list to announce release of formative assessment toolkit for teachers	Aug 2012	ASAA and OSIA Director of Communications
ACTIVITY (37): Track usage of formative assessment site (e.g., number of tests built and administered)	Starting in Aug 2012 and ongoing	ASAA
ACTIVITY (38): Conduct evaluation of formative assessment toolkit and modify as needed based on teacher feedback (fold questions into same teacher survey that asks about utility of www.georgiastandards.org resources and standard PLU course)	Starting in Aug 2012 and ongoing	ASAA
GOAL 4d: Create benchmark assessments where some degree of curriculum sequencing can help compensate for student mobility. *Rationale: Provide educators with data that is aligned to summative assessments and can be used to provide critical feedback on and improve instruction throughout the course of the school year.*		
ACTIVITY (39): Form advisory group that is a cross section of Academic and Technical Advisory Groups, with targeted new members as deemed appropriate	May-June 2010	ASAA and Assessment Specialists
ACTIVITY (40): Determine sequencing solution: a) sequence the State curriculum to make benchmark assessment comparable across the state, or b) use un-sequenced benchmark assessments designed to mirror the end of year, summative assessments	June-July 2010	ASAA, Assessment Specialists, Academic Standards Program Managers, Advisory Group
ACTIVITY (41): Select vendor to develop new benchmark assessments to provide low stakes feedback to teachers and students	June-Sept 2010	ASAA and Advisory Group

ACTIVITY (42): Develop tests in Common Core subject areas (ELA and math) over a two-year period of time	Oct 2010 – June 2012	ASAA, Assessment Specialists, and vendor
ACTIVITY (43): Issue communication to field / educators – use targeted distribution list to announce release of benchmark assessments for teachers	June 2012	ASAA, Academic Standards, and Communications Director
ACTIVITY (44): Provide online training to educators on benchmark assessments (part of the same 10-hour PLU course)	Starting in July 2012	ASAA, GAVS
GOAL 5: Increase global competitiveness of Georgia's students, especially in STEM, through internationally benchmarked assessments and innovative coursework. *Rationale: Provide cost-effective design and development.*		
ACTIVITY (45): Participate in Common Assessment consortium, and apply for Common Assessment program funds as part of a consortium. Collaboration with other States allows for more cost-effective design and development of these assessments.	March-June 2010	ASAA
ACTIVITY (46): Work with partner states to develop common assessments	Sept 2010-Aug 2012	ASAA and Assessment Specialists
GOAL 6: Ensure student success, in college and beyond, by aligning high school exit criteria and college entrance requirements with the new standards and assessments. *Rationale: Alignment critical for successful transition across educational system.*		
ACTIVITY (47): Replace GHSGTs with EOCTs once EOCTs become available. Align Georgia's high school exit requirements more closely with college entrance requirements (EOCTs are more rigorous tests). Notify for change in graduation requirements; develop EOCTs in Physics and World History; and administer new EOCTs as funding becomes available for core areas such as chemistry and environmental science.	Contingent on State budget (need at least 2 more EOCTs)	ASAA
ACTIVITY (48): Conduct ongoing review of high school exit criteria in view of college entrance requirements, with openness to adjusting high school exit criteria again in the future. Analyze student P-16 trend data once it becomes available (longer-term) from the State Longitudinal Data System. K-12 systems and institutions of higher education can begin to identify what courses / what kind of preparation in high school help students be more successful in college (i.e., no remediation classes).	Need at least a few years worth of data *(May be 2014-15 before have sufficient data)*	OSIA

Performance Measures *Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.*	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
1. Percent of veteran teachers statewide, by content area (Math, ELA) and overall, who participate in state-developed PLU on standards	N/A (1)	N/A (1)	50%	75%	100%
2. Percent of new teachers statewide, by content area (Math, ELA) and overall, who participate in state-developed PLU on standards	N/A (1)	N/A (1)	100%	100%	100%
3. Percent of veteran teachers, by tested subject area and overall, who participate in state-developed PLU on assessments and use of data to modify instruction	N/A (1)	N/A (1)	50%	75%	100%
4. Percent of new teachers, by tested subject area and overall, who participate in state-developed PLU on assessments and use of data to modify instruction	N/A (1)	N/A (1)	100%	100%	100%
5. Percent of teachers, by content area and overall, in Participating LEAs who score above threshold score on those strands in the evaluation tool that pertain to knowledge of standards, delivery of standards, and development /use of assessments to boost student learning	N/A (2)	N/A (2)	TBD (2)	TBD (2)	TBD (2)
6. Percent of teachers, by content area and overall, in Participating LEAs, using formative assessments in their classrooms	N/A (3)	N/A (3)	N/A (3)	TBD (3)	TBD (3)
7. Usage of www.georgiastandards.org site: Number of unique visitors per year separated into teachers vs. non-teachers	N/A (4)	N/A (4)	TBD (4)	TBD (4)	TBD (4)
8. Usage of www.georgiaoas.org site: Number of unique visitors per year separated into teachers vs. non-teachers	N/A (4)	N/A (4)	TBD (4)	TBD (4)	TBD (4)

Explanations:

(1) Baseline year does not apply since Common Core Standards (CCS) have not been rolled out yet (no training modules in place yet). CCS will be adopted in August 2010, and then during SY 2010-11, resources in support of new standards will be organized and published, and training on new standards will be developed. Training will be delivered beginning in 2011-12, with the initial goal of 50% of veteran teachers going through training in the first year and with the ultimate goal of 100% of veteran teachers going through training by end of 2013-14. Since PLU will be required for recertification, Georgia believes it can achieve this goal. New teachers will be expected to take the PLU in their first year of teaching. The same timeline and goals apply to Assessments PLU.

(2) Georgia is currently not able to develop a baseline for percent of teachers who score above threshold score on the strands in the evaluation tool that pertain to knowledge and delivery of standards since the evaluation tool will be finalized and validated in 2010-11, then implemented in 2011-12. The first year that Georgia will have data to establish a baseline is at the end of 2011-12 and will establish targets for 2012-13 and 2013-14.

(3) The baseline data will be collected through surveys to participating LEAs in 2010-11, and then targets will be established for 2011-12 through 2013-14.

(4) The data is not currently tracked at this level of granularity. GaDOE will begin to track number of unique visitors (teachers vs. non-teachers) in 2010-11, and then establish targets for 2011-12 through 2013-14

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

State Reform Conditions Criteria

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

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

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

Evidence:

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

Each year the Data Quality Campaign surveys all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico to assess states' progress towards and future plans for implementing DQC's 10 Essential Elements of a longitudinal data system. **DQC's 2009 annual survey identified Georgia as one of eleven states with all ten Elements implemented.** (See *Appendix C1: GaDOE press release on DQC report*.) Georgia is proud of this accomplishment, and the state is committed to further expanding and refining the data included in its statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS) to keep it on the leading edge of data collection.

Georgia has demonstrated its commitment to and national leadership in strong data collection, especially in the area of gathering and using data on successful transitions from secondary to postsecondary education, with its participation in the National Student Clearinghouse's (NSC) StudentTracker Service. In 2008, **GOSA entered into a contract with the NSC to study postsecondary enrollment and other outcomes of Georgia's public high school graduates.** By matching official graduate class data from the GaDOE to NSC's postsecondary enrollment records from public and private colleges and universities across the nation, GOSA learned that approximately two-thirds of Georgia's high

school graduates between 2000 and 2008 enrolled in a postsecondary institution somewhere in the country. **Georgia is the first state to comprehensively study and publish such information,** and will delve more deeply into these research efforts with NSC data to learn about graduates' college persistence and completion rates. In fact, Georgia is one of five states participating in an NSC Pilot, funded through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to enhance the ability of schools, districts, and states to track high school students into and through postsecondary education. To this end, the Pilot will develop high-quality, actionable, data-driven reports that build on GOSA's work with the NSC to link P-12 and postsecondary data and will be used to improve the college readiness and success of students. The Pilot will also develop online professional development materials and capture lessons learned for going to scale nationally.

Table C1 below is a brief summary of the extent to which Georgia currently includes the America COMPETES Act elements in its SLDS. Ongoing refinement and development of all elements is currently underway. More detail is available in *Appendix C2: Georgia Performance on America COMPETES Act elements.*

Table C1: Summary of Georgia Performance on America COMPETES Act

Element of America COMPETES Act	In Place (per DQC)
Element 1 - A unique student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system.	Yes
Element 2 - Student-level enrollment, demographic and program participation information.	Yes
Element 3 - Student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out or complete P-16 education programs.	Yes
Element 4 - The capacity to communicate with higher education data systems	Yes
Element 5 - State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability.	Yes
Element 6 - Yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111 (b) of the ESEA of 1965.	Yes
Element 7 - Information on students not tested, by grade and subject.	In Process
Element 8 - A teacher identification system with the ability to match teachers to students.	Yes
Element 9 - Student level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned.	Yes
Element 10 - Student-level college readiness test scores.	Yes
Element 11 - Data that provide information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education including whether students enroll in remedial coursework.	Yes
Element 12 - Data that provide other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.	In Process

Reform Plan Criteria

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

The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan to ensure that data from the State's statewide longitudinal data system are accessible to, and used to inform and engage, as appropriate, key stakeholders (*e.g.*, parents, students, teachers, principals, LEA leaders, community members, unions, researchers, and policymakers); and that the data support decision-makers in the continuous improvement of efforts in such areas as policy, instruction, operations, management, resource allocation, and overall effectiveness.[9]

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

Seamless access to robust and comprehensive data on student and teacher performance represents a foundational element for Georgia's reform agenda. In addition, longitudinal data across the PreK-20 pipeline is critical to ensure that GaDOE has appropriate information available to support core policy decisions and ongoing operational improvements, and drive strategic allocation of resources based upon programs and policies that fundamentally improve student outcomes. Georgia recognizes the power of data, when used effectively, to optimize performance of the educational system at all levels: interactions between students and teachers, supports for teachers, school and district management, and state level supports and deployment of resources.

A data governance structure defining organizational roles and responsibilities is critical to any effective and sustainable data management system. Accordingly, the State has developed a data governance structure which sets out ownership of data, clear business processes for collecting and reporting data, accountability for data quality, and processes for data access. All agencies belonging to the Alliance

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

of Education Agency Heads (Georgia Department of Education, University System of Georgia, Georgia Professional Standards Commission, Technical College System of Georgia, Department of Early Care and Learning, Georgia Student Finance Commission, and the Governor's Office of Student Achievement) came together as part of the Data Systems Task Force to develop RT3 recommendations for Georgia. The agencies were joined in this effort by representatives from K-12 districts as well as representatives from research and business communities. Together this group developed a **comprehensive vision for a single Statewide Longitudinal Data System** (SLDS) that provides seamless data access to all users: students, parents, teachers, administrators, and researchers. Multiple funding sources were identified for the system including existing State funds, first and second round SLDS grants, RT3, and other sources. **The agency heads also signed a joint Memorandum of Understanding, outlining** how the SLDS will be governed/overseen, the kind of access to be provided to each agency, and the process to be used for reviewing and handling data requests from LEAs, researchers, legislators and the public (in addition to reports that the State intends to develop and publish) – see Appendix *A23: Data Governance MOU* as well as Figure C1 below for a graphical representation of how Data Systems implementation efforts will be structured and overseen.

Under the guidance of the agency heads and the Data Governance MOU, GaDOE has a clear plan to ensure that data is accessible to all critical constituents, including: parents, students, teachers, principals, LEA leaders, and community members. GaDOE will leverage emerging best practices from across the country (TX, KY, MN, etc.) to provide clear, concise reports on student, teacher, school, district and state performance via the web to core constituents. Several LEAs in Georgia (Gwinnett, for example), have recently created "parent portals," through which parents are able to access some student-level data items. In addition, GaDOE is working to improve its Student Profile application, which provides individual-level data to teachers for the students in their classes, including enrollments, course schedules, demographics, assessment histories and other data points. The State will learn from these existing efforts as it works to create reports to improve the ways in which the SLDS will inform and engage these stakeholders.

The Alliance of Education Agency Heads will develop a research agenda based on its five goals and RT3 strategies, using data collected in the SLDS. GOSA and the SLDS Director will reach out to other researchers around the state and nation in order to promote other research, and to streamline the process for providing access to SLDS data to other researchers. This process, including addressing researchers' technical questions about SLDS data items as well as a quality control function, ensuring that only methodologically sound work is being conducted using SLDS data, will be managed by the Data Governance Committee and its subcommittees—see Figure C1 below.

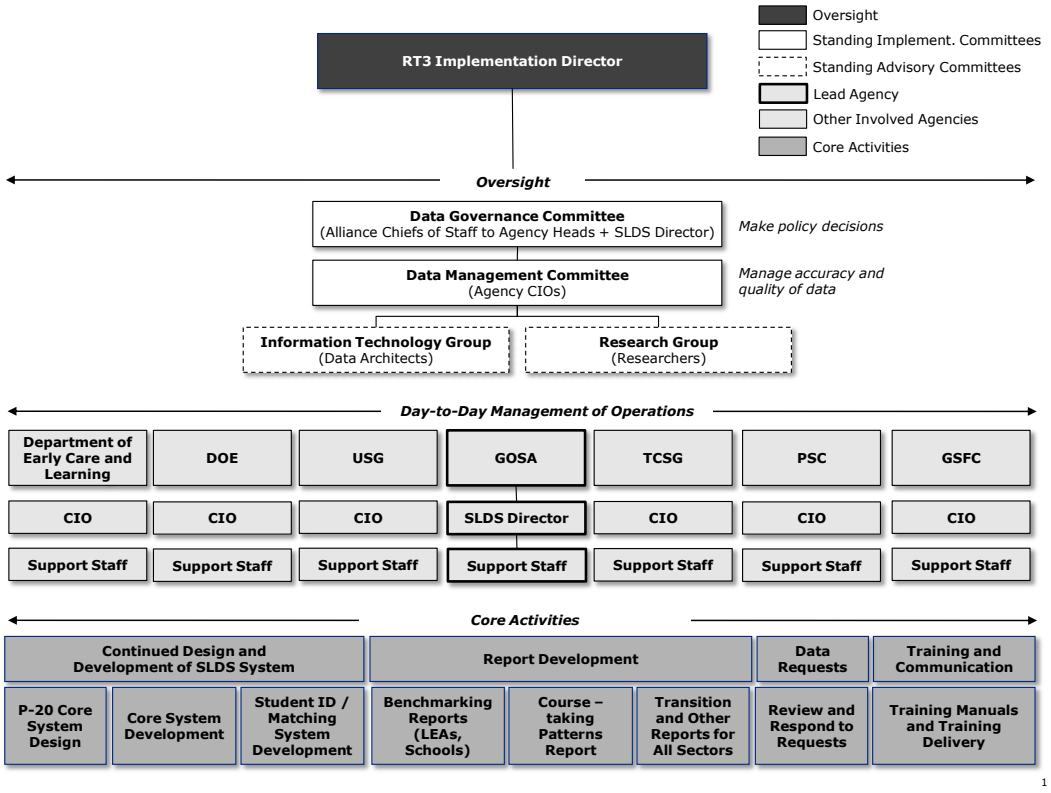


Figure C1: Oversight Structure for the Data Systems reform area under RT3

The action plan developed collaboratively by the Data Systems Task Force to allow for access and use of State data follows:

GOAL 1: Perform the initial tasks to plan out, staff, and govern the data system. *Rationale: Cross-agency representation, a dedicated oversight group, and detailed designing and planning are critical elements to address needs and concerns of all parties.*			
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	**TIMELINE**	**RESPONSIBILITY**	**FUNDING SOURCE**
ACTIVITY (1): Identify and convene a Data Governance Committee (DGC) to oversee the policy and data implications of the LDS.	Dec 2009-Apr 2010	RT3 SC, DGC	FY09 ARRA SLDS grant
ACTIVITY (2): Establish a group dedicated to the planning and operations of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) within the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA).	Dec 2009-Feb 2010	RT3 SC	FY09 ARRA SLDS grant
ACTIVITY (3): Perform the detailed planning activities required to design, develop, test, and launch the SLDS.	Jan-Apr 2010	SLDS Director	FY09 ARRA SLDS grant
GOAL 2: Develop the core functionality of the P-20 Data System to be able to track student transitions between agencies. *Rationale: Current state of data collection system including inputs by all data holders and users must be aligned/expanded to desired state.*			
ACTIVITY (4): Perform a data audit of all agency systems to determine what elements are currently collected and also which elements need to be added for Race to the Top.	Apr-Sept 2010	SLDS Director, SEAs	FY09 ARRA SLDS grant
ACTIVITY (5): Develop a data schema to normalize both old and new data elements to be fed to LDS. Different agencies today have different ways to define and calculate data elements (e.g. GPA may use just core subjects and be on a 5.0 scale or it may include all subjects and also be on a 4.0 scale). Agencies must ensure when submitting data to the central system that data elements and definitions are aligned	Nov 2010-Mar 2011	SLDS Director, DGC, SEAs	FY09 ARRA SLDS grant RT3 Grant
ACTIVITY (6): Develop the extract, transformation, and loading procedures required to link disparate agency systems into an Enterprise Data Hub. A central enterprise data hub is needed to normalize data across systems and provide a central area with the cleanest and most up-to-date data for research and reporting purposes	Dec 2010-Sept 2011	SLDS Staff, SEAs	FY09 ARRA SLDS grant
ACTIVITY (7): Inform and train LEAs and schools on any changes to data collection process. Modifying collection at the LEA level will require significant lead time and communications to increase compliance and minimize errors.	Jan-Aug 2011	GaDOE, LEAs	RT3 grant
Activity (8): Link the Enterprise Data Hub to non-educational systems (e.g. Department of Labor) and non-state systems (e.g. National Student Clearinghouse). A true P-20 system will track an individual from school through to life after school, across state lines, and within private colleges and universities.	Oct 2011-Dec 2012	SLDS Dir. and Staff, Participating Data-Sharing Organizations	RT3 grant

GOAL 3: Develop a data matching algorithm to properly identify students across schools, districts, and agencies. *Rationale: Initial matching algorithm must be continuously modified based on ongoing, real-world testing to provide as accurate a match as possible*			
ACTIVITY (9): Develop first-pass of data matching algorithm. A fuzzy-match algorithm is required to track transient students across districts	Jul 2010 – Jan 2011	SLDS Staff	FY09 ARRA SLDS grant
ACTIVITY (10): Modify existing data matching algorithm incorporating new data elements (iterative process).	Jan-Oct 2011	SLDS Staff	RT3 grant
GOAL 4: Develop a decision support system for researchers, principals, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders. *Rationale: System must be designed and modified based on ongoing feedback from and needs of end-users, including FERPA protections.*			
ACTIVITY (11): Create initial dashboards and reports using data that are already captured. Displaying existing system data linkages will demonstrate the benefits of tracking student data and provide early opportunity to pilot web-based portals and presentation tools.	Apr–Nov 2010	SLDS Staff, Research Group	FY09 ARRA SLDS grant
ACTIVITY (12): Conduct user feedback sessions to determine new reporting needs. Input from users of these reports will determine changes to exist reports and also help to identify new reports that would be most helpful to stakeholders.	Sept 2010-Feb 2011	SLDS Staff, System Stakeholders	FY09 ARRA SLDS grant
ACTIVITY (13): Evaluate BI, dashboard, and reporting tools and web-based presentation tools. Multiple options exist for presentation-layer tools. A study should be conducted to identify the most effective tool for Georgia's needs.	March 2011 – June 2011	SLDS Director & Staff, DGC	FY09 ARRA SLDS grant
ACTIVITY (14): Build reporting layer access and security. FERPA and other security requirements must be addressed explicitly.	May 2011 – Sept 2011	SLDS Director, DGC, Data Group	FY09 ARRA SLDS grant

Performance Measures *Performance measures for this criterion are optional.*	**Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)**	**End of SY 2010-2011**	**End of SY 2011-2012**	**End of SY 2012-2013**	**End of SY 2013-2014**
Number of Unique Visitors to the State's Report Card (website)	704,431*	745,724	787,017	828,310	869,603

* Between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009

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

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

(i) Increase the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness;

(ii) Support participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) and schools that are using instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) in providing effective professional development to teachers, principals and administrators on how to use these systems and the resulting data to support continuous instructional improvement; and

(iii) Make the data from instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice), together with statewide longitudinal data system data, available and accessible to researchers so that they have detailed information with which to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students (*e.g.*, students with disabilities, English language learners, students whose achievement is well below or above grade level).

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

(C)(3)(i) and (ii) Increase acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems and supporting participating LEAs in using instructional information systems. Georgia is committed to increasing the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems to provide teachers, principals, parents, students, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness. The State will take the lead in setting up policies to encourage and support increased adoption and use of local instructional improvement systems and in promoting practices that will lead to a better understanding by educators in participating LEAs of how to access, understand, and use information in the SLDS and in local instructional improvement systems to drive student performance. The State's plan includes strategies to (1) encourage and facilitate districts in

ensuring that educators have the technological tools and training necessary for accessing and using data to improve instruction; (2) provide rapid access to individual student performance information and online access to formative assessment toolkits and other instructional resources; (3) develop Instructional Improvement Reports for districts, schools, and teachers; (4) promote professional development / tutorials available in multiple formats in a variety of venues; (5) capture lessons learned and promote best practices in data usage; and (6) require educators seeking certification or recertification to receive training and show competence in the analysis, interpretation, and use of data.

The MOUs signed with participating LEAs include clear expectations that LEAs with an instructional improvement system in place fully utilize that system, and that other LEAs invest in such systems. There are a variety of instructional improvement systems in place in Georgia already, such as Teachscape (Edgenuity), Learning Village, and Renzulli, which provide teachers with a web-based portal to manage curriculum resources, create assessments for students, score, evaluate and group students, and develop report cards and profiles for each student, drastically reducing the time needed to obtain student-specific data. Some interactive online teaching and learning tools not only provide a rich database of curricular resources (aligned and coded to standards of a number of states) to engage and enrich students, but also help create individualized student profiles, and allow the teacher to differentiate the core curriculum by each student's profile (interests, learning styles, and expression styles). Regardless of the system, the common goal is for the teacher to spend less time on manual efforts to disseminate projects/tests and analyze results, and to have more time to design student-appropriate and student-differentiated instruction so that classroom instruction (and any assignments outside the classroom) meets the unique needs of individual students and helps all students advance throughout the year.

The State will also provide teachers and administrators with rapid access to student-level data along with enhanced assessment resources. Georgia is already piloting nightly-uploads of student-level data in large districts such as Gwinnett. With rapid (as real-time as possible) access to individual student performance information, teachers can differentiate instruction by student (or at least by groupings of students) and ensure that every lesson delivered has the maximum positive impact on moving students forward throughout the year. To get at

this kind of information, teachers need more than just summative (annual snapshot) data on their students but also ongoing formative assessments and a variety of performance-based tasks. These tasks will draw from a State bank of test questions to ensure standardized, horizontal alignment between schools. Through synthesis of assessment results and the integration of different tasks and measures of student work, teachers can obtain valuable and meaningful data on which they can act. **The State will also assist in developing Instructional Improvement Reports which meet the needs of end-users to ensure that most beneficial instructional improvements result.** As teachers become more familiar with and skilled in using data to improve instruction, the State will research, capture, and disseminate best practices. Finally, the State will take a proactive role in strengthening certification requirements and providing professional learning to ensure that all educators know how to access, analyze, and use data appropriately.

Finally, Georgia is also participating in The Teacher-Student Data Link Project (TSDL) which will provide an essential element to the use of data to assess and improve classroom instruction. Without timely, accurate and nuanced data that links students to the teachers who provide them instruction in each subject, assessment data cannot readily be used to target professional development and improvements in instructional practices for teachers. TSDL will bring multiple states together to leverage their collective knowledge and resources to determine a common definition and approach to this most critical aspect of their longitudinal data systems. TSDL also incorporates school, district, and teacher involvement throughout the project, which will help ensure data definitions and processes accurately and so that they not overly burdensome to educators. In support of the TSDL Project, the Center for Educational Leadership and Technology (CELT) will be assisting GaDOE in conducting a comprehensive assessment of Georgia's data collection, verification, storage, and reporting processes and systems, as each relates to linked educator-student and assessment data. This analysis will include the degree and types of collaboration and communication between the SEAs, the LEAs, and among the appropriate program areas within the SEA. Together with CELT, the GaDOE is carrying out the analysis at the LEA level in order to assess how the schools and school districts collect the data and verify the quality of data.

The State's plan to increase acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems and supporting participating LEAs in using instructional information systems follows:

GOAL 1: Set expectations and facilitate LEA use and implementation of instructional improvement systems. *Rationale: State must set policies and facilitate effective practices.*			
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	**TIMELINE**	**RESPONSIBILITY**	**FUNDING SOURCE**
ACTIVITY (1): State signs MOUs with participating LEAs. As part of the MOU, require that any instructional improvement system in place is being fully utilized by teachers and administrators and encourage those participating LEAs that do not currently have instructional improvement systems to invest in such systems as part of their RT3 efforts. See *Appendix A16: Participating LEA Model MOU and Exhibit 1*	Dec 2009-Jan 2010	RT3 SC, Participating LEAs	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (2): State encourages LEAs with lowest achieving schools to invest in instructional improvement systems (if they do not have a system in place).	Jan-Sept 2010	RT3 SC, Particip. LEAs	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (3): State continues discussions with vendors and scans for national best practices to determine whether it would be beneficial for the State to enter into a contract for instructional improvement systems on behalf of the LEAs. Benefit: Use of the same high-quality instructional improvement system across LEAs would allow for comparisons across LEAs, sharing of best practices across districts, schools, principals and teachers, and building networks of support.	May-Sept 2010	RT3 Director, VSC	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (4): State enters into contract with single vendor, if appropriate, or develops list of state-approved vendors in the area of instructional improvement systems (from which LEAs can select).	Sept-Dec 2010	RT3 Director, VSC	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (5): Participating LEAs report out to the State on use of their instructional improvement systems. Allows to measure degree of system adoption within each LEA and to evaluate impact of systems on classroom instruction and student achievement (Are students more engaged in the classroom? Is there correlation between student engagement and achievement?) Collection methods and format of report outs to be designed collaboratively with participating LEAs.	Annually, post Dec. 2010	RT3 Director, GOSA, Participating LEAs	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (6): Capture lessons learned / best demonstrated practices and share with other LEAs across the state. Contract with provider (e.g., research institution) to develop evaluations and case studies. Make these available online as professional development resources to teachers, principals, and administrators. Use case studies in curriculum modules taught in Summer Leadership Academy. [See Section (D)(5)].	Starting in 2012-13	RT3 Director, GOSA, Research Provider	RT3 grant

GOAL 2: Develop Instructional Improvement Reports (IIR) for districts, schools, and teachers. *Rationale: Requirements from end-users must inform report development, and report usage, best practices, and feedback must inform report modifications.*			
ACTIVITY (7): Determine needs of teachers, principals, and superintendents. Identify and reach out to teachers, principals, and superintendents who will be using the new Instructional Improvement Reports (IIR). Conduct focus groups, interviews, and other means of documenting user needs to develop reporting and dashboard requirements for IIR (including defining key performance metrics to be shown).	Oct 2011 – Feb 2012	SLDS Director, SLDS Staff, DG	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (8): Revise data collection process to ensure appropriate data elements are captured and can be reported on near real-time basis. Based on reporting and dashboard requirements from Activity (7) above, identify and document any new data collections requested/required. Develop data specifications for new collections requested including definitions, timing/frequency decisions, and user access control requirements (with consideration for FERPA and other privacy requirements).	Oct 2011 – Feb 2012	DG, RG	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (9): Develop and roll out IIR to users. Develop first generation of IIR according to report specifications generated through Activities 7 and 8 above. Review reports with teachers, principals, and administrators via focus groups to capture early feedback. Develop training materials and user guides for IIR to be included on web portal. Issue statewide communication to teachers about new IIRs in preparation for following school year with reference to available online material providing overview of new process. Conduct regional training sessions with each school principal and all administrators. Develop virtual courses for online training sessions to supplement training materials and guides already developed. Roll out IIR to users.	Feb-Oct 2012	SLDS Director, GaDOE, LEAs	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (10): Review and modification after first operational year. Develop survey to capture user feedback and best practices from teachers, principals, and superintendents. Synthesize and communicate best practices for using IIR to all teachers, principals, and administrators. Revise reports, online training documentation and user guides as needed, and communicate changes to users. Roll out second version of IIR to users.	Nov 2012 – Jun 2013	SLDS Director, GaDOE, LEAs	RT3 grant
GOAL 3: Support participating LEAs and schools in using instructional improvement systems by providing effective professional development to teachers, principals, and administrators on how to use these systems and resulting data to support continuous instructional improvement. *Rationale: Ensure that systems are designed with user feedback to ensure broad and effective use.*			
ACTIVITY (11): State signs MOUs with participating LEAs. As part of the MOU, require that participating LEAs provide effective professional development to teachers and principals on: (1) the use of state- level data and local data (e.g., summative assessment data, formative and benchmark assessment data); (2) on the use of any instructional improvement system in place in the LEA (including any reporting tools or dashboards).	Dec 2009-Jan 2010	RT3 SC, Participating LEAs	RT3 grant

ACTIVITY (12): State develops detailed plans with participating LEAs on targeted professional development to be made available to teachers on the use of data. As part of ongoing district-based professional development.	Apr-Sept 2010	RT3 Director, Participating LEAs	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (13): State develops a way to measure proficiency in data use before teachers enter the classroom. The State will change certification requirements of Georgia to include a Data Proficiency Assessment (analysis, interpretation, use of data analysis).	Jan-Apr 2010	PSC	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (14): State develops formative assessment toolkit and makes available to all teachers online. Teachers will be able to access this toolkit via www.georgiaoas.org, the website which houses the online assessment system. Benefit: teachers in those LEAs which do not have their own instructional improvement systems will be able to access, download ready-made, or design their own formative assessments online, to assess their students' knowledge base and adjust instruction accordingly. For more detail on development of formative assessment toolkit, refer to action plan in Section (B)(3), Activities 27-30.	May 2010-Aug 2012	OSIA (ASAA and Program Managers)	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (15): State develops Professional Learning Units (PLUs) focused on use of data to modify instruction. Will include training on how to create and deliver assessments (e.g., formative assessments and performance-based tasks), and how to use assessment data to modify and improve instruction. See Section B (3) Standards and Assessments, Activities 31-38 for more detail.	Starting in July 2011 and then ongoing	OSIA Program Managers OESI Trainers	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (16): State evaluates and modifies support to teachers and principals through ongoing annual surveys (on PLUs and use of formative assessments). Collecting this important feedback will allow the GaDOE to improve its professional development offerings.	Ongoing, on an annual basis	OSIA, GOSA	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (17): State modifies recertification requirements for teachers to include required training on use of data to modify/differentiate instruction and boost student learning). This training will be covered in the PLU described in Activity 15 above and in detail in Section B (3). Teachers will be required to take and pass a PLU dedicated to standards (teaching to standards) and assessment data (use of data to modify instruction).	Requirements changed Jan-July 2010. PLUs in Summer 2011	PSC	RT3 grant

C)(3)(iii) Make the data from instructional improvement systems, together with statewide longitudinal data system data, available and accessible to researchers. Georgia has an existing web-based tool, Student Profile, that was released in 2009 and displays information at a student level for instructional improvement purposes. This tool is accessible by both teachers and principals at all districts and uses existing State data collections. **Part of the RT3 funds will be used for enhancements to the Student Profile tool including development of classroom-level reports and a more user-friendly interface tailored to the type of user.** Another portion will be used to increase the frequency and breadth of data collections. With improved data collection, linkages, and visualization, the Student Profile tool will provide a more complete and timely view of student performance for instructional improvement purposes. New data collections, submission tools, and reporting interfaces will be managed by the State to ensure that instructional improvement and NCLB requirements are adequately met by even the least technologically capable districts. While the State plans to require new and more frequent data collections (including formative and benchmark assessments, extended day usage, etc.) at the LEA level, not all of the data will be passed on to the State's data warehouse for data storage and transmission efficiency reasons.

To maximize its data infrastructure investment, Georgia will make the data it is collecting through the SLDS and instructional improvement systems available to researchers with the high-level analytical skills and research training needed to mine the data and answer critical policy and evaluation questions. **The State will encourage and enter into strategic partnerships with universities, researchers, and intermediary groups to conduct a purposeful research agenda to inform decision-making and improve student performance.** Key research topics and advocacy areas include: (1) effectiveness of educator preparation programs; (2) effectiveness of strategies and interventions implemented within the State's RT3 proposal, and (3) educational background of students who experience the least difficulty in transitioning to college. Georgia's SLDS will have capability not only to track students and their progress/transitions over time, but also—through linking students and teachers—to track teacher, principal, district, and teacher and leader preparation program effectiveness over time. See Section (D)(2) for detail on data initiatives related to Great Teachers and Leaders. The public and researchers will have access to varying levels of this data. Georgia's plan in this area follows:

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	**TIMELINE**	**RESPONSIBILITY**	**FUNDING SOURCE**
GOAL 1: Develop the capability to track teacher and program performance and link that performance to students. *Rationale: Effectiveness measures must be based on student performance gains in order to inform continuous improvement of educator preparation, aspiring educators' program choice, and State actions.*			
ACTIVITY (1): Develop data capabilities to capture and disseminate Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) scores.	Apr-Aug 2010	DG, RG, GaDOE	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (2): Link teacher effectiveness to prior teacher education/coursework.	Apr 2010 – Mar 2011	SLDS Dir., DG, RG, USG, TCSG, PSC	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (3): Link Teacher Effectiveness Measures and Leader Effectiveness Measures to student performance outcomes.	Oct 2010 – Mar 2011	GaDOE, SLDS Staff, PSC	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (4): Develop capabilities to capture Teacher Preparation Program Effectiveness Measures and Leader Preparation Program Effectiveness Measures	Apr-Sept 2010	DG, RG, GaDOE	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (5): Begin to publish these effectiveness measures. Not available until TEM and LEM available on a cohort basis. Evaluation tools will be validated in 2010-11, and data from qualitative evaluation tool will not be available till fall 2012. TPPEM and LPPEM will require two years worth of data, and will be available in fall 2013.	Fall 2013	GOSA	RT3 grant
GOAL 2: Make data (at the appropriate "unit" level) available to researchers. *Rationale: Enact purposeful research agenda to inform decision-making about new initiatives, best practices, and use and impact of instructional improvement systems.*			
ACTIVITY (6): Develop data capabilities to track performance of new programs launched (e.g. extended school day, etc.).	Apr-Sept 2010	DG, RG, SLDS Staff	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (7): Make IIR available to researchers. Also make any best practices for using IIR available to researchers.	Nov 2012 – Jun 2013	SLDS Director, DGC	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (8): Make available to researchers any data captured in Activities 1-7 and 1-17 in C (3)(i-ii) above.	Starting in the fall of 2012	SLDS Dir., GOSA, Research Provider	RT3 grant
ACTIVITY (9): Make K-12 to higher education transition data available to researchers.	Nov 2012 – Jun 2013	SLDS Director, DGC	RT3 grant

Performance Measures *The performance measures below apply to Participating LEAs only (data will be captured through new reporting requirements for participating LEAs)*	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
Percent of LEAs with instructional improvement systems	N/A*	N/A*	TBD **	TBD **	TBD **
Percent of all teachers accessing new Instructional Improvement Reports (IIR) through teacher portal	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	TBD **	50%
Percent of teachers in high-poverty, high-minority (or both) schools accessing new IIR through teacher portal	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	TBD **	50%
Percent of math teachers accessing new IIR through teacher portal	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	TBD **	50%
Percent of science teachers accessing new IIR through teacher portal	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	TBD **	50%
Percent of principals accessing new IIR through administrator portal	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	TBD **	50%

Explanations:

* Instructional improvement system data not available for baseline year. Survey of Participating LEAs will be conducted in 2010-11, and a baseline will be established for 2010-11. IIR reports will not be available till Fall of 2012.

** Instructional improvement system targets will be established for 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14 based on survey data. IIR targets will be established for 2013-14, based on teacher and principal usage in 2012-13.

(A) Great Teachers and Leaders *(138 total points)*

State Reform Conditions Criteria

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

The extent to which the State has—

(i) Legal, statutory, or regulatory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) for teachers and principals, particularly routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education;

(ii) Alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) that are in use; and

(iii) A process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and for preparing teachers and principals to fill these areas of shortage.

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

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

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

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

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

Throughout her tenure, State Superintendent Cox has made sure that increasing teacher and leader effectiveness is at the forefront of education reforms in Georgia. Teacher and leader effectiveness are two of the six goals in the GADOE's strategic plan, and the State has invested significantly behind initiatives that support human capital development in the field of education. The State has supported the creation of high-quality alternative certification paths, and has developed and begun to field test research-based evaluation instruments (CLASS Keys and Leaders Keys), which will serve as the foundation for the final evaluation tools that will be adopted statewide. Before diving into the detail of the recommendations that demonstrate how Georgia will continue to increase teacher and leader effectiveness, it is worth noting the overall organizational structure of the effort that will be required to carry out specific initiatives. Please see Figure D1 below.

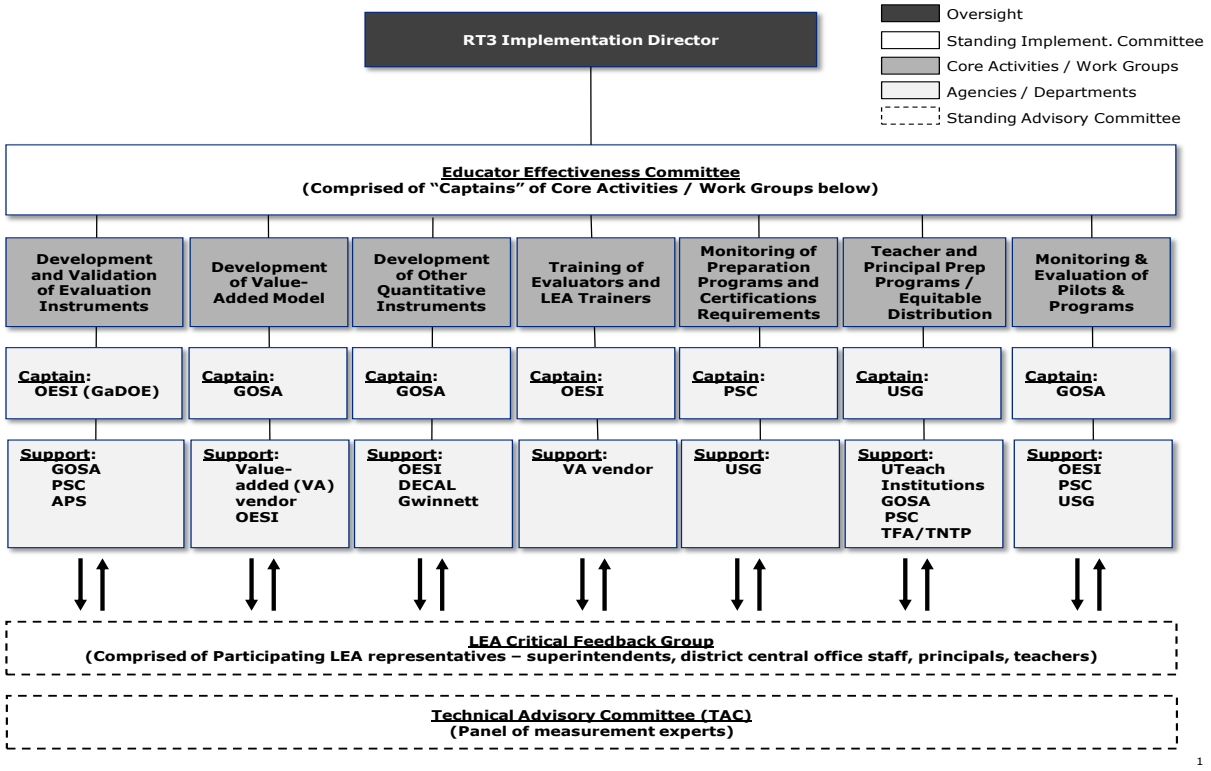


Figure D1: Oversight and Organization Structure of the Educator Effectiveness Effort

(D)(1)(i) Legal, statutory, or regulatory provisions for alternative routes to certification for teachers and principals

Under the "A Plus Education Reform Act of 2000," Georgia state law authorizes alternative routes to certification that permit LEAs and Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESAs) to provide Educator Preparation programs for classroom teachers independently of institutions of higher education. O.C.G.A. 20-2-984 (b) gives the Professional Standards Commission (PSC) authority over traditional and alternative preparation programs for educational personnel and empowers PSC to recommend standards and procedures for preparing educational personnel as well as to approve programs of alternative certification. O.C.G.A. 20-2-200 (a) also gives PSC authority by regulation to set up and require certification types and classifications. **PSC has used its legal authorization to develop a robust system of alternative routes to certification for teachers—known under the umbrella term of "Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy" or GaTAPP (to preserve the older acronym)—and one alternative route to certification for school leaders called a Permit.** PSC Rule 505-2-.10 states that "at the discretion of a local employing school system, an initial Permit may be issued in the field of Educational Leadership to individuals from outside the traditional educational route who are selected to serve in the leadership role of Superintendent or Building Principal." See *Appendix D1: Alternative Certification Rules.*

- **Alternative routes for teachers meet definition.** Georgia's GaTAPP programs are selective, accelerated, high-quality, and school-based, with built-in supports for new teachers**. GaTAPP programs meet all five elements of alternative routes to certification as defined in the RFP Notice:** 1) GaTAPP programs are offered by various types of qualified providers, including IHEs, LEAs, and RESAs and are permitted to operate independently of IHEs; 2) GaTAPP programs are selective in accepting candidates, requiring both basic skills and clear evidence of content knowledge mastery through baccalaureate or advanced degrees in the content or related field, and passing scores on Georgia's GACE teacher licensure exams; 3) GaTAPP candidates receive individualized instruction while in the classroom as well as structured supervision and coaching by a team of qualified mentors and coaches called the Candidate Support Team (CST). Through continuous monitoring and assessment of the teacher candidate's performance in the classroom, the CST provides recommendations for advancement or retention in the program; 4) GaTAPP programs are certification-only options which allow program completion in one year and provide for a test-out option (One Year Supervised Practicum); and 5) Upon completion,

GaTAPP programs, with the exception of the Adjunct (J) License, lead to Clear Renewable (CR) Certification, the same level (type) of certification that is awarded to candidates completing traditional preparation programs. GaTAPP programs are required to meet the same standards, which mirror those of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) required for all college/university programs, and go through the same review process.

- **Alternative route for principals meets definition.** Georgia's alternate route for district and school leaders—the Permit—also meets the definition of alternative routes to certification: 1) no specific type of provider is specified; 2) individuals selected must hold a master's degree or higher from a PSC-accepted accredited institution and have a minimum of 3 years of business, management, leadership and/or instructional experiences acceptable to the employing school system, with the employing system requesting the Permit; 3) The employing system must supply a mentor system to provide orientation to the school, guidance in basic principles of classroom management, and induction support as candidates adjust to the school work place; 4) the amount of coursework required is limited, and 5) the Permit can be converted to a Clear Renewable Certificate
- **Alternative routes will be subject to same scrutiny/monitoring as traditional preparation programs.** The system-wide approach to accountability (see *Appendix 28: System-wide Effectiveness and Accountability*) and the SLDS will allow the State to develop effectiveness measures for each preparation program. These measures will be tested for reliability and then reported publicly, and will serve as key indicators in determining which programs are the most promising and should be enhanced. More detail in Section (D)(4).

(D)(1)(ii) <u>Alternative routes to certification that are in use</u>

The result of alternative route regulations has been a robust array of program paths tailored specifically to the needs of LEAs and to the needs of a wide variety of individuals who hold a bachelor's degree or higher, who did not complete teacher education degree programs, and who want to transition to the profession. A variety of options were developed as the State sought to open the door to individuals with different "packages" of qualifications. Some aspiring teachers have baccalaureate degrees with content majors that match teaching fields; some have degrees in "related" fields and may need additional content; some individuals have education degrees but lack only student teaching; some

individuals have advanced degrees. The program provides options for all of these. With the expansion of routes, PSC developed an Educator Preparation rule for GaTAPP, effective May 15, 2009, which placed existing and newly created non-traditional paths to CR certification under one umbrella rule. There are now **five distinct paths under GaTAPP to CR Certification,** three of which were approved recently, in May 2009. (See *Appendix D2: Alternative Certification Path Decisions*). Detail on entry and exit requirements for each path is provided in *Appendix D3: GaTAPP Requirements for Clear Renewable Certification by Alternative Path.* Across these different paths, there are now **27 approved programs** across Georgia under the GaTAPP umbrella. Full GaTAPP programs produced 837 successful completers with Clear Renewable certification; One Year Supervised Internship Practicum programs produced 234 successful completers with CR certification. *See Appendix D4: Alternative Pathway Summary Table.* In 2008-09, there were 11,170 newly hired teachers (includes all teachers who were not in the public K-12 education workforce the prior year, including veteran teachers as well as newly-prepared teachers). **GaTAPP programs provided roughly 22% of new hires[10] while Georgia-based college/university programs provided 28%.** See *Appendix A10: Sources of New Teachers in Georgia*. Unlike alternative routes for teachers, the Permit route for school leaders has been infrequently requested or used. Georgia is therefore proposing a new alternative route for principals within this application, which will mirror alternative routes for teachers, allowing alternate assessments of knowledge and skills, providing structured school-based supports, and increasing accessibility. Detail is provided in Section (D) (3).

D)(1)(iii) <u>Process for monitoring, evaluating and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage, and for filling these areas</u>

Georgia uses proxy measures to estimate supply and demand of teachers and principals. These proxy measures are based on information currently available (e.g., K-12 student population projections, impending teacher and principal retirements, program completer counts, etc.). The PSC examines these measures by region, by job type (teacher vs. principal), by certificate field, etc. Because the State's statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS) is under development, the State does not yet have a sophisticated monitoring / projection vehicle in place. The work proposed in Georgia's SLDS application will give the State the ability to do two things: 1) track teacher candidates much earlier in the

10 In addition to GaTAPP, percentage also includes test-based non-renewable certificate, waivers, foreign exchange, etc.

pipeline (including their GACE[11] assessment scores, type of initial certification, entry into the public vs. private K-12 sector vs. non-education paths), and 2) track their progression into the workforce once they complete a preparation program (e.g., student achievement results, recertification). With the work laid out for the SLDS, Georgia will have all the pieces in place to apply a sound methodology to predict, track, and evaluate supply and demand. While the State does not have the tools to conduct fine grained analyses, it does have sufficient data to identify large-scale critical shortage subjects and staffing inadequacies. These include mathematics, science, and special education shortages statewide as well as regional shortages in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)—localized depending on student demographics. Georgia has mobilized partnerships among Georgia's colleges and universities and LEAs, as well as the Alliance partnership to help prepare teachers to fill these immediate needs. One example is GeorgiaONmyLINE programs for career-changers wishing to teach in high-need fields including middle and secondary mathematics and science, special education, and ESOL. USG institutions collaborate and share faculty to deliver these programs entirely online. (See *Appendix D5: GeorgiaONmyLINE*). The Alliance Math-Science Task Force also addressed the problem of shortages of STEM teachers through its recommendations. See Section (A) (1) and *Appendix A13: Alliance Math and Science Task Force Recommendations.*

11 Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators®

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

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

(i) Establish clear approaches to measuring student growth (as defined in this notice) and measure it for each individual student; (5 points)

(ii) Design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth (as defined in this notice) as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement; (15 points)

(iii) Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback; as part of such evaluations, provide teachers and principals with data on student growth for their students, classes, and schools; (10 points) and

(iv) Use these evaluations, at a minimum, to inform decisions regarding— (28 points)

(a) Developing teachers and principals, including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development;
(b) Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals, including by providing opportunities for highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities;
(c) Whether to grant tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures; and
(d) Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and ensuring that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.

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

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

Within the last decade, Georgia has made significant strides in addressing the issues of teacher quantity by implementing an extensive variety of alternative certification options, described in detail in Section (D) (1). **Georgia has also begun to lay important groundwork in the area**

of teacher and principal quality, recognizing that the most important factors driving school success are principal and teacher effectiveness.[12] Increased effectiveness of teachers and increased effectiveness of principals represent two of the five statewide goals of the Alliance and the GaDOE (see *Appendix A2: GaDOE Strategic Plan*). In support of those goals, **Georgia has developed and begun to pilot new research-based evaluation instruments for teachers and leaders, and is now poised to make its most significant changes yet in the areas of measuring and improving educator effectiveness.** Additionally, through participation in the Gates Foundation's Teacher-Student Data Link Project, the State will be better prepared to leverage improved policies, processes, and technologies in support of linking high quality teacher, student and assessment data to be used for teacher and administrator evaluation systems, professional development planning, evaluating and identifying effective instructional practices and using data at the classroom level to guide and inform instruction. The ability to link educator and student data via class enrollment will assist policymakers and educators in developing methods for identifying and aligning effective educators, teaching practices, and strong teacher preparation programs with student learning and achievement. To accomplish this most important goal, GaDOE and its participating LEAs will work together to define teacher-of-record, and draft the policies, processes, and technologies necessary to create and sustain a valid educator-student data link.

The section below describes the approach that Georgia will take as part of its RT3 reforms to finalize a fair, transparent and rigorous evaluation system for educators which prioritizes student growth in the definition of teacher and leader effectiveness, and ties compensation, certification, and employment decisions to teacher and leader effectiveness.

12) Augustine, Gonzalez, et.al. (2009). *The Promise of Cohesive Leadership Systems*. NY:RAND.

(D)(2)(i)(a) Establish clear approaches to measuring student growth and measure it for each individual student

Georgia has an ambitious plan to establish a vertically aligned system-wide approach to effectiveness and accountability. The plan creates tight vertical alignment for both accountability and supports across the entire spectrum of education providers: teachers, principals, districts (superintendents and school boards), and educator preparation programs. **At the heart of the new measurement system will be student achievement and student growth.** Specifically, Georgia will create a single Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) for each teacher, a single Leader Effectiveness Measure (LEM) for each school building leader, and a single District Effectiveness Measure (DEM) for each district. In addition, TEMs and LEMs will feed into a Teacher Preparation Program Effectiveness Measure (TPPEM) and a Leadership Preparation Program Effectiveness Measure (LPPEM), which will be used to improve the effectiveness of educator preparation programs. See *Appendices D6-D10* for visual illustrations of the five effectiveness measures.

Figures D1 and D2 below emphasize that **accountability at each step of the system-wide effectiveness measurement system must be accompanied by appropriate levels of support.** For example, teachers are responsible for ensuring that students in their classrooms learn and achieve, but must have professional development supports from their school leaders to enable them to be successful in this task. School leaders are accountable for school-wide performance (overall student achievement and growth; reduction in achievement gaps; graduation rates; etc.), but must in turn have appropriate support from their districts' central offices (professional development; recruiting/hiring supports; etc.). Districts are accountable for district-wide student achievement and academic growth, but rely on the State for appropriate supports (state-level funding; statewide professional development/training associated with rollout of new standards and assessments; etc.). Educator preparation programs are accountable for ensuring that the teachers they produce have the content and pedagogical skills to boost student learning and that the principals they produce have the leadership and management skills to change culture, motivate staff, increase student learning, and manage schools in a fiscally responsible way. Preparation programs in turn rely on the State for funding and appropriate regulation. Effectiveness measures for teachers, principals, districts, and educator preparation programs are provided in *Appendices D6: TEM, D7: LEM, D8: DEM, D9: TPPEM,* and *D10: LPPEM.*

Figure D1: SYSTEM-wide Approach to Effectiveness and Accountability (Within K-12)

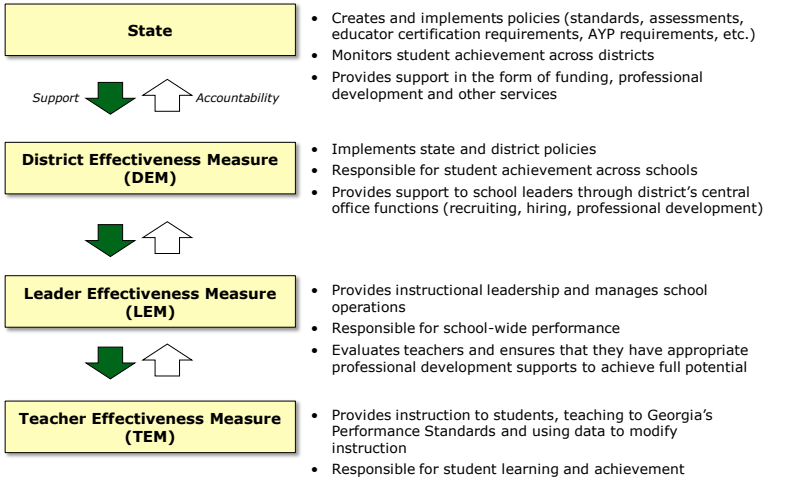
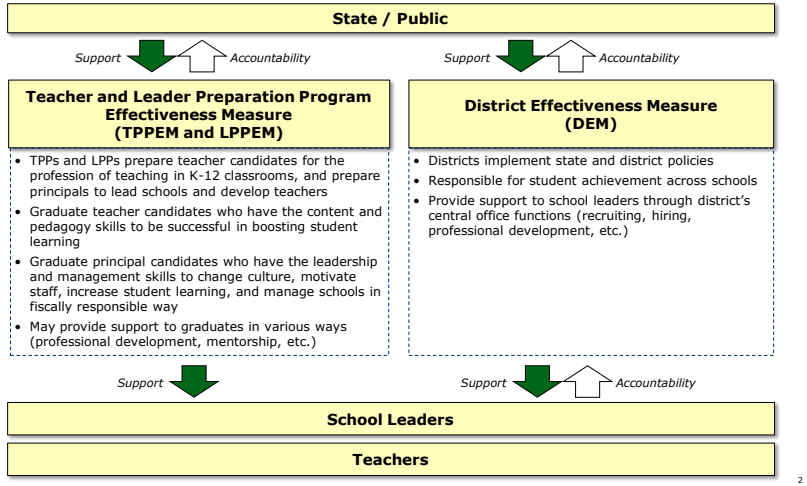


Figure D2: SYSTEM-wide Approach to Effectiveness and Accountability (Across K-12 and Teacher Preparation Programs)



All the measures listed above will have a significant student growth component, which requires the State to establish a clear and transparent approach to measuring student growth. **Georgia proposes to use a portion of RT3 resources, if awarded, to contract with a Value-Added Model (VAM) provider to develop a statewide VAM** that is capable of calculating value-added scores at the teacher level (thanks to teacher-student linkages in the State's SLDS), the principal (school-wide) level, and the district level. VAMs are "a collection of complex statistical techniques that use multiple years of students' test score data to estimate the effects of individual schools or teachers"[13] on student learning. Georgia recognizes that this complex approach needs to be explained and communicated thoroughly and carefully, and plans to dedicate an appropriate amount of resources (state trainer staff time and VAM provider time) to develop appropriate communication vehicles and training on this topic (to district central staff in HR functions, to evaluators/principals, and to teachers). **Communication/rollout details are captured in the action plan at the end of this section.**

13 McCaffrey, Daniel F., *Evaluating Value-Added Models for Teacher Accountability.* Research described in report was conducted by RAND Education for the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

(D)(2)(ii) Design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that:

a) Differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account student growth data as a significant factor. The Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) and Leader Effectiveness Measure (LEM) will include four key components described below. Also see Table D1 further down for weightings assigned to each component (the student growth component is shaded). The RT3 working groups have agreed to these preliminary weightings. They will be finalized by OESI and GOSA in collaboration with participating LEAs. Furthermore, a panel of measurement experts comprising a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will be established to work closely with GOSA to study the instruments used for each component of TEM and LEM on which high-stakes (promotion, dismissal, compensation) decisions will be made. The TAC will look for evidence that the instruments are a) developed and refined based on sound principles; b) appropriately implemented, and c) yield reliable and valid indicators of effectiveness:

(1) **Qualitative, rubric-based evaluation tool with multiple rating categories** (not just satisfactory vs. unsatisfactory) and based on a number of inputs. The CLASS Keys teacher evaluation system, which is rubrics-based across multiple categories, provides a strong starting point for further development. In the case of teachers, inputs could be classroom observations (conducted by either principals or other administrators eligible to carry out this responsibility, and peer reviewers—where LEAs are interested in creating peer reviewer positions); walkthroughs; and/or teacher artifacts (e.g., lesson plans and portfolios). In the case of principals, these inputs could be the quality of the school improvement plan and student/staff/parental feedback. See *Appendix D6*: TEM and *Appendix D7: LEM*.

(2) **Value-added score, which measures the effect of a teacher or a school on student learning.** Value-added scores will be calculated on the basis of standardized tests currently available in Georgia (CRCTs in Reading, Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science and End-of-Course Tests in High School). This means that only teachers in tested subject areas (approximately 30% of teachers) will have value-added scores, a constraint that all VAMs have in common. Georgia does not plan to create new summative tests in non-core areas. Because such tests must be developed across multiple courses and subject areas, they are not cost-effective. Instead, Georgia plans to invest in the development, testing and evaluation of alternative quantitative measures to assess student engagement and student

achievement – see (4) below. The quantitative value-added component will constitute at least 50% of the overall TEM for teachers in "core" areas (tested subjects) and at least 50% of the overall LEM for all building leaders.

(3) **Reduction of the student achievement gap at the classroom/student roster level (for teachers) and the school level (for principals).** Georgia is defining the student achievement gap as the difference in achievement between any student subgroup ($n \geq 15$) in a given teacher's classroom (or overall roster of that teacher's students) and the highest performing subgroup in the State (based on aggregated performance, by student subgroup, at the State level). For principals, student achievement will be aggregated, by subgroup, at the school level and the differences in achievement between the school's subgroups and the highest performing subgroup will be used as a basis for determining size of gap reduction. **GOSA will work closely with the TAC to identify a) the specific method for calculating the reduction and b) the level of gap reduction needed to be deemed significant.**

(4) **Other quantitative measures, to be developed, tested and evaluated by the State in collaboration with participating LEAs.** Georgia anticipates that it will, at a minimum, contract with a provider to develop a number of teacher-focused surveys (e.g., student surveys starting in grade 4—based on research pointing to student surveys being reliable instruments starting at this grade level[14]; parent surveys in grades pre-K through 3; as well as peer surveys) and principal/school-focused surveys. GOSA and participating LEAs and a potential external provider will look at best practices of climate surveys targeted at students, staff and parents, with the goal of measuring a principal's effectiveness in creating a favorable school environment and working conditions.

14 *Approaches to Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness: A Research Synthesis,* National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, June 2008.

Table D1: Preliminary weightings, by effectiveness component

[Dark shading represents the student growth component of each effectiveness measure]

TEACHERS (TEM)	**Qualitative, rubrics-based evaluation**	**Value-added Score**	**Student achievement gap reduction**	**Other quantitative measures**
Core Teachers	30%	**50%**	**10%**	10%
Non-core Teachers	60%	0%	0%	40%
PRINCIPALS (LEM)	**Qualitative, rubrics-based evaluation**	**School-wide value-added score**	**School-level student achievement gap reduction**	**Governance and leadership measures**
All Principals	20%	**50%**	**20%**	10%
DISTRICTS (DEM)	**District-wide value-added score**	**District-wide student achievement gap reduction**	**College and career-readiness assessment**	**Governance and leadership**
All Districts	**40%**	**20%**	20%	20%
TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS (TPPEM)	**Student achievement of graduates**	**Success rate of "Induction" teachers**	**Content knowledge of graduates**	**Persistence of graduates in teaching profession**
All Programs *	**50%**	20%	20%	10%
PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAMS (LPPEM)	**Student achievement of graduates**	**Talent development**	**Content knowledge of graduates**	**Persistence of graduates in K-12 leadership**
All Programs *	**50%**	30%	10%	10%

* Includes alternative certification routes

b) Designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement. As illustrated in Table D1, student growth is at the heart of each effectiveness measure **designed by the RT3 working groups, which included superintendents, principals, teachers and higher education faculty.** Significant weight is also placed on closing achievement gaps. Going forward, the qualitative evaluation instruments (for teachers and principals), the weights assigned to effectiveness components, and any new quantitative measures will be **finalized (or, in the case of other**

quantitative measures, designed and developed) through close collaboration with participating LEAs. A standing Educator Effectiveness Committee (EEC), comprising heads of agencies responsible for carrying out key activities related to teacher and principal reforms, will convene regularly to drive implementation of RT3 recommendations and will report out regularly to the RT3 Implementation Director. The EEC will consult regularly with an **LEA Critical Feedback Group, comprised of participating LEAs' superintendents or their designees, and including principal and teacher representatives from among the participating LEAs.** The LEA Critical Feedback Group will be able to weigh in on all aspects of evaluation instruments, effectiveness measures and processes to implement the new system.

(D)(2)(iii) Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback, and provide teachers and principals with data on student growth

Annual evaluations of teachers and principals are already mandatory in Georgia, but there is a wide range in the quality of the evaluations and teacher ratings tend to be binary (satisfactory vs. unsatisfactory), not allowing any room for meaningful differentiation among teachers on the basis of effectiveness. As part of RT3 reforms, Georgia will take additional steps to ensure that annual evaluations of teachers and principals are timely, meaningful and constructive. The RT3 MOU (see *Appendix A16: Participating LEA Model MOU and Exhibit 1)*, which has been signed by all participating LEAs, includes strong evaluation commitments. Specifically, LEAs will:

(1) Conduct face-to-face annual evaluations of teachers and principals using the jointly developed evaluation system described above.
(2) Provide timely and constructive feedback to all teachers and principals as part of the evaluation process.
(3) **Share all data with teachers relevant to their summative annual evaluations** (rubrics-based evaluation; value-added student academic growth data in those core content areas where value-added data will be available; and any other quantitative measures that are being designed, developed and tested by participating LEAs).
(4) **Share all data with principals relevant to their summative annual evaluations** (rubrics-based evaluation; value-added student academic growth data across core content areas; and other quantitative measures such student attendance and student graduation rate).

(5) Work collaboratively with the State and other participating LEAs to **develop a simple survey tool to be administered to all teachers and principals to assess how well the evaluation process is meeting core objectives** (e.g., setting clear expectations; providing timely and constructive feedback, etc.).
(6) Conduct this survey regularly (e.g., annually) and share results with the State.
(7) Use survey results to modify the evaluation process within LEAs, as needed.

For its part, the **State will, through OESI (GaDOE), invest in building State training capacity,** and will provide appropriate training to evaluators in participating LEAs (see action plan at the end of this section for more detail). Training will include components such as: overview of all components of the new evaluation system; content of the new qualitative evaluation instrument; value-added model; how to evaluate new teachers against new rubrics; and best practices for providing ongoing and end-of-year feedback to teachers. In larger districts, which have professional development capacity, OESI will also train key central office personnel on the new evaluation system (e.g., HR officers). The evaluation system will be piloted in the 23 participating LEAs in 2010-11, and then rolled out (along with accompanying training and communication) to approximately 60 LEAs per year, starting in 2011-12.

Also, since the State will manage the new SLDS (which houses all the teacher, student and standardized test data) as well as the contract with the VAM provider, **the State will take responsibility for developing and disseminating to LEAs district-level, school-level, and teacher-level value-added reports** (along with appropriate communication and training provided by OESI and the VAM provider). Finally, the State will put in place and support, through GOSA and OESI, a **continuous evaluation and feedback mechanism—**by developing a uniform survey of teachers and principals to gauge whether the evaluation process is meeting its core objectives (timely, constructive and actionable feedback), the State will provide the LEAs with a tool to evaluate and tweak their evaluation processes and the training they provide to evaluators.

(D)(2)(iv) Use these evaluations to inform key talent development and talent management decisions

Based on recommendations from RT3 working groups, MOUs with participating LEAs require LEAs to commit to using TEM /LEM to inform talent management decisions such as: professional development supports, compensation, promotion, retention, recertification, interventions, and dismissals. Participating LEAs will use annual evaluations, at a minimum, to inform decisions regarding:

(a) **Developing teachers and principals,** including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development (PD). LEAs will: (a) Develop clear professional development (PD) priorities at the LEA level to provide an overall framework within which targeted PD programs for teachers and principals can be delivered; (b) LEA central office staff will work with principals to ensure that they have a strong understanding of the portfolio of PD options available at the district level, and to ensure that they have the information on how to translate evaluation data into targeted PD recommendations for teachers; and (c) LEA central office staff will work with teachers to ensure that they understand the portfolio of PD options at the district level, and know what kind of PD they may need to take as they conduct self-reflection / self-evaluation.

(b) **Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals,** including by providing opportunities for highly effective teachers and principals to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities. According to the terms of the MOU (*Appendix A16: Participating LEA Model MOU and Exhibit 1*), LEAs will:

- **Tie step increases for teachers to teachers' performance on the rubrics-based evaluation tool,** which will have multiple strands (including teacher's impact on student growth) and multiple rating categories (beyond a simple satisfactory / unsatisfactory rating). A threshold overall rating score, to qualify a teacher for a step increase, will be established collaboratively by participating LEAs and the State in consultation with the TAC.
- **Tie annual salary increases for principals to each principal's LEM.** A threshold LEM will be established by Participating LEAs and State, in consultation with the TAC, to qualify a principal for an annual salary increase.

- Work with the State to **develop career ladder opportunities for all teachers** (e.g., at the master teacher and teacher leader level) that allow teachers to take on additional responsibilities for additional pay, while remaining in the classroom. One potential example of a teacher leader's responsibilities might be "peer review" or participation in the teacher evaluation process as an evaluator (additional voice in the evaluation process). Sample guidelines, with illustrative threshold effectiveness requirements for each step on the career ladder, are provided in *Appendix D11: Career Ladder High-Level Guidelines.*
- **Award individual performance bonuses to <u>all</u> teachers on the basis of TEM, and to school leaders on the basis of LEM.** The State will place a priority on core areas by providing higher individual incentives to teachers in "core" (tested) subjects. Threshold TEM will be established for each tier of performance by participating LEAs and State, in consultation with the TAC, to qualify teachers for bonuses at the various levels/tiers of performance. See *Appendix D12: Performance-based Compensation Guidelines.*
- **Make additional individual bonuses available to core teachers in high-need schools if they reduce the student achievement gap** defined as the difference in achievement between any student subgroup ($n \geq 15$) in a given teacher's classroom (or roster of students) and the highest performing subgroup in the State. GOSA will work closely with the TAC to identify: a) the specific method for calculating the reduction and b) the level of gap reduction needed to be deemed significant to merit additional performance pay.
- **The new teacher compensation model will be an opt-in system.** Current teachers who choose not to opt in will be grandfathered into their current salary structure while new teachers will automatically be placed in the new compensation system.
- Under the new system, effective teachers as determined by threshold TEM values will have equal or greater earning potential as under the current salary schedule.

Table D2 below provides an illustration of what teacher compensation looks in the current compensation system. Table D3 on the next page provides and illustration of what teacher compensation might look like under the new legislation that is being introduced in January 2010 in the 2010 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly described at the end of Section (D)(2)(iv).

Table D2: Illustrative Example of Teacher Compensation under Current State Salary Schedule

Starting Salary (Bachelor's)	**$33,424**	
Value of steps by Yr. 5	$3,100	*3 steps*
Salary at Yr 5	**$36,524**	
Move to Master's at Yr 5	$5,478	
Additional Steps by Yr 10	$6,426	*4 additional steps*
Salary at Yr 10 (Master's)	**$48,428**	
Additional Steps by Yr 20	$7,713	*5 additional steps*
Salary at Year 20	**$56,141**	*12 total steps*

As Table D3 illustrates, **a highly effective teacher holding a bachelor's degree (with the same years of experience) will have a higher earning potential under the new/proposed performance-based compensation system.** Using the figures provided for illustrative purposes, at the 5-year mark, that teacher would make $36,524 on the current state salary schedule vs. a potential $53,524 on the new salary schedule (or 47% more). At the 10-year mark, that same teacher (now holding a master's degree) would make $48,428 vs. a potential $66,108 (or 37% more). At the 20-year mark, that same teacher would make $56,141 vs. a potential $72,656 (or 29% more). **The proposed performance-based compensation legislation would allow effective teachers to reach higher earning potential earlier on** and therefore to increase the value of their lifetime earnings over the course of their teaching careers.

Another critical point highlighted by Table D3 is that **the portion of total teacher compensation that is based on performance under the proposed new compensation system is significant and might range from 38% to 54%** (depending on levels of teacher effectiveness and bonus amounts). In the case of an effective teacher who chooses to continue as a Career Teacher rather than take on the additional

responsibilities of a Master Teacher in return for higher pay, the performance-related pay might be 45% of the total compensation. In the case of a highly effective teacher who chooses to take on the additional responsibilities of a Master Teacher, the performance-related pay might be 54% of the total compensation. **And within the performance-based portion of the total compensation, anywhere between 48% and 64% is tied to quantitative measures of student growth (e.g., value-added scores which are a significant part of TEM).** The remainder of the performance-based portion of total compensation is based on a teacher's performance on the research-based evaluation tool. This tool will be much more rigorous than the existing evaluation tools as it will have multiple dimensions of performance, a much broader range of ratings, and will rely on multiple inputs /voices in the evaluation process.

Table D3: Illustrative Example of Teacher Compensation under Proposed Legislation
Amounts shown are for Illustrative Purposes Only

	Ineffective	Effective - chooses to remain at Career Teacher Level	Effective - chooses to advance to Master Teacher Level	Highly Effective - chooses to remain at Career Teacher Level	Highly Effective - chooses to advance to Master Teacher Level
BA Starting Salary	**$33,424**	**$33,424**	**$33,424**	**$33,424**	**$33,424**
Individual performance bonus (1)		$8,000	$8,000	$12,000	$12,000
Student achievement gap reduction bonus (2)		$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000
Value of steps by Yr. 5		$3,100	$3,100	$3,100	$3,100
Potential salary at Yr. 5	**N/A (3)**	**$49,524**	**$49,524**	**$53,524**	**$53,524**
Salary increase with Master Teacher promotion (4)		$ -	$8,000	$ -	$8,000
Additional steps by Yr 10		$4,584	$4,584	$4,584	$4,584
Potential Salary at Yr 10		**$54,108**	**$62,108**	**$58,108**	**$66,108**
Additional steps by Yr 20		$6,547	$6,547	$6,547	$6,547
Potential Salary at Yr 20		**$60,656**	**$68,656**	**$64,656**	**$72,656**
Incremental Pay –Steps		$14,232	$14,232	$14,232	$14,232
Incremental Pay – Bonuses		$13,000	$21,000	$17,000	$25,000
Steps as % of Incremental Pay		**52%**	**40%**	**46%**	**36%**
Bonuses as % of Incremental Pay		**48%**	**60%**	**54%**	**64%**
Performance-based portion as % of Total Comp		**45%**	**51%**	**38%**	**54%**

(1) In any given year, after year 2 (requires 2 years of effective or highly effective teaching, as demonstrated by TEM scores)
(2) For teachers in tested subject areas in high-need schools only
(3) Contract not renewed after Year 3
(4) Has to be at least a Career Teacher (so requires min. of 3 years of experience). The most recent 2 years have to qualify as effective or highly effective teaching, as demonstrated by TEM

Participating LEAs will also use annual evaluations, at a minimum, to inform decisions regarding:

(c) **Whether to renew contracts to teachers and principals** using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.

- The LEA will base decisions to award employment contracts to teachers and principals on TEM /LEM.
- The State will revise its certification rules to create an **Induction Certificate,** which will be a three year, non-renewable certificate issued to those who have completed an initial preparation program or been accepted into a GaTAPP program. A teacher who does not reach a threshold TEM by the end of his/her third year (threshold TEM to be developed by State and Participating LEAs in consultation with the TAC) will not be able to advance to a Career Teacher Certificate, and will not be able to continue teaching in school systems in Georgia.

(d) **Removing ineffective teachers and principals** after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and ensuring that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.

- The State will revise the certification rules pertaining to the **Career (Clear Renewable) Teacher Certificate**. Teachers holding the Career Certificate will need to be recertified every five years to be able to continue teaching. To qualify for recertification, a Career Teacher must not only complete the requisite number of Professional Learning Units (PLUs) within the five year period, but most importantly, must also achieve a required threshold TEM (as developed by State and Participating LEAs in consultation with the TAC). If a Career Teacher's average TEM (e.g., over the last two years of teaching) is above the threshold, the teacher will be able to renew his/her certificate. If a Career Teacher's average TEM is below the threshold, the teacher will become ineligible for recertification and will therefore not be able to continue teaching. If a Career Teacher's average TEM is "borderline" (e.g., right at the threshold), the teacher will be placed on a one-year probation and given the opportunity to improve his/her TEM with supports provided by the schools and district. The TAC will assist the State and Participating LEAs in determining the appropriate ranges of TEM. Table D4 on the next page illustrates Georgia's approach to promotion, retention and dismissals.

Table D4: Promotion, retention and dismissal approach

	Induction Certificate Teacher	Career Certificate Teacher
Promotion	A teacher who reaches a threshold TEM by the end of his/her third year (threshold TEM to be developed by State and Participating LEAs in consultation with the TAC) is eligible for a Career Certificate.	If a Career Teacher's average TEM (e.g., over the last two years of teaching) is above the threshold, the teacher will be able to renew his/her certificate.
Dismissal	A teacher who does not reach a threshold TEM by the end of his/her third year will not be able to advance to the Career Teacher Certificate level.	If a Career Teacher's average TEM is below the threshold, the teacher will become ineligible for recertification and will therefore not be able to continue teaching. If a Career Teacher's average TEM is "borderline" (e.g., right at the threshold), the teacher will be placed on a one-year probation and given the opportunity to improve his/her TEM with supports provided by the schools and district.
Retention	Tracking teachers' TEM will allow principals and district leadership to identify rising stars and invest in the retention of these teachers.	Tracking teachers' TEM over the course of their careers will allow principals and district leadership to identify teachers who are high performers and invest in the retention of these teachers.

(e) **Ensuring the equitable distribution of teachers and principals** by developing a plan to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals and are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students.

- LEAs will develop a plan to use TEM/LEM scores to make strategic placement and transfer decisions within the LEA, to ensure students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals.
- It should be noted that RT3 equitable distribution initiatives are closely aligned with the State's Teacher Equity Plan (TEP). Effectiveness of RT3 initiatives will be monitored for possible inclusion in the State's TEP.
- LEAs may also utilize effectiveness measures that will become available on teacher and leader preparation programs to guide and refine their recruiting and hiring practices, to target candidates from the most effective programs to the highest-poverty and/or highest-minority schools.

- LEAs may also consider compensation incentives to attract effective teachers to teach in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools (additional funds will be available from the State on a competitive application basis – see Section (D)(3) for more details).

Support to LEAs in implementing teacher and leader effectiveness reforms. In addition to the evaluation system training mentioned above, the State will also have access to the technical expertise of external organizations which have significant experience in implementing teacher and leader effectiveness reforms across districts. This technical expertise can be made available to individual districts (the State has set aside a small amount of funds as part of its RT3 budget to offer initial assistance to districts in this area—e.g., share best practice toolkits—but any "deep dives" and deeper technical assistance support to districts would need to be covered by the LEAs' share of the RT3 funds).

Legislative actions. Georgia is committed to making the **performance-based compensation program** (as outlined above) a lasting and sustainable reform, not just in the LEAs that sign MOUs with the State, but statewide. A Bill on the performance-based pay program has been prepared and will be introduced in January 2010 in the 2010 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly (see *Appendix D13: Legislation on Performance-based Compensation*). If the bill passes, SBOE will adopt a new state salary schedule for teachers in 2014-15 (Participating LEAs will be able to begin their performance-based pay systems in 2013-14 on the basis of MOUs signed with the State). Once the salary schedule is adopted, all districts will come on board by 2015-16 according to a schedule to be determined by the SBOE.

(1) The new state salary schedule will replace the current degree-based compensation system with a performance-based compensation system which will have two core components: (1) a baseline starting salary (common for all teachers), and (2) a performance-based bonus portion which will be available to all teachers based on meeting effectiveness measure requirements.
(2) The bonus portion of compensation will be included in the calculation of teachers' pensions and count toward retirement.
(3) Teachers will also continue to receive step increases, but these increases will be tied to performance/effectiveness as well. While this is not a legislative change (current law already allows for tying step increases to teachers' evaluations), the practice and implementation

of the law will be significantly more rigorous, as it will be based on a new rigorous evaluation system with multiple components (with student growth as a significant component).

(4) Given that the State is allowing current teachers to opt into the new salary schedule (and grandfathering those teachers that choose not to opt in), the State will operate two salary schedules simultaneously, until the last teacher who has been grandfathered in exits the system.

(5) Should the proposed bill not pass in the 2010 legislative session, **Georgia will still be able to proceed with outlined reforms**—it will be able to leverage current law to carry out the following initiatives statewide: (1) change the teacher evaluation model to one with specific requirements for student achievement (OCGA 20-2-210(b)(1)); (2) pay bonuses to teachers whose students make "substantial" gains in test scores (OCGA 20-2-212.4); and (3) establish a career ladder program to pay teachers more for, among other things, outstanding student achievement (OCGA 20-2-213). The results and learnings from the evaluation and performance-based pay work with the Participating LEAs will serve as a foundation for future legislation in this area.

Certification rule changes. As outlined earlier, some of the reforms described in this section require certification rule changes (creation of an Induction Certificate, adjusting the rules for a Career Teacher certificate). In subsequent D sections, we will also discuss additional rule changes: (1) change to the policy related to Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) to discontinue any exemptions to GACE and require all licensing candidates to take the GACE; and (2) change to the rules governing principal preparation programs, to allow for a new alternative certification pathway for principals.

Policy actions. Georgia is already focused on changing its school culture from one currently based largely on compliance and inputs to one driven by performance and outcomes. As Georgia prepares to dramatically shift the criteria on which it makes compensation decisions so it may appropriately reward its most effective teachers and leaders, it becomes increasingly important to take **additional steps to ensure the integrity of the State's student achievement data.** To that end, GOSA commits to conducting annually a comprehensive, intense review of

all State assessment answer documents. Such a review will include: (1) erasure analysis to identify classrooms in which a statistically improbable number of student responses have been changed from wrong to right answers; and (2) response similarity analysis to algorithmically detect answer patterns that signal increased likelihood of test tampering in classrooms. Such a review of statewide 2009 CRCT data is already well underway with results and recommendations scheduled to be shared with the SBOE in February, 2010. The comprehensive review will be followed by a thorough investigation of the testing environment in classrooms where suspicion of intentional wrongdoing is raised. Legislation introduced in the 2010 session of the General Assembly (see *Appendix D14:Legislative Steps to Ensure Integrity of State's Student Achievement Data*) will make it unlawful for educators to knowingly and willfully tamper with or facilitate cheating on state assessments. A violation of this law will result in a misdemeanor infraction, and the Professional Standards Commission will suspend or revoke the certification of guilty parties. Teachers and leaders found guilty of these infractions will also be subject to loss of their pension.

Georgia's detailed action plan for implementing teacher and principal effectiveness reforms follows on the next page.

GOAL 1A: Establish a clear approach for measuring student growth by developing a value-added growth model (VAM) *Rationale: Use a proven method to measure student achievement in tested subjects for use in teacher evaluation.*		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	**TIMELINE**	**RESPONSIBILITY**
ACTIVITY (1): Establish vendor selection committee (VSC) to include Executive Director of GOSA, Chief of Staff to the State Superintendent, Executive Secretary of the PSC and other representatives, as appropriate.	Jan-April 2010	RT3 SC
ACTIVITY (2): Agree on selection criteria and process	Mar-April 2010	VSC
ACTIVITY (3): Issue formal RFP to vendors and select VAM vendor	May-Aug 2010	VSC
ACTIVITY (4): Build VAM with vendor and Participating LEAs	Sept 2010- Jun 2011	GOSA, OESI
ACTIVITY (5): Develop communications materials and brochures in preparation for VAM rollout (key messages, VAM rationale, VAM methodology)	April-June 2011	Vendor working with GOSA, OESI, PSC
ACTIVITY (6): Develop VAM training component of overall evaluation system training (how to read and interpret VAM; etc.)	April-June 2011	OESI GOSA VAM Vendor
ACTIVITY (7): Vendor to **train OESI staff** in VAM and in how to train districts	June-July 2011	VAM Vendor
ACTIVITY (8): Roll out VAM in Participating LEAs as part of overall new evaluation system for teachers – training for LEAs' central office selected staff and for principals will be provided in the summer	July-Aug 2011	GOSA OESI VAM vendor
ACTIVITY (9): Offer workshops for teachers when they return to classrooms – through districts' central office staff who have attended summer training	July-Aug 2011	Vendor Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (10): Revise VAM as needed, based on results of phase 1 pilot	June-Aug 2012	GOSA , OESI, vendor
ACTIVITY (11): Roll out VAM in additional LEAs (up to 60 per year) starting with summer training of district office staff and principals	July-Aug 2012	OESI VAM Vendor
GOAL 1B: Establish a clear approach for measuring student growth by developing other quantitative measures of student learning that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms. *Rationale: It is not realistic or financially feasible to develop tests for all subject areas (so as to have VAM scores for all subjects), but for a fraction of potential test development costs, Georgia will invest in developing and validating other quantitative measures that predict student learning.*		
ACTIVITY (12): Design and develop "other quantitative measures" of student achievement. Potential ideas include student, parent, and peer surveys and new ways of measuring student engagement.	June-Dec 2010	GOSA, OESI & Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (13): Validate survey tools before use in high stakes evaluation	Jan 2011-April 2012	GOSA, OESI, Vendor
ACTIVITY (14): Field test new measures to determine degree of correlation between measures and growth in student learning	Jan 2011-April 2012	GOSA,OESI, Vendor, Participating LEAs

ACTIVITY (15): Revise measures as needed, based on field test results and feedback from key stakeholders (district office selected staff; leaders; teachers)	May-June 2012	GOSA,OESI, Vendor, Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (16): Once measures have been validated, **communicate measures (rationale, value) broadly to school leaders and to teachers** via formal training and existing communication platforms, and include measures in calculations of overall teacher effectiveness in participating LEAs (Phase 1 LEAs)	Starting in Sept 2012	Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (17): Roll out "other quantitative measures" to other districts as they come online (up to 60 per year) and in calculations of overall teacher effectiveness (Phase 2 LEAs)	Starting in July 2011 with training	OESI
GOAL 2: Develop Rigorous, Transparent, and Fair Evaluation Systems for Districts, Principals and Teachers in collaboration with LEAs, principals and teachers. *Rationale: District, principal and teacher involvement in the process will provide valuable insights as well as built credibility and support for process.*		
ACTIVITY (18): Establish collaborative process for development of evaluation system. Establish a standing committee—Educator Effectiveness Committee (EEC)—comprised of state agency representatives responsible for implementing RT3 reforms; a Critical Feedback Group (CFG) —comprised of participating LEA superintendents or their designees (including principals and teachers) and a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)—comprised of measurement experts.	March-May 2010	GOSA, OESI, PSC, USG, Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (19): In collaboration with districts, **design two surveys to solicit feedback from sites currently piloting CLASS Keys and Leader Keys** to assess level of satisfaction with tool and what changes may be needed. Finalize rubrics-based evaluation instrument for teachers (TEM) and for leaders (LEM), keeping within the parameters set by the Core Principles developed by the RTTT working groups and agreed to by participating LEAs.	May 2010	EEC CFG TAC
ACTIVITY (20): Launch survey to CLASS Keys users (principals and teachers) and to Leader Keys users (district central office staff and principals)	May 2010	EEC, CFG, TAC
ACTIVITY (21): Analyze survey results	June 2010	EEC, CFG, TAC
ACTIVITY (22): Modify evaluation tools as appropriate, based on survey results. Agree on performance standards and elements to be included in the evaluation tool, and designate a subset of those standards as "power strands"	July-Aug 2010	EEC, CFG, TAC
ACTIVITY (23): Select an external provider to validate the revised evaluation tools	July-Aug 2010	EEC, CFG, TAC
ACTIVITY (24): Conduct a **validation study** of the revised evaluation tools	Sept 2010-June 2011	EEC, CFG, TAC

ACTIVITY (25): Formalize a vertically aligned evaluation system with student achievement at its center. Finalize composition of the District Effectiveness Measure, Leader Effectiveness Measure, and Teacher Effectiveness Measure.	July 2010-Mar 2011	EEC, CFG, TAC
ACTIVITY (26): Conduct ongoing study of evaluation tools and effectiveness measures to allow for learning as part of the process. As the State and LEAs learn more from the pilots, there will be flexibility to tweak teacher evaluation inputs and metrics.	Starting in summer 2012 (1 year of data)	GOSA, GaDOE staff
ACTIVITY (27): Evaluate results each year to **test correlation between rubric-based evaluation tool and student outcomes**	Starting in summer 2012 (1 year of data)	GOSA, OESI
ACTIVITY (28): Make any necessary adjustments to evaluation tool and measures based on findings, and roll out evaluation system and DEM, LEM and TEM to additional districts that come online (up to 60 per year)	Starting in Jun-Aug 2012)	OESI, GOSA CFG, TAC
GOAL 3: Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and leaders that include timely and constructive feedback and provide data on student growth. *Rationale: LEAs must be closely involved in every step of the process and must have sufficient capacity, knowledge, and buy-in in order to execute effectively at the local level.*		
ACTIVITY (29): Get commitment from participating LEAs to conduct annual evaluations of their principals and teachers, and to make timely and constructive feedback a fundamental component of the evaluation system. Strengthen initial MOUs with strong action plans for teacher effectiveness for each Participating LEA.	April-July 2010	RT3 SC
ACTIVITY (30): **Build capacity at the district level (to support evaluators in executing the new evaluation system).** Develop communications and training materials that describe the entire evaluation system (rubrics-based tool; VAM; other quantitative metrics; purpose and use of DEM, LEM, TEM)	April-July 2010	GOSA OESI CFG
ACTIVITY (31): Ask Participating LEAs to **appoint Master Teachers or Teacher Leaders to peer review positions** (if LEA chooses this path; each LEA designs its own selection process, but it has to be rigorous and based on teacher performance)	Jan-May 2010	GOSA OESI Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (32): **Train 3-5 evaluators per school** (including nominated peer reviewers) from Participating LEAs to conduct evaluations and provide timely and actionable feedback in a 3 day onsite training session. Also provide training to 1-2 central office representatives per Participating LEA ("train the trainer" model so that central office staff can later provide ongoing evaluation training to LEA evaluators).	Starting in July-Aug 2011	OESI CFG

ACTIVITY (33): **Bring on LEA representatives over time** (to subsequent summer sessions) as trainers, allowing them to share their experiences with evaluation system in their districts.	Starting in spring 2012 (Mar-June)	OESI
ACTIVITY (34): **Train subsequent cohorts of districts** (up to 60 per year) utilizing combination of OESI training staff and LEA trainers. Provide initial training for evaluators/principals and for central office staff in district	Summer, starting in July-Aug 2012	OESI
ACTIVITY (35): Offer **regional workshop for teachers** when they return to classroom--through districts' central office staff who have attended summer training	September 2011	OESI, RESAs Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (36): Share key evaluation data with district leaders, school leaders and teachers to create transparency around metrics; provide guidance on how data should be used/interpreted; show connections between quantitative measures and qualitative (rubrics-based) inputs; highlight disconnects where they exist and identify ways to address disconnects]. Vendors and GOSA calculate VAM and TEM for teachers, VAM and LEM for schools / principals, and VAM and DEM for districts. GOSA will monitor / audit reported measures. The SLDS will capture VAM, TEM, LEM, and DEM statistics to allow for longitudinal analysis at the teacher, school and district level, and to create reports that can be accessed by teacher and administrators.	Starting in May-June 2012	GOSA SLDS staff VAM Vendor
ACTIVITY (37): Ensure that specifics of data trends are discussed in evaluation conversations.	Starting in May-June 2012	HR offices at participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (38): Share results of field tests for "other quantitative measures" with participants and more broadly with key stakeholders	Starting in May-June 2012	GOSA OESI
ACTIVITY (39): Ask for teachers' input on the evaluation process. Teachers can provide valuable feedback on whether the new evaluation system is being implemented with fidelity by school leaders. Design annual survey for teachers to probe on evaluation-related questions (or utilize/tweak existing surveys – e.g., climate surveys)	June-August 2011	GOSA OESI Survey vendor
ACTIVITY (40): Administer survey annually within Participating LEAs and share summary results with LEA superintendent's offices and GOSA/EWG	Starting in May 2012	GOSA OESI Survey vendor
ACTIVITY (41): Utilize feedback from surveys to adjust evaluation process within districts, as needed	Starting in Sept 2012	HR offices at participating LEAs

ACTIVITY (42): Showcase best practices in appropriate forums. Facilitate dissemination of best practices and encourage LEAs to learn from one another about how best to support teachers and principals to drive student achievement. Best practices may be published or Participating LEAs may be asked to present their experience in settings such as the Summer Leadership Academies.	Data will be available starting in summer of 2012	OESI working with superintendent's offices in participating LEAs
GOAL 4: Use annual evaluations to inform talent development and talent management decisions. *Rationale: Formalize expectations and provide guidelines to ensure effective implementation.*		
ACTIVITY (43): Agree, with Participating LEAs, on **reporting requirements to be included in final MOU submitted to US ED.** To include data on how LEAs utilize teacher and principal effectiveness data throughout their systems.	May-July 2010	RT3 SC EEC Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (44): Monitor LEA's effectiveness in utilizing annual evaluations to inform the kind of talent development and talent management decisions outlined earlier in this section (through reporting requirements mentioned above).	Starting in Summer 2012 (after full year of teacher effectiveness data available).	GOSA OESI
ACTIVITY (45): Tie teacher and leader compensation in Participating LEAs and involved LEAs to effectiveness measures, as outlined earlier in this section, to formalize the performance-based system	Starting Fall 2013 (retro for SY 2012-13) once 2 years of effectiveness data available	GOSA GaDOE
ACTIVITY (46): Provide guidelines to participating LEAs on potential Career Ladder roles. Non-negotiable—access to a Career Ladder role is contingent on high and sustained performance.	Overview in fall 2010; Cannot go into effect until at least fall 2012 (need performance data)	EEC Critical Feedback Group

Performance Measures Notes: Data should be reported in a manner consistent with the definitions contained in this application package in Section II. Qualifying evaluation systems are those that meet the criteria described in (D)(2)(ii).		Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
(D)(2)(i)	Percentage of participating LEAs that measure student growth (as defined in this notice).	0%	50%	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for teachers.	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for principals.	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems that are used to inform:	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(a)	• Developing teachers and principals.	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Compensating teachers and principals.	0%	0%	0%	0%	80%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Promoting teachers and principals.	0%	0%	0%	0%	80%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	• Retaining effective teachers and principals.	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	• Granting tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	• Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals.	0%	0%	0%	0%	80%

Explanations:

- In 2010-11, the State will pilot the Value-Added Model tools in the participating LEAs. Learnings from the pilot will be applied when VAM is rolled out to additional LEAs (up to 40 more) in SY 2011-12. Also in this year, the research-based evaluation tool will be finalized and validated. Finally, other quantitative measures (surveys) will be developed and validated.
- In 2011-12, the State will implement the research-based evaluation tool, the VAM and other quantitative measures in all Participating LEAs (and up to 40 additional LEAs).
- In 2012-13, the LEAs will continue implementation of the evaluation system (Year 2 of data gathering)
- In 2013-14, the LEAs will have 2 years' worth of data on teachers and principals, and will now be able to tie "high-stakes" decisions such as compensation, renewal of contracts or full certification, and dismissal of ineffective teachers and principals to the 2 years of collected data.

General data to be provided at time of application: (to be updated)		
Total number of participating LEAs.	23	12.7% of State total
Total number of principals in participating LEAs.	871	38.4% of State total
Total number of teachers in participating LEAs.	46,581	39.6% of State total

Criterion:	Data to be requested of grantees in the future:
(D)(2)(ii)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems.
(D)(2)(iii)[15]	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as effective or better in the prior academic year.
(D)(2)(iii)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were evaluated as ineffective in the prior academic year.
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems whose evaluations were used to inform compensation decisions in the prior academic year.
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	Number of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems who were eligible for tenure in the prior academic year.
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	Number of teachers in participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems whose evaluations were used to inform tenure decisions in the prior academic year.
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	Number of teachers and principals in participating LEAs who were removed for being ineffective in the prior academic year.

[15] Note that for some data elements there are likely to be data collection activities the State would do in order to provide aggregated data to the Department. For example, in Criteria (D)(2)(iii), States may want to ask each Participating LEA to report, for each rating category in its evaluation system, the definition of that category and the number of teachers and principals in the category. The State could then organize these two categories as effective and ineffective, for Department reporting purposes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Evidence for (D)(3)(i): Definitions of high-minority and low-minority schools as defined by the State for the purposes of the State's Teacher Equity Plan.

(D)(3)(i) and (ii) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals

Impending retirements of the "Baby Boom" generation, coupled with significant population growth in Georgia over the last decade, will likely increase the already significant statewide need for large numbers of effective teachers and principals. Shortages are especially critical for teachers of science and mathematics, where Georgia has not only redesigned and strengthened its curriculum but has also increased the number of math/science courses required for graduation. The State recognizes that the current compensation system (based on years of experience and level of degree earned), shortages of effective teachers in hard-to-staff subject areas, and the mix of State school districts (heavily weighted toward rural districts which have their own set of recruiting and capacity challenges), are all factors that contribute to the State's equitable distribution dilemma.

In order to ensure equitable distribution of teachers and principals and to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority[16] schools have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals, **Georgia will target its efforts toward placing the right teachers—the most effective—in the right places, teaching the right subjects to the most needy students; and placing the right principals—the most effective—in the highest need schools to create conditions of change for teachers and students.** Georgia's equitable distribution plan draws on a range of reforms described in this proposal—educator effectiveness measures, differentiated pay, and creating conditions for teaching and learning through appropriate supports for teachers and principals. Georgia's plan, which addresses both (D)(3)(i) and (D)(3)(ii) of this criterion is four-pronged: 1) Retain effective teachers and principals already working in high-poverty and high-minority schools and in shortage subject areas; 2) Encourage effective teachers and principals to move to high-poverty and high minority schools; 3) Grow the pipeline of effective teachers and principals entering the profession, both in high-need schools and shortage subject areas; and 4) Improve the capacity of existing teachers and principals through targeted professional development. Within these four areas are a mix of market-based (demand) and non-market-based (supply) strategies. The plan includes parallel strategies tailored to the specific roles of teachers and principals.

16 Evidence for (D)(3)(i): Definition for high-minority school as provided by Georgia's Teacher Equity Plan = A high-minority school is a school whose minority population falls within the upper quartile for the State. A low-minority school is a school whose minority population falls within the bottom quartile for the State.

On the teacher and principal DEMAND side, Georgia proposes to establish a correspondence between teacher and principal effectiveness and compensation by providing two kinds of incentives: (1) incentives for effective teachers and principals to remain in the highest-need schools; and (2) incentives for effective teachers and principals to move to the highest-need schools.

(1) Georgia will put in place a **performance-based compensation system which includes student growth as** a significant component in teacher and principal evaluation, and in teacher and principal pay—teachers and principals who meet high effectiveness standards will be eligible for varying levels of individual bonuses (tiered approach to performance). The compensation system will also **allow effective teachers and principals in high-need schools to access an additional bonus tied to the degree of reduction made in the student achievement gap every year.** See Section (D) (2) for details.

(2) Georgia will put in place **tax-exempt "signing bonuses" for teachers who choose to move to rural high-need schools.** While there are approximately 920 schools in Georgia that qualify as high-need (designated as high-poverty, high-minority, or both), Georgia will cap the program at $5 million over the lifetime of the RT3 grant (4 years). With this cap, roughly 50 schools across Georgia might benefit from additional resources provided by the State to cover the cost of signing bonuses to highly effective teachers who choose to move to high-need schools in rural parts of Georgia. Districts with eligible schools may apply for State funds in order to award bonuses of up to $50,000 (exempt from state income tax) to candidates with a track record of effectiveness who choose to work in those schools. **Bonuses will vest over a period of three years (of service in the high-need school) and will be contingent on meeting a high threshold TEM during each year of service.** Funds will be awarded to districts/schools on a competitive basis, and will take into account the district's geographic context, historic pipeline, current recruiting plans, shortage areas, etc. **The disbursement of funds will be contingent on a district/school demonstrating that the high-need school hired an effective teacher (to prevent ineffective teachers from moving into high-need schools for the sake of financial rewards).** At this time, Georgia is not considering offering these kinds of bonuses to principals, having experimented with significant bonuses for principals in the past and having found that these incentives were not effective in getting principals to relocate.

On the teacher and principal SUPPLY side, Georgia will focus on two types of initiatives: (1) improving the effectiveness of teachers and principals currently working in high-need school settings through targeted professional development; and (2) increasing the pipeline of effective teachers to high-need schools and hard-to-staff subject areas.

(1) To improve effectiveness of existing teachers in high-need settings, the State will work with LEAs to provide **targeted professional development to teachers based on annual evaluations.** See Section (D)(2) above and Section (D)(5). Because of the State's specific focus on STEM, Georgia will strengthen professional development in STEM by entering into partnership with the CEISMC, the outreach center of Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) to provide online courses in robotics, problem-based inquiry science, statistics, and online learning. CEISMC will expand this existing array by adding professional development course offerings in six other 21st Century STEM areas, such as genetics/biotechnology, climate science, instructional technology, and nanochemistry. CEISMC will also expand the Georgia Intern-Fellowships for Teachers (GIFT) program, which places STEM teachers in mentored, challenging STEM summer internships in industry and university research laboratories to deepen their knowledge of content application. (See *Appendix D15: GIFT.*)

(2) To increase the pipeline of effective teachers in high-need schools and hard-to-staff subject areas, the State is entering into **partnerships with external organizations which have a long history of recruiting and training effective teachers in shortage areas**—Teach for America (TFA), The New Teacher Project (TNTP), and UTeach -- and will establish a Grow Your Own Teacher (GYOT) competitive grant program for rural districts. See *Appendix D16: TFA, TNTP and UTeach Outcomes* for data on effectiveness of these programs.

   a. **TFA** will expand in metropolitan areas where it already has a presence.
   b. **TNTP** will serve four regional clusters, but will also provide its services in metropolitan areas.
   c. **UTeach** programs will improve the pipeline of STEM teachers. Under RT3, Georgia will formalize agreements with the UTeach Institute which provides direction and assistance to IHEs for startup of UTeach based programs. Georgia will commit to four UTeach sites statewide, and will award site funds on a competitive basis to four IHEs in Georgia. Recipients will be

geographically dispersed around the State and situated in regions that have traditionally had difficulty finding qualified, effective teachers. Four IHEs within the designated regions (North, South, East, and West) have already expressed interest in competing for the funds. Students who are already enrolled at the IHE and have indicated a strong interest in majoring in math or science will be recruited into teaching. As an incentive, their first education class will be provided by UTeach at no cost.

d. Additionally, Georgia will establish an **Innovation Fund** [See Section (A) (2)] which will support, among other initiatives, **competitive grants for Grow Your Own Teacher (GYOT)** programs to address the particular staffing challenges of rural, low-performing schools. With 527,507 rural students, Georgia has the third largest rural student population in the nation. The 56% graduation rate in Georgia rural schools is the third lowest among all states for rural students. Using resources from the Innovation Fund, a competitive GYOT program grant will enable K12 systems to partner with local IHEs to design, implement, and evaluate their own individualized program model to meet specific, local needs and contextual factors. The GYOT competitive grant program criteria will require strong partnerships between local schools and colleges of education and/or technical colleges, along with local community and business organizations where appropriate, in career pathways to teaching. Specific participant program strands may include but are not limited to 1) middle and/or high school students; 2) adults with less than a bachelors degree; 3) under-represented groups; 4) paraprofessionals; 5) working adults / career changers who are highly interested in teaching and who possess the raw skills to become effective teachers. **In order to be successful, GYOT programs will need to be extremely rigorous in their screening of potential candidates.** Fortunately, strong models exist today for how to screen and recruit candidates into these types of programs. TFA and TNTP are both examples of organizations that have developed a very rigorous screening and selection mechanism. Rather than "recreating the wheel," aspiring GYOT programs can look to existing best practices.

Recognizing the critical role of the school leader in workforce development and retention, Georgia's equitable distribution plan also targets **principal development and the principal pipeline.** Specifically, Georgia will:

(1) Support principal development, especially in lowest-achieving schools and most remote areas, through continued support for **Summer Leadership Academies** organized by OESI [detail provided in section (D)(5)].

(2) Change current certification rules to allow for **an alternative certification pathway for principals,** and will **open this pathway to non-educators.** The existing pathway is built primarily for educators and requires aspiring principals to have a master's degree to qualify for a provisional certificate, and then to complete a Performance-Based Leadership Program (PBLP) to earn a renewable leadership certificate. New rules for an alternative certification pathway will:

   a. Open the field to non-educators (e.g., career changers);

   b. Eliminate master's degrees as a pre-requisite for becoming a principal (will accept baccalaureate degree holders into alternative programs as long as they demonstrate substantial and relevant work experience e.g., in some sort of leadership role, to be defined more specifically by PSC); and

   c. Allow a wide variety of alternative certification providers, as long as they meet rigorous requirements set by the PSC. Examples of providers include:

      - Institutions of higher education;
      - Nonprofit organizations such as New Leaders for New Schools;
      - LEAs (some of which already have principal development programs in place). Strong examples of principal development programs on which alternative certification pathways can be modeled already exist in Georgia. One such example is Gwinnett County which has both an Aspiring Leaders program (for teachers interested in a principal track) and a Quality Plus Leaders Academy or QPLA (for assistant principals interested in becoming principals). The QPLA program includes a strong curriculum, a 60-day residency component, and mentoring/coaching supports built in for two years. The QPLA was seed funded by a Broad Foundation grant, but will be sustainable (fully paid for by the district)

within one year. The program also benefits from a strong relationship with Teach for America on the recruiting front (QPLA has access to TFA teachers and alumni interested in school leadership careers).

See below for key components of the Georgia equitable distribution plan:

GOAL 1: Ensure equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals **GOAL 2: Increase number and percentage of effective teachers teaching hard-to-staff subjects and in hard-to-staff places** *Rationale: Leverage effectiveness measures (TEM/LEM) to address both demand and supply.*			
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	**TIMELINE**	**RESPONSIBILITY**	**AFFECTED POPULATION**
DEMAND SIDE – RETENTION BONUSES AND SIGNING BONUSES			
ACTIVITY (1): Pay individual bonuses to teachers and principals based on performance tied to student achievement. The TEM and LEM metrics described in detail in Section D (2) will measure teacher and principal effectiveness on a variety of dimensions (with student achievement as a significant component). Data collection begins in 2010-11 with VAM, in 2011-12 for qualitative evaluation ratings. Move to performance-based pay requires two full years of evaluation data.	Starting in 2013-14	Data Collection and TEM/LEM Calculation = GaDOE	Teachers and Principals
ACTIVITY (2): Pay additional bonuses in high-need schools for reducing the achievement gap each year. This is a retention-type bonus targeted at high-need schools where the achievement gaps are the largest.	Starting in 2011-12	Data Collection = GaDOE / LEAs	Teachers and Principals
ACTIVITY (3): Put in place a system of tax-exempt signing bonuses that vest over three years. This is an incentive for teachers to move to high-need schools and stay there for a period of at least three years. The bonus rewards effective performance, as it is contingent on meeting high threshold TEM in each of the three years.	Starting in 2011-12	GaDOE (FBO) OPB	Teachers
SUPPLY SIDE – IMPROVING EXISTING CAPACITY			
ACTIVITY (4): State provide targeted training to teachers through online PLUs. Focus on modules such as: standards; teaching to standards; analysis, interpretation and use of assessment data to improve instruction. See detail in Section B.	May-June 2011	OSIA, OESI	Teachers
ACTIVITY (5): State builds on existing Summer Leadership Academies, currently organized for lowest-achieving schools. A solid infrastructure and approach already exists, currently focused on NI-5 and higher schools, which can send up to 10 people per school to this leadership training. Over time, expand institutes to include all high-poverty or high-minority schools.	Starting in Summer 2010	OESI	Principals (primarily)

ACTIVITY (6): Sign MOUs with participating LEAs to include a variety of teacher effectiveness reforms, including using TEM and LEM as a basis for talent management decisions. TEM and LEM can help identify teachers who need additional supports; the LEA's responsibility will be to provide the kind of supports needed to develop its teachers. TEM and LEM can also be used by participating LEAs to make strategic placement decisions of teachers and principals across schools, based on effectiveness (to distribute effective teachers and leaders equitably).	Apr-Sept 2010	RT3 SC / Participating LEAs	Teachers and Principals
ACTIVITY (7): State establishes teacher induction guidelines and includes in MOU with participating LEAs. Policy changes: State changes certification rules, making the initial certification (Induction Certificate) provisional. State also tracks the rate at which Induction Teachers move to the Career Teacher level, and makes this part of the Teacher Preparation Program Effectiveness Measures discussed in detail in section D(4). Putting in place stricter requirements for moving on from Induction to Career Teacher Certificate (i.e., meeting threshold TEM) increases the accountability of both program providers and K-12 school systems. At the pre-service stage, program providers need to enhance quality of programs to ensure that candidates are graduating appropriately prepared for the classroom; and at the in-service stage, LEAs need to provide more effective induction, coaching and ongoing professional development supports to teachers.	Jan-Aug 2010 (MOUs) TPPEM measures as of 2012-13	RT3 SC / Participating LEAs	Teachers
SUPPLY SIDE – INCREASING PIPELINE OF EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS			
ACTIVITY (8): Increase pipeline of effective teachers, including in math and science, through State partnership with Teach for America (TFA). *Rationale:* TFA has a strong record of attracting and retaining highly effective teachers. The partnership would focus on metro areas in the short to medium term (where TFA already has some presence and can expand). Finalize partnership arrangements in April-Sept 2010; begin recruiting in September 2010 for SY 2011-12; and first class of new TFA recruits begins in SY 2011-12	Recruiting begins in Fall 2010	RTTT Executive Director / TFA leadership team in GA	Teachers
ACTIVITY (9): Increase pipeline of effective teachers, including in math and science, through State partnership with The New Teacher Project (TNTP). *Rationale:* TNTP has a strong record of attracting and retaining highly effective teachers. The partnership will focus on suburban and rural districts, with metro districts involved where partnerships with TNTP already exist).	Recruiting begins in Fall 2010	RTTT Executive Director / TFA leadership team in GA	Teachers

ACTIVITY (10): As part of the Innovation Fund described in Section A (2), provide competitive grant awards to Grow Your Own Teacher (GYOT) programs. This creates an incentive for school systems to partner with local IHEs to develop programs developed specifically for the needs of that school system. Allows growth in local teaching capacity in areas which have difficulty attracting effective teachers because of location.	Starting in Fall 2010	Innovation Fund Director (GOSA)	Teachers and Principals
ACTIVITY (11): Create alternative certification pathway for principals by passing new rules. The most-used (traditional) pathway, built primarily for educators, requires aspiring principals to have an MA to qualify for a provisional certificate and to complete a Performance-Based Leadership Program to earn a renewable leadership certificate. New rules for an alternative certification pathway will attract non-educators, create alternative requirements, and open the door to a wider variety of alternative certification providers.	Jan-July 2010 to develop and pass new rule	PSC	Principals
ACTIVITY (12): Alternative providers, including LEAs, apply to have their principal programs approved by the PSC. Most LEAs are already approved as "units" by PSC, and therefore will only need to apply for program approval.	Beginning in Aug 2010	Potential alternative providers; PSC	Principals

Performance Measures for (D)(3)(i) *Note: All information below is requested for Participating LEAs.*	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
General goals to be provided at time of application:	**Baseline data and annual targets**				
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	N/A *		X**		
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	N/A *		X**		
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	N/A *		X**		
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	N/A *		X**		
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	N/A *		X**		
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice).	N/A *		X**		
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	N/A *		X**		
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective.	N/A *		X**		

Explanations:

* While Georgia already requires annual evaluation of teachers, the quality of those evaluations varies widely by district and is not as rigorous as the new evaluation system being proposed as part of RT3 reforms. Georgia does not have in place today an evaluation system that would allow districts to accurately identify percentage of teachers who are highly effective (as defined in this notice). The proposal that we have outlined in Section (D)(2) will allow Georgia to put in place a rigorous evaluation system with multiple components (qualitative, research-based evaluation tool; value-added scores to capture student growth; and other quantitative measures—e.g., student and peer surveys—designed and developed collaboratively with participating LEAs). The individual components of the system will be developed in 2010-11; the system itself will be launched in SY 2011-12, allowing the State to develop a baseline distribution of teacher effectiveness in the fall of 2012.

** Year in which Georgia will be able to establish effectiveness targets (for 2012-13 and 2013-14).

General data to be provided at time of application:	
Total number of schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	918
Total number of schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	574
Total number of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	43,622
Total number of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	30,144
Total number of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	914
Total number of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice).	569

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

Performance Measures for (D)(3)(ii) *Note: All information below is requested for Participating LEAs.*	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
General goals to be provided at time of application:	**Baseline data and annual targets**				
Percentage of mathematics teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	N/A*		X**		
Percentage of science teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	N/A*		X**		
Percentage of special education teachers who were evaluated as effective or better.	N/A*		X**		
Percentage of teachers in language instruction educational programs who were evaluated as effective or better.	N/A*		X**		

Explanations:

* While Georgia already requires annual evaluation of teachers, the quality of those evaluations varies widely by district and is not as rigorous as the new evaluation system being proposed as part of RT3 reforms. Georgia does not have in place today an evaluation system that would allow districts to accurately identify percentage of teachers who are highly effective (as defined in this notice). The proposal that we have outlined in Section (D)(2) will allow Georgia to put in place a rigorous evaluation system with multiple components (qualitative, research-based evaluation tool; value-added scores to capture student growth; and other quantitative measures—e.g., student and peer surveys—designed and developed collaboratively with participating LEAs). The individual components of the system will be developed in 2010-11; the system itself will be launched in SY 2011-12, allowing the State to develop a baseline distribution of teacher effectiveness in the fall of 2012.

** Year in which Georgia will be able to establish effectiveness targets (for 2012-13 and 2013-14).

General data to be provided at time of application:	
Total number of mathematics teachers.	9,157 (grades 6-12)
Total number of science teachers.	7,517 (grades 6-12)
Total number of special education teachers.	18,887 (K-12)
Total number of teachers in language instruction educational programs.	1,946

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

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

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

(i) Link student achievement and student growth (both as defined in this notice) data to the students' teachers and principals, to link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, and to publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the State; and

(ii) Expand preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice).

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

(D)(4)(i) and (ii) <u>Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs</u>

As a result of ongoing RT3 discussions, the University System of Georgia and the PSC have signed letters stating their support for the following core principles (see *Appendix A32* for USG letter of support and EPAAC letter of support):

(1) The mission of Georgia's teacher and leader preparation programs must be to **produce better outcomes for students.**

(2) Teacher and leader preparation programs must provide sustained**, systematic and diverse clinical experiences** that are integrated with classroom theory. (See *Appendix D17: Definition of sustained, systematic and diverse clinical experiences*).

(3) Teacher and leader preparation programs must **prepare candidates to use data to differentiate instruction and boost student learning.** To support this principle, GOSA/GaDOE will provide teacher preparation programs with models/examples of student

profiles to be integrated with the theory of classroom instruction, and the PSC will add by rule change a data proficiency test (analysis, interpretation, use of data analysis) as a certification requirement.

(4) Teacher and leader preparation programs must carefully **track and evaluate the student achievement impact of their graduates to identify and strengthen preparation practices.** To support this endeavor, Georgia will—through data that will be tracked by the SLDS—publicly report and link student achievement data to the programs or institutions where teachers and principals were credentialed. The State will develop a Teacher Preparation Program Effectiveness Measure (TTPEM) and Leader Preparation Program Effectiveness Measure (LPPEM) for each program. (See *Appendices D9 and D10* for a visual depiction of TPPEM and LPPEM, respectively). As part of the TPPEM, **the State will track the rate at which Induction Teachers move to the Career Teacher level.** Putting in place stricter requirements for moving on from the Induction Teacher Certificate to the Career Teacher Certificate (i.e., meeting threshold TEM) increases the need at the: (1) pre-service stage (prep programs) to enhance quality of programs to ensure that candidates are graduating appropriately prepared for the classroom; and (2) in-service stage (LEAs) to enhance the quality of induction, coaching and professional development supports to teachers. The TPPEM and LPPEM measures will give preparation programs the data they need for program improvement, and will provide teacher and principal candidates with additional critical information during their program selection process.

(5) Teacher preparation programs must **create robust partnerships with LEAs** in which distinguished teachers mentor student teachers and teacher candidates, including clinical experience in high-need settings. This in turn drives coursework in classroom management and instructional planning. To encourage these kinds of partnerships, the State will create an Innovation Fund (public/private fund described in Section (A) (2)) which will accept competitive applications for partnerships between LEAs and teacher preparation programs, among the various initiatives it decides to fund.

(6) Teacher preparation programs **must conduct a legitimate examination of their candidates' ability to produce student learning before candidates are permitted to graduate.** The State will also call for leader preparation programs to conduct a legitimate

examination of their candidates' ability to evaluate teacher performance effectively and reliably before recommending them for certification. (See *Appendix D18: Legitimate Examination Definition*.)

(7) Georgia will consider the link between Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) results and student achievement over time, revising licensing requirements as appropriate. **The State will change the policy related to GACE, discontinuing any exemptions to the GACE basic skills test and requiring all licensing candidates to take the GACE.**

The State's plan for implementing preparation program reforms follows.

GOAL 1: Link teachers' and principals' student achievement/student growth data to preparation programs *Rationale: Include educator preparation programs in SYSTEM-wide approach to Effectiveness and Accountability.*		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	**TIMELINE**	**RESPONSIBILITY**
ACTIVITY (1): Create a Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) for each teacher in the state and a Leader Effectiveness Measure (LEM) for each principal in the State. The TEM and LEM require linking student achievement and student growth data to the students' teachers and principals. This is the first necessary step in lining the information back to in-State teacher and principal preparation programs. See Section (D)(2).	Jan 2010 – March 2011	GOSA, OESI, VAM vendor LEAs, External Validation organization
ACTIVITY (2): Develop a Teacher Preparation Program Effectiveness Measure (TPPEM) and Leader Preparation Program Effectiveness Measure (LPPEM). The TPPEM and LPPEM include multiple components, including TEM and LEM of graduates aggregated by cohort, which provides the linkage between student growth data to in-State teacher and principal preparation programs.	Apr 2010-July 2011	SLDS Director / GaDOE
ACTIVITY (3): Calculate TPPEM and LPPEM and publish preparation program "report cards" (both traditional and alternative routes). Student growth data will be tracked as early as 2010-11 through value-added models, but the first full year of TEM/LEM implementation will not occur until SY 2011-12 (since the qualitative evaluation tool will be validated in 2010-11 and launched in participating LEAs in 2011-12). First TEM / LEM scores will be available in the fall of 2012; the earliest the State would have data to calculate TPPEM and LPPEM would be late 2012.	Beginning in late 2012, and then annually	GOSA PSC

GOAL 2: Expand preparation programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals *Rationale: Given finite amount of financial resources, ensure that the best/most effective programs are getting the most support.*		
ACTIVITY (4): Use TPPEM and LPPEM to expand preparation and credentialing programs which are most effective. The TPPEM and LPPEM will serve as proxy for program effectiveness. Preparation programs will have a wealth of valuable information available to them through TPPEM and LPPEM (graduates' student achievement data, success in passing from Induction Teacher to Career Teacher stage, and persistence in the field of teaching, as measured by retention rates) to decide which programs merit the most investment.	Need at least 2 years worth of effectiveness data. Would not start until after 2013-14	Teacher and leader preparation programs
ACTIVITY (5): In the longer-term, tie State funding for preparation programs to their TPPEM and LPPEM "grades" in order to support the preparation and credentialing of programs that are most successful in producing effective teachers and principals. The State will move in this direction only after sufficient data has been collected, analyzed and validated, to ensure that these important funding decisions are being made based on reliable and valid data.	After 2013-14	Governor / General Assembly

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
General goals to be provided at time of application:	**Baseline data and annual targets**				
Percentage of teacher preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice) of the graduates' students.	0%	0%	0%	15%	30%
Percentage of principal preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice) of the graduates' students.	0%	0%	0%	15%	30%

Explanations:

- In 2010-11, the State will pilot the Value-Added Model tools in the participating LEAs. Learnings from the pilot will be applied when VAM is rolled out to additional LEAs (up to 40 more) in SY 2011-12. Also in this year, the research-based evaluation tool will be finalized and validated. Finally, other quantitative measures (surveys) will be developed and validated.
- In 2011-12, the State will implement the research-based evaluation tool, the VAM and other quantitative measures in all Participating LEAs (and up to 40 additional LEAs).
- In 2012-13, the LEAs will continue implementation of the evaluation system (Year 2 of data gathering)
- In 2013-14, the LEAs will have 2 years' worth of data on teachers and principals, and will now be able to tie "high-stakes" decisions such as compensation, renewal of contracts or full certification, and dismissal of ineffective teachers and principals to the 2 years of collected data.

General data to be provided at time of application:	
Total number of teacher credentialing programs in the State.	19 public IHEs (additional 3 pending approval) 22 private IHEs 28 alternative preparation programs (6 more in the pipeline)
	69 credentialing programs in total (plus 9 pending)
Total number of principal credentialing programs in the State.	11 public IHEs 3 private IHEs
	14 credentialing programs in total
Total number of teachers in the State.	117,560
Total number of principals in the State.	2,323 principals 3,479 assistant principals

Data to be requested of grantees in the future:
Number of teacher credentialing programs in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.
Number of teachers prepared by each credentialing program in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.
Number of principal credentialing programs in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.
Number of principals prepared by each credentialing program in the State for which the information (as described in the criterion) is publicly reported.
Number of teachers in the State whose data are aggregated to produce publicly available reports on the State's credentialing programs.
Number of principals in the State whose data are aggregated to produce publicly available reports on the State's credentialing programs.

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

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

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

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

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

The State is acutely aware of the scale and systemic scope of the reforms proposed in its RT3 application. True to its vision of a system-wide approach to effectiveness and accountability, the State stands ready to collaborate with its participating LEAs to intensify and target the supports it provides to the practitioners who will be enacting these sweeping reforms on the ground. Equally, the State will measure, evaluate, and continuously improve its efforts in order to continue only those strategies which truly assist educators in improving student outcomes. For each of the reform plans described in this application, the State describes its supporting actions and monitoring methodology, and these are summarized in Table D5 on the next page.

	Table D5: State Supports	Table D5: LEA Supports
Standards & Assessments **(Section B)**	• OSIA (GaDOE) develops, organizes and provides resources related to Common Core Standards to teachers and administrators via website • OSIA develops face-to-face training and online training modules • OSIA delivers intensive face-to-face training for teacher teams in all Georgia schools (4 teachers per school) • OSIA develops formative and benchmark assessments which will allow teachers to have more real-time data on their students, and modify instruction based on this data • OSIA delivers online training to all teachers in GA: 1 PLU on standards, and 1 PLU on use of assessment data to modify and improve instruction	• Teacher teams (4 per school) trained by OSIA train other teachers in their home schools and are available as ongoing resource to teaching staff and administrators • Districts implement the new evaluation system developed y the State in collaboration with participating LEAs and track teacher performance on the standards in the evaluation tool that relate to knowledge of standards and delivery of standards in a classroom setting • Teachers who are identified as needing improvement receive additional targeted training on standards
Data Systems **(Section C)**	• State SLDS Team refines student-teacher linkages and host relevant student data (e.g., demographics, assessments, attendance) in the SLDS • State SLDS Team develops web-based Instructional Improvement Reports (IIR) to allow teachers to access classroom level data, and quickly assess and adapt instruction to needs of students • State SLDS Team and GaDOE provide training to teachers and principals on use of IIR • State SLDS Team creates student matching system that allows teachers and principals to track students transferring across districts	• LEAs host local systems and local data which feeds into SLDS • Ensure full utilization of instructional improvement systems (where they exist) and provide training to teachers on how to use those systems
Great Teachers and Leaders **(Section D)**	• State, with participating LEAs, finalizes evaluation system, qualitative evaluation instrument and other quantitative instruments. State tests and validates instruments • State, working with external vendor, develops a value-added model which will measure student growth for each student • OESI (GaDOE) delivers face-to-face training to evaluators in all districts (3 evaluators per school and 2 "trainers" per district) • GOSA / GaDOE provide value-added reports (at the district, principal and teacher level) to districts	• "Trainers" at the district level provide ongoing support to evaluators (additional training / professional development) • Principals deliver timely and meaningful feedback to teachers • District leadership delivers timely/meaningful feedback to principals • Principals and HR staff use evaluation data to recommend targeted professional development (PD) for teachers • HR staff monitors /tracks teacher PD attendance • Districts develop induction programs to support new teachers • Districts develop career ladder roles aligned with State guidelines
Lowest-Achieving Schools (LAS) **(Section E)**	• State partners with TFA and TNTP, giving principals in LAS access to pipelines of highly effective teachers • State provides technical expertise to conduct strategic resource reallocation reviews to maximize spending on instruction • State develops common planning time expectations for teachers (participating LEAs)	• LAS principals receive significant budget/hiring authority from district • Participating LEAs ensure that teachers have a minimum of 60 minutes of common planning time per week • Principals focus / organize common planning time on data-driven evaluations of student learning

- For **implementation of common core standards and high quality assessments,** the State must ensure that teachers can teach to both the GPS and the new common core standards as they are implemented, and that teachers can design and use assessments which provide feedback on student progress. To do so, the State will develop high-quality instructional materials, resources, and assessments; provide targeted PD informed by seamless information on student and teacher performance; communicate with educators and families to enlist widespread support and use of resources; align high school exit criteria with college and work readiness; and develop a formative assessment tool kit and benchmark assessments for teacher use. In addition, the State will develop a PLU (professional learning unit) course targeted at high quality delivery of standards and a PLU course targeted at use of data to modify and improve instruction. All new teachers will be required to take both PLU courses, and these courses will be required of teachers for certification renewal. To monitor and improve these efforts, the State will track participation in and satisfaction with PLUs, and will also conduct evaluations of formative assessment toolkits and benchmark assessments in order to modify them as needed based on teacher feedback. See Action Plan in Section (B) (3) for details.
- Through **implementation of data systems to support instruction,** educators will have access to detailed data on individual student achievement and attendance as well as achievement patterns within classes that they have never had before and will need to learn how to use these data to improve instruction. The State will assist by encouraging and helping districts to provide educators with the technological tools and training necessary for accessing and using data to improve instruction; developing Instructional Improvement Reports (based on data in the SLDS) which meet the needs of end-users; providing a PLU course targeting meaningful use of assessment data; and researching and disseminating best practices. The State will measure, evaluate, and modify these strategies through data audits, real-world testing, user feedback sessions, report-outs from participating LEAs, and surveys of teachers and principals on PLUs and use of formative assessments. Finally, the State will support an intentional research agenda to evaluate the effectiveness of RT3 strategies. See Action Plans in Sections (C) (2) and (C) (3).
- To **provide great teachers and leaders,** the State has intense responsibility to develop valid and reliable performance evaluation instruments and systems—informed by continuous feedback from practitioners—which will support the high-stakes consequences of

TEM, LEM, DEM, TPPEM, and LPPEM and to ensure that teachers, leaders, and other educators have the information and high levels of training needed for effective and widespread implementation. The State will provide continuous monitoring to ensure that districts conducting annual evaluations of teachers and principals provide timely and constructive feedback to teachers and principals. In addition to evaluation systems, the State will provide standards and technical expertise for implementation of induction certificates and programs. The State will carefully evaluate the cost-benefit of retention and signing bonuses, and differential pay for teachers in shortage fields to make determinations for future funding. The State will provide strong communications and technical expertise from internal and external partners for programs designed to increase the number of highly effective educators, including TFA, TNTP, UTeach, and Grow Your Own Teacher programs and a new alternative route to certification for school principals. The State will monitor the effectiveness of all educator preparation programs through the TPPEM and LPPEM, and use results to improve programs and to scale the most effective. See Action Plans in Sections (D) (2), (D) (3), (D) (4), and (D) (5) for details.

- The State will provide numerous **supports to turn around the lowest-achieving schools** in participating LEAs. In addition to funds which will flow to the LEAs through Race to the Top, these supports will include structural initiatives (such as helping schools select and implement an appropriate intervention model; and providing technical expertise to support reforms) and programmatic initiatives (such as math coaches; extended day options; targeted PD for teachers focused on data use, formative assessment, active literacy and thinking maps; partnerships with local universities to develop and deliver innovative courses, especially in STEM; graduation coaches (dropout prevention); and credit recovery services in addition to a new national Grade Level Reading Initiative. The State will monitor the effectiveness of various strategies with the ultimate measure being LEAs which move off NI status. See Action Plan in Section (E) (2).

In addition to the supports summarized above and provided in detail within each action plan, the State will implement several **cross-cutting strategies to provide effective support for educators.** These strategies are designed to:

(1) Propel teacher knowledge and student achievement in STEM through **a State partnership with Georgia Tech's outreach center,** which will provide focused professional development for teachers in math and science (see *Appendix D19: State Partnership with Georgia Tech/CEISMC* for a comprehensive description of professional development activities provided to teachers);

(2) Ensure structured and intensive support for new teachers through developing **induction program guidelines** and by setting aside funds within the **Innovation Fund to cover the cost of developing innovative district/IHE partnerships to bridge the gap between pre-service and career teaching.** This will provide a system of continuous supports for teachers, for which K12 systems and IHE partners are mutually accountable (See *Appendix D20: Teacher Induction Guidelines*.);

(3) Build district capacity at leadership levels through **Summer Leadership Academies and a follow-on system on ongoing supports** to ensure that school leadership has the capacity to support teachers appropriately and to turn around schools; and

(4) Invest in **intensive communication and building of relationships with educators and leadership organizations/training providers across the State,** understanding that buy-in, feedback and creative implementation from the field are critical.

The State's plan for implementing these four cross-cutting initiatives effectively as support for educators follows on the next page.

GOAL 1: Partner with Georgia Tech through its outreach center, the Center for Education Integrating Science, Mathematics and Computing (CEISMC), to provide 21st Century teacher professional development in STEM. *Rationale: Effective implementation of GPS and common core requires a) strengthening teachers' content understanding and pedagogical skills, b) providing contextualized tasks and STEM examples that effectively engage 21st Century learners, and c) providing students, especially those from groups underrepresented in STEM, with learning opportunities that encourage them to pursue advanced studies in STEM fields.*		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	**TIMELINE**	**RESPONSIBILITY**
ACTIVITY (1): Provide online PD to STEM teachers, including courses in robotics, problem-based inquiry science, statistics, and online learning and in six new 21st Century STEM areas, such as genetics/biotechnology, climate science, instructional technology, and nanochemistry.	2010 for existing courses; 2011 for new courses	RT3 Executive Director, OSIA, CEISMC
ACTIVITY (2): In conjunction with the instructional technology online course above, develop an Instructional Technology Toolkit for administrators and teachers to support the effective use of technology (laptops, student response systems, interactive whiteboard, digital probes, virtual manipulatives, graphing calculators, etc.) within the science and math GPS frameworks. CEISMC will expand, in English and Spanish, the current GaDOE digital library of STEM resources and videos demonstrating "best practices" integrating classroom technology with attention on real-world applications and STEM careers and the preparation required.	2010-11--Develop English toolkit; 2011-12—Release English, develop Spanish; 2012-14 Increase Best Practices videos.	RT3 Executive Director, OSIA, CEISMC
ACTIVITY (3): Expand the Georgia Intern-Fellowships for Teachers (GIFT) program which places STEM teachers in mentored, challenging STEM summer internships in industry and university research laboratories from 80 to 105 teachers annually.	Increase to 105 teachers, starting Summer, 2010	RT3 Executive Director, OSIA, CEISMC
ACTIVITY (4): Provide a new Operations Research (OR)-based mathematics course as a Math4 option. OR is a "mathematics for the real world" course in which students learn to apply what they have learned to useful and engaging problems such as humanitarian logistics, airplane scheduling, and optimal diet management. This course will reach at least 3,000 students per year.	2010-11--Finish planning; 2011-12 and beyond--offer course	RT3 Executive Director, OSIA, CEISMC
ACTIVITY (5): Utilize Robotics/Engineering Design to teach physical science. Building on NSF funding of a program that inspires students from all demographic groups to continue to actively engage in STEM education, Georgia Tech will expand the use of engineering and robotics in middle schools, specifically within integrated STEM classrooms.	2010-11: Develop program; 2011-12: Implement in 10schools/yr	RT3 Executive Director, OSIA, CEISMC
ACTIVITY (6): Offer advanced courses in college-level calculus II and III to advanced high school students through the use of live video conferencing pioneered by Georgia Tech. The RT3 initiative will expand the reach of the program by 150 students (to 400/year), add additional school systems and individual students in rural counties, and will investigate the feasibility of offering other advanced distance course such as Computer Science, Introductory Engineering, or post-AP chemistry or physics.	Increase to 400/yr starting in fall, 2011. 2012-14 possible new course offering.	RT3 Executive Director, OSIA, CEISMC

GOAL 2: Ensure that beginning teachers get the support they need to maximize their effectiveness during their first years in the classroom. *Rationale: Teacher induction programs matter to teacher success in early years.*		
ACTIVITY (7): Change certification requirements to provide for beginning teachers to work as "Induction Teachers" during their first three years in the classroom. More detail provided in Section (D)(2).	Fall 2010	PSC
ACTIVITY (8): Establish appropriate TEM expectations for new teachers for movement to "Career Teacher."	2012 once data are available	EEC, GOSA, CFG, TAC
ACTIVITY (9): Raise the bar for teacher induction programs. Publish and disseminate new State guidelines for teacher induction programs, as developed by RTTT working groups, formed around the four pillars of induction including the principle that **teacher induction programs should not follow a "one size fits all" approach.** Ensures appropriate support to novice teachers and consistency in resources dedicated to teacher induction across districts.	Jan-June 2010	PSC
ACTIVITY (10): Work closely with participating LEAs to ensure that induction guidelines are being met at those LEAs [included in MOU with these districts]	Starting June 2010	RT3 Director OESI, PSC
ACTIVITY (11): Strengthen accountability of teacher preparation providers for beginning teacher success by including data on TEM of program completers, progress from Induction Teacher to Career Teacher, three-year retention data in Teacher Preparation Program Effectiveness Measure (TPPEM), and by publishing TPPEM "report cards." See Section (D) (4)		SLDS Director GaDOE GOSA
ACTIVITY (12): Provide and build Innovation Fund for start-up capital to develop collaborative partnerships between IHEs and school districts to provide teacher induction support programs that are differentiated along the following dimensions: 1) school environment (e.g. high-needs vs. affluent); 2) teacher effectiveness levels/teacher needs (as identified through rubrics-based evaluation); and 3) years of experience (e.g., second year teachers vs. first year teachers)	Starting June 2010	Innovation Director, business and philanthropic partners
ACTIVITY (13): Use TEM and other measures (e.g., teacher retention) to evaluate effectiveness of teacher induction programs and determine scale-up decisions.	Starting in Fall 2012	Participating LEAs, GOSA, TAC
ACTIVITY (14): Use Induction Teacher evaluation and student achievement data to continually evaluate and improve beginning teacher support	Starting in Fall 2012	Participating LEAs, GOSA, TAC
GOAL 3: Provide time, training, resources, and induction support to build capacity for school turnaround at the LEA and school levels. *Rationale: Georgia has learned in its own effort to turn around low-performing schools that leadership preparation and support are key factors of success in turning around a low performing school or improving a high performing school.*		
ACTIVITY (15): Raise the bar on induction programs for principals, starting with lowest-achieving schools. Even high potential principals need targeted support in the first 1-3 years in the position (levels of support decrease over time) to be as effective as possible in leading their schools, raising student achievement and developing staff.	Starting Summer 2010-ongoing	OESI PSC

ACTIVITY (16): Use LEM to evaluate effectiveness of principal induction programs and to determine which to scale.	Starting in Fall 2012, when metrics become available	Participating LEAs GOSA TAC
ACTIVITY (17): Continue and expand Summer Leadership Academies. Provide support for principals to implement standards-based teaching, career ladders, induction programs, and other reform strategies.	Starting Summer 2010—ongoing	OESI
ACTIVITY (18): Ongoing State support to principals in Needs Improvement / Lowest Achieving Schools (NI/LAS). Principals can benefit from the State's central capacity of qualified educators (GAPSS analysts and State Directors) with relevant expertise in school improvement. See action plan in Section E(2).	Ongoing	OESI
ACTIVITY (19): Track principal support programs listed and measure correlation of various programs to student achievement or to principal evaluation rubric score improvement. Redeploy resources to the most effective programs. Track support program participation. Determine which support programs deserve more investment based on results of program analysis.	Annually	Participating LEAs GOSA TAC
GOAL 4: Build relationships, maintain effective communications, and provide forums for educators to ensure active support for reforms and opportunities to share and build upon lessons learned. *Rationale: Provide supportive conditions where difficult reforms can be effectively implemented, learning increased, and best practices spread across the State.*		
ACTIVITY (20): Develop comprehensive communications plan to ensure that teachers, principals, superintendents, school boards, and educator preparation programs are informed on a regular basis of RT3 reforms and initiatives.	Feb-July 2010	RT3 Director, Communications Team
ACTIVITY (21): Hold annual RT3 Summits to highlight lessons learned and engage public and educator support.	Beginning in Summer 2011	RT3 Director, Communications Team
ACTIVITY (22): Disseminate effective school improvement practices at Summer Leadership Academies for selected school leadership teams from schools in NI-5 levels and above. These sessions allow the State to disseminate effective school improvement practices and provide structured time for school teams to develop plans for the upcoming year based on their new learning.	Beginning in Summer 2011	RT3 Director, Communications Team
ACTIVITY (23): Publish quarterly e-reports and distribute to LEAs, professional organizations, higher education, business, community, philanthropic partners.	Beginning in Fall 2012	RT3 Director, Communications Team
ACTIVITY (24): Scale up Math + Science = Success public awareness campaign to build support for STEM teaching and learning.	Beginning in Summer 2010	RT3 Director, Communications Team

Performance Measures for (D)(5) *Note: Performance measures in (1)-(10) below apply to Participating LEAs only.*	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
1. Percent of all schools that have a minimum of 60 minutes per week of common planning time for teachers (either by grade level-elementary, or subject area-secondary)	Unknown*				100%
2. Percent of high-poverty, high-minority (or both) schools that have a minimum of 60 minutes per week of common planning time for teachers (either by grade level-elementary, or subject area-secondary)	Unknown*				100%
3. Percent of lowest-achieving schools that have a minimum of 60 minutes per week of common planning time for teachers (either by grade level-elementary, or subject area-secondary)	Unknown*				100%
4. Percent of LEAs offering formal induction programs to new teachers	Unknown*				75%
5. Percent of LEAs offering formal induction programs to new principals	Unknown*				75%
6. Average length of new teacher induction program (years)	Unknown*				2
7. Number of new teachers (by content area) participating in induction programs	Unknown*				100%
8. Average length of new principal induction program (years)	Unknown*				2
9. Number of new principals participating in induction programs	Unknown*				100%
10. Percent of Participating LEAs who send leadership teams to the Summer Leadership Academy every year	Unknown*				75%
11. Participation in Summer Leadership Academy (total number of participants per year in summer leadership academy)	150	200	300	400	500
12. Participation in Summer Leadership Academy (total number of schools participating per year in summer leadership academies) – assumes up to 10 participants per school	10	20	30	40	50

Explanations:

***** There is no information currently available about the degree to which common planning time and induction programs occur within the participating LEAs. At the beginning of the State's partnership with participating LEAs, the State (GOSA) will issue a brief survey to participating LEAs to obtain the baseline information for questions (1)-(10) above. The ultimate goals for each measure (1)-(10) are as described above in Year 2013-14. The baseline will serve to set goals in the interim years (2010-11, 2011-12 and 2013-14).

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

State Reform Conditions Criteria

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

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

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

Evidence for (E)(1): A description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.

(E)(1) State's legal, statutory, or regulatory authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools and in LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status

Current Legislation: Current law enables the State to monitor school performance and intervene to assist persistently lowest-achieving schools and LEAs in improvement or corrective action status. Authorizing legislation in Georgia mirrors federal law: Georgia Code 20-14-26 establishes a **Single Statewide Accountability System** (SSAS) with indicators of performance, ratings of schools and school systems, annual report cards, and a system of school awards and interventions; Georgia Code 20-14-41 specifies levels of assistance and intervention for schools that receive an unacceptable rating for student performance, and Georgia Code 20-2-243 authorizes the SBOE to withhold Quality Basic Education funding. These laws were enacted into SBOE Rules on July 14, 2005. (See *Appendix E1: SBOE Accountability Rules.)* The SSAS includes graduated consequences at both the school and LEA levels. School level interventions for schools at NI-8 (Needs Improvement status, Year 8) and above may include: school closure, mandated charter school, complete reconstitution, site-based expenditure controls, and/or specified maximum class sizes. LEA-level interventions may include: a decrease of management authority for the superintendent and

local board of education, assignment of a management team to operate all or part of the LEA, and/or restructuring of the LEA's governance arrangement.

Differentiated Accountability Pilot Approved by US ED: The intervention authority of the State was broadened on July 1, 2008, when the US ED approved Georgia's **Differentiated Accountability (DA) Plan,** which proposed targeted changes to Georgia's NCLB Accountability Plan (see *Appendix A11: Georgia's Differentiated Accountability Approach*). Georgia was among six states chosen in March 2008 by the US ED to pilot a DA plan under the NCLB Act. This program gave states new flexibility to intervene in struggling schools by varying the intensity and type of interventions used and focusing resources on schools with the greatest needs. As part of its DA plan, which went into effect in 2008-09, Georgia re-categorized its struggling schools to create tiers of interventions best suited to the needs of the schools and their students. **NI-1 and NI-2 schools** continue to operate under **Improvement status,** but LEAs have the option of offering free tutoring to students at NI-1 schools, and can then offer public school choice to students at NI-2 schools. (Previously, NCLB required public school choice to be offered first. Systems that still want to offer choice first are allowed to do so under the new DA plan.). **NI-3 and NI-4 schools** continue to operate under **Corrective Action status,** but **three tiers of consequences** were created for schools in Corrective Action, based on their academic achievement: Tier 1 represents the top 20% of schools in corrective action; Tier 2 represents the middle 60%; and Tier 3 represents the bottom 20%. Tier 1 and Tier 2 schools choose corrective actions from a list provided by the State, while Tier 3 schools agree to corrective actions that the State chooses on their behalf, based on a detailed GAPSS analysis. Finally, schools categorized as **NI-5 and higher** are labeled **as State Directed Schools** and must enter into a contract with GaDOE (previously this consequence applied to schools NI-7 and higher). Georgia currently has 278 NI schools in total, or 12.8% of all schools. Of these, 159 schools are in Improvement Status (NI-1 and NI-2), 74 are in Corrective Action (NI-3 and NI-4), and 45 are in State-Directed Status (NI-5 and higher). Each State Directed school is assigned a State Director (one to one ratio) who works closely with the school system, provides observations and professional development for teachers, academic coaches, and administrators, and ensures that the school is implementing its improvement plan and fulfilling the terms of the contract signed with GaDOE. **Work is underway to turn the DA approach into a SBOE Rule.**

Potential New Legislation: See Section (F)(3) for new legislation (SB 84) related to State intervention and local school system governance being introduced in the 2010 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly. If passed, SB 84 will address gaps in school system governance models and strengthen the State's ability to intervene when school systems are on Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) probation.

Reform Plan Criteria

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(E)(2)(i) High quality and ambitious plan to identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools

Methodology to Identify Lowest Achieving Schools (LAS). Consistent with its principles of prioritizing student achievement and intervening in the schools whose students have the greatest need, Georgia has carefully examined and used school achievement data in its methodology for identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools (LAS). RT3 working groups closely followed the criteria described in the RFA notice and established the following as filters: (1) whether the school was in the bottom 5% of schools (from the perspective of academic performance on ESEA tests in Math and ELA); and (2) whether the school was a high school with a graduation rate <60%. RT3 working groups then applied these criteria to two sets of schools: (a) those that are Title I eligible and received Title I funds; and (b) those secondary schools (middle, high, or K-12 schools) that are Title I eligible but did not receive Title I funds. See *Appendix E3: Methodology for Selecting LAS.* These filters combined yielded a total of **42 LAS**—30 unique schools which received Title I funds and 12 unique schools which were Title I eligible but did not receive Title I funds.

Adding Back NI-5 and Higher Schools. The State then proactively added back **20 schools that fell into the NI-5 and higher category**, but were not captured by the methodology outlined in the RFA, in order to stay true to reform initiatives already in place (i.e., the DA Plan recently approved by US ED and implemented in 2008-09, that extends more intensive levels of support/intervention to schools in NI-5 and NI-6 categories). This brought the number of LAS, as defined by Georgia, to a total of **62 schools**. Please see Table E1 below for a breakout of LAS by NI status and school level.

Table E1: Breakout of LAS by NI Status and School Level, 2009

School Level	NI-2	NI-3	NI-4	NI-5	NI-6	NI-7	NI-8	NI-9	NI-10	TOTAL	% Total
Middle		2		6	4	7	3	1	1	**24**	**39%**
High	3	11	5	10	4	1	1		1	**36**	**58%**
K-12					1	1				**2**	**3%**
TOTAL	**3**	**13**	**5**	**16**	**9**	**9**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**62**	**100%**
% Total	**5%**	**21%**	**8%**	**26%**	**14%**	**14%**	**6%**	**2%**	**3%**	**100%**	

Feeder Schools. Of the LAS schools, 58% are high schools, 39% are middle schools, with the remainder being K-12 schools. Based on analysis of root causes for persistently lowest-achieving schools, the RT3 Steering Committee and working groups can state with confidence that academic performance problems of the LAS student population do not begin at the high school level or even at the middle school level, but likely much earlier, in the elementary feeder schools. Because of how AYP is calculated, issues at the subgroup level are often not captured at the elementary school level (sample sizes of student subgroups are often too small). It is often not until the middle school level, when sample sizes become larger, that subgroup issues are identified. While the RT3 application does not call for feeder pattern analysis or require the inclusion of feeders schools in the State's turnaround strategy, State leadership and the RT3 working groups strongly believe that the challenge of LAS schools should not be dealt with exclusively at the LAS school level, but should be approached at the LEA level as a system-wide issue that needs to be resolved. LEAs that have lowest-achieving schools in their mix will need to, with support from the State, take a system-wide look at their students and schools, conduct a segmentation of their student population to understand their needs and determine what models are best suited to meet the needs of the various groups (e.g., multiple pathways for students, depending on need). Understanding the issues in schools that feed into LAS is a critical part of this overall student and school analysis. The RT3 working groups therefore recommend that at least one feeder school per identified LAS be included in the task of turning around lowest-achieving schools at the district level. While this will increase the number of schools of highest concern to the State from 63 to 126, it should be noted that the State is not requesting additional funding from RT3 for feeder schools, nor does it expect to provide additional funding to participating LEAs (those that sign MOUs with the State) for feeder schools. There is much, however, that can be done with existing funding, and some of the district level analyses that will be conducted with LAS in mind (e.g., strategic review of resource allocation at the district and school levels) will also benefit other schools in the district, including feeder schools.

(E)(2)(ii) Supporting LEAs in turning around lowest-achieving schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models

State's Historic Performance on School Turnaround. Georgia believes in setting high standards and expectations for all (as evidenced by reforms describe earlier in this application—GPS, School Standards, CLASS Keys, Leader Keys, Statewide Accountability System, and

Differentiated Accountability), measuring progress, diagnosing root causes, laying out detailed plans, and supporting and monitoring progress. The approaches the State has developed to achieve these goals have evolved and proven to be successful. Decisions about types of interventions are based on a Continuum of Need, which allows the State to be proactive in supporting its lowest-achieving schools while being responsive to specific school contexts and diagnostic results. Consistent with its Differentiated Accountability Plan, the State advocates a portfolio approach of interventions, identifying and segmenting schools by level of under-performance and mobilizing different interventions and models to match each school's circumstances so that all students—no matter where they go to school—can graduate prepared for success in college and careers. The State has chosen to provide extra intervention earlier because of positive results: 12 of 29 contract monitored schools made AYP in 2008, seven of them for the first time. The expanded designation (moving NI-5 and NI-6 schools to Restructuring or State Directed status) also allowed GaDOE for the first time to use a portion of new federal school improvement grants authorized by Title I, section 1003(g), to cover the cost of a state director for each State Directed school (45 schools with NI-5 and higher status). Georgia has a solid historic performance for turning around its lowest-achieving schools, as evidenced by Table E2 and Table E3 below.

Table E2: Breakout of NI Schools over Time, by NI Status (2004-09)

	2004	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**
NI-1	210	147	117	130	101	87
NI-2	52	93	81	78	86	72
NI-3	29	29	42	39	44	47
NI-4	24	19	19	30	29	27
NI-5 or higher	99	66	49	46	48	45
Total	**414**	**354**	**308**	**323**	**308**	**278**
All Schools	**2,030**	**2,040**	**2,071**	**2,100**	**2,153**	**2,172**
% of All	**20.4%**	**17.4%**	**14.9%**	**15.4%**	**14.3%**	**12.8%**

Table E3: Original (2003) Cohort of NI Schools

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
NI 2003 Cohort	533	244	154	103	87	59	33
% of 2003 Cohort	**100%**	**46%**	**29%**	**19%**	**16%**	**11%**	**6%**

As Table E2 shows, the overall number of Georgia schools at some level of Needs Improvement has dropped from 414 in 2003-04 to 278 in 2008-09 (a reduction of 33% over six years). NI schools have dropped from 20% of all schools in 2003-04 to 13% of all schools in 2008-09. Table E3 is another critical piece of information to consider in Georgia's historic performance on school turnaround. The 2003 cohort of 533 NI schools has dropped to only 33 today (or 6% of the original cohort). Perhaps even more importantly, once schools come off the NI list, they rarely reappear on the list (a handful of exceptions amount to about 3% of the schools reappearing on the list). **While this represents solid performance, Georgia recognizes that there is much room to improve the outcomes associated with school turnaround efforts.** There are still over 12% of schools in NI status and still over 30 persistently lowest-achieving schools that the State has not been able to move out of NI status over the last 6 years. A whole generation of students has suffered from the schools' lack of progress. It is not acceptable to allow another generation of students to be subjected to this kind of school environment. Georgia recognizes that bolder and more aggressive approaches will be needed to really "move the achievement needle" in the most persistently lowest-achieving schools. Even though there appears to be no "silver bullet" or quick and guaranteed "fix" today at the national level to the issue of turnaround schools, **Georgia embraces RT3 reforms as an opportunity to test and pilot a number of bold approaches in Georgia's schools, including deepening partnerships with organizations such as Teach for America and establishing new partnerships with organizations such as The New Teacher Project, and with EMO and CMO organizations.**

Approaches Used and Lessons Learned: The GaDOE and its partners have **invested substantial resources in building State capacity** to provide effective and timely support for persistently lowest-achieving schools. See Table E4 below.

Table E4: State Support Structure for NI Schools

NI Level	# of NI Schools	Served by / Ratio of Providers to Schools
NI-1 and NI-2 (Title I)	159	RESA School Improvement Specialists / 1:5
NI-3, NI-4 (Title I/Non Title I)	74	GaDOE School Improvement Specialists / 1:2.5
NI-5 and above (Title I)	45	GaDOE State Directors / 1:1
All NI Schools	278	Collaborative for School Improvement (GaDOE, RESA, GLRS, Higher Ed, Other)

In addition to building State-level capacity, Georgia has identified the following as key factors in school turnaround success:

(1) **Systematic use of data.** Early in SY05, work began on the development of a set of performance standards for schools**,** which would later become the School Keys. A companion process was also developed to measure the implementation of the standards and would later become the Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards (GAPSS). The GaDOE has been able to identify specific target areas for improvement through AYP Reports (including student achievement data) and GAPSS Analyses.

(2) **Clear performance expectations of schools.** Expectations for schools have been clarified through the School Keys, and in the case of schools at NI levels 5 and above, have been built into improvement contracts that schools sign with the State. These contracts were first used in SY07 for schools in NI levels 7 and above. When Georgia's DA Plan was approved in 2008, the use of improvement contracts was expanded as a requirement for NI levels 5 and above.

(3) **Process of short-term action plans.** As more schools participated in the GAPSS Analysis process, required at NI-5 and NI-7, GaDOE began to use short-term action plans (STAPs) to help schools identify manageable parts of the school improvement plan to implement with intensity and monitor on a 45-60 day basis.

(4) **Performance coaches.** GaDOE has encouraged schools to use both subject-specific instructional coaches, including math, science, and reading coaches (to help schools with the implementation of their instructional interventions) and graduation coaches (initiated 2006-2007; deployed first in high schools and later also in middle schools) to focus on students at high risk of dropout.

(5) **Data-driven professional learning and leadership academies.** A professional learning program called **Raising Standards**, begun in SY07, addresses standards-based teaching and learning, identified in the GAPSS Analyses as an area of weakness throughout the state. In addition, the GaDOE has initiated **intense week-long Summer Leadership Academies** in 2008 and 2009 for selected school leadership teams from schools in NI-5 levels and above. These sessions allow the State to disseminate effective school improvement practices and provide structured time for school teams to develop plans for the upcoming year based on their new learning. The GaDOE has followed up with professional learning targeted at critical improvement issues that have the most promise of affecting school performance. These areas (data teams, formative assessment, active literacy and thinking maps) align with the target areas for improvement identified through the AYP reports and GAPSS Analyses over the last several years.

(6) **Strong communication and effective relationships with LEAs.** Finally, a key factor in Georgia's successful deployment of DA has also been strong communications and effective relationships with LEAs, with principals and teachers giving high marks to state directors for thoughtful, focused coaching and a collaborative rather than directive approach.[17]

A detailed overview of the Evidence requested for this section is provided in *Appendix E3: Approaches Used, Results and Lessons Learned*.

State's Future Approach to School Turnaround under RT3. The State will establish a **new office—the State Office of School Turnaround (SOST)—within the GaDOE to lead this effort and to give due attention to persistently lowest-achieving schools.** Leading the SOST will be the Deputy Superintendent for School Turnaround (DSST), a new position for which a national search will begin

17 *Mining the Opportunities in "Differentiated Accountability"*, Center on Education Policy (August 2009) and *Intensified Support: Changes in School Restructuring in Georgia under the No Child Left Behind Act*, Center on Education Policy (September 2009)

immediately (see *Appendix A26: Letter from State Superintendent Cox to Secretary Duncan*). The DSST will report to the State Superintendent, work closely with the RT3 Implementation Director and will be accountable for turning around lowest-achieving schools. The existing Division of State Directed Schools, focused on all schools at NI-5 and higher levels (all of which are on the persistently lowest-achieving school list) will move over to report to the DSST. The Deputy Superintendent for Education Support and Improvement will continue to be responsible for school improvement in all schools other than NI-5 and higher, and for increasing overall teacher and leader effectiveness. See Figure E1 below for how the turnaround effort will be structured in Georgia.

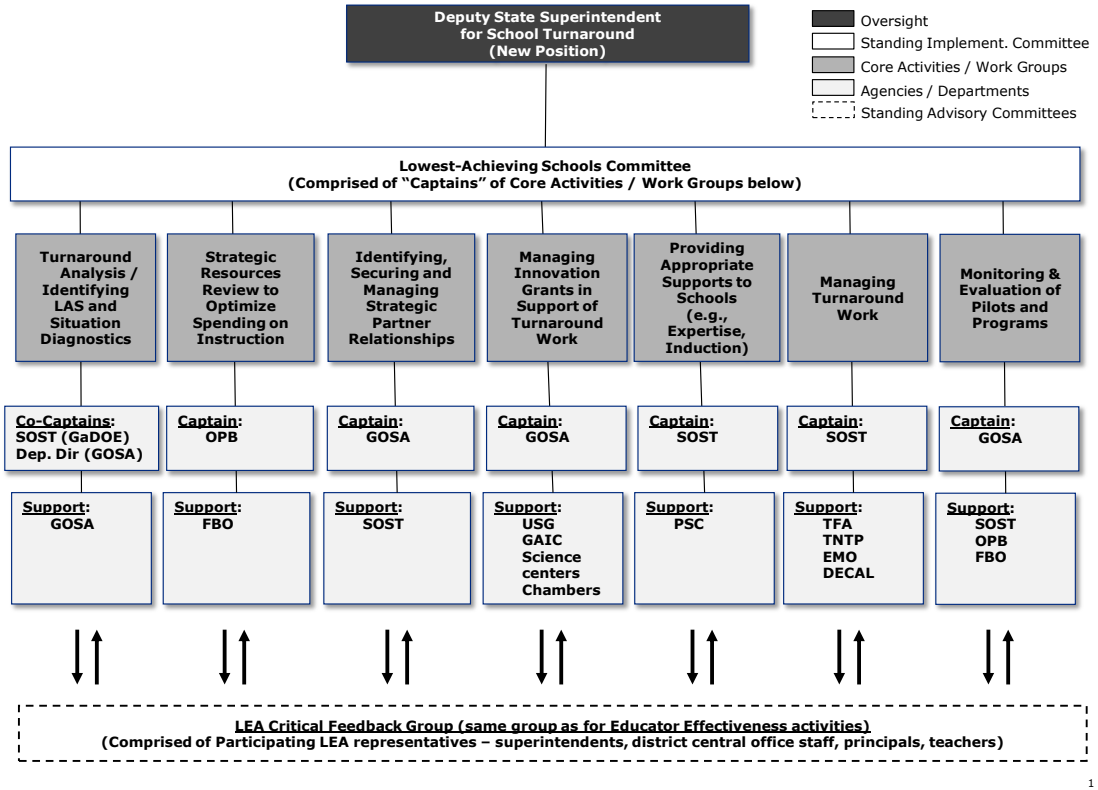


Figure E1: Oversight Structure for Turning Around Lowest-Achieving Schools

Georgia will approach the challenge of turning around its LAS on two distinct but complementary levels—structural (related to type of intervention model selected and school governance) and programmatic (range of programmatic initiatives and services provided to LEAs, LAS and their students).

(1) **Structural Initiatives:**

a. A range of **intervention models** exist, all of which assume that the LAS school principal has appropriate authority over staffing and budget decisions. The appropriate model for each LAS will be selected by the State in collaboration with the LEA based upon local context and need, including such factors as: (a) the level of NI status; (b) geographic location; (c) the strength of the "local" teacher and principal pipeline; and (d) the feasibility of enlisting EMOs and CMOs (a critical factor for the restart model). Preliminary review of LAS schools by RT3 working groups suggests that LAS schools that are NI-2, 3 or 4 (21 schools) may benefit most from a transformation model; LAS schools in NI-5, 6 or 7 (34 schools) may be candidates for transformation, restart or turnaround; while some of the LAS schools in NI-8, 9 or 10 may be candidates for school closure. These preliminary assumptions are all subject to adjustment once a detailed diagnostic is conducted for each LAS in participating LEAs. **The DSST will co-lead, with GOSA, the process of intensive and rigorous diagnostics of participating LEAs.** The diagnostic team will include State-level experts from GaDOE and GOSA, field-level experts (e.g., one to two superintendents), and potentially external experts (e.g., external providers who have developed processes and teams of turnaround experts).

b. In order to bolster the teacher pipeline and support turnaround or restart efforts, the State is entering into **partnerships with Teach for America (TFA), The New Teacher Project (TNTP)**, and **UTeach.** TFA will expand in metro areas where it already has substantial presence, and TNTP will service some of the more rural/distant regions of Georgia while also servicing metro areas. UTeach sites will be selected to assist LEAs in additional locations to increase the supply of mathematics and science teachers.

c. The State is also **in preliminary discussions with Education Management Organizations** (EMOs) in order to make restarts a feasible option for LEAs. Participating LEAs will work with school improvement partners (EMOs, CMOs) either pre-qualified or selected by the State.

d. The State will make **real resources available** to the LAS through the 50% of overall RT3 funding that will flow directly to Participating LEAs. A condition of obtaining these resources (spelled out in the MOU between the State and Participating LEAs) is a rigorous review of existing resource allocations in the Participating LEAs to ensure that existing resources are being deployed with maximum impact today.

e. Finally, LEAs who choose to partner with the State on turning around low-achieving schools in their respective districts will also **commit to implementing teacher and leader reforms** outlined earlier in Section D. For a detailed list of commitments, refer to *Appendix A16: Participating LEA Model MOU and Exhibit 1*.

(2) **Programmatic Initiatives.** The State expects that a number of programmatic initiatives will be needed to turn around lowest-achieving schools. At a minimum, LEAs will benefit from:

a. **Extended day** options for specific groups of students (to be used for academic improvement or enrichment activities).

b. **Math coaches** to support teachers with the delivery of the new math curriculum and interpretation of assessments to provide differentiated math instruction to students.

c. **Targeted professional development** for teachers, focused on data use, formative assessment, active literacy and thinking maps (the MOU with Participating LEAs calls for a minimum of 60 minutes of common planning time for teachers per week. See *Appendix A16: Participating LEA Model MOU and Exhibit 1*.

d. Partnerships with local universities to **develop and deliver innovative courses,** especially in STEM.

e. **Implementation of local instructional improvement systems** which provide teachers with a web-based portal to manage curriculum resources, create assessments for students, score, evaluate and group students, and develop report cards and profiles for each student, drastically reducing the time needed to obtain student-specific data. The State will take a lead role in either pre-qualifying vendors from which Participating LEAs can choose, or in collaborating with the LEAs to select a single vendor for all

Participating LEAs (if this kind of approach is justified by potential economies of scale, e.g., cost per student may be lower if entering into a contract that covers a larger number of students).

f. **Access to upper division courses for students** through Georgia Virtual School (GAVS), which will provide students in lowest-achieving high schools with access to advanced courses (including courses in STEM) that they may not be able to get otherwise in their home schools.

g. **Credit recovery services for students** through GAVS and other providers, if GAVS does not offer sufficient credit recovery options (e.g., in specific courses).

h. **Dropout prevention programs,** through **graduation coaches** (described in Section A) and through expansion of the State's current partnership with Communities in Schools of Georgia (CISGA) to support 4 additional **Performance Learning Centers (PLCs) in Participating LEAs for which this is an appropriate model.** The State recognizes that students who are more than one year behind academically may not necessarily benefit from individual credit recovery services (through GAVS or other providers) and will need a structured support/supervision pathway like a PLC. PLCs are small, non-traditional schools geared toward high school students who are not succeeding in the traditional school setting and have been deemed at risk of dropping out. PLCs partner with LEAs to create a business-like environment and emphasize personal support and an intense academic program anchored by an online instructional system and project-based learning. While graduation coaches provide academic coaching to students around credit accumulation, **site coordinators** employed by the PLCs develop a web of community support for high need students. PLCs began in 2003 with initial funding from the Joseph B. Whitehead Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and a handful of innovative local school district partners. Over the next several years, over three dozen additional funding partners became involved, including the State of Georgia in 2007. [Also in 2007, CIS was awarded an additional grant from the Gates Foundation to expand the PLC program to five other states—NC, NJ, PA, VA, and WA). There are currently 21 PLCs serving about 2,000 students each in Georgia. Since the 2002-03 year, they have helped graduate 4,036 students who were likely to be or were high school dropouts. See *Appendix E4: Outcomes of CISGA PLCs*. In response to requests from school districts, CIS-GA

has also developed a middle school model that could address students' challenges before entering high school. The approach is modeled on existing PLCs and is called **Life and Learning Academies** (LLAs). LLAs aim to provide a non-traditional, accelerated education setting for middle school students, and as such also fit into Georgia's strategy to turn around its lowest-achieving schools (See *Appendix E5: Life and Learning Academy* for a description of the model). LLAs will be piloted in September 2010 and should be viewed as "whole school models." As shown earlier in Table E1, about half of the persistently lowest-achieving schools are high schools, and about half are middle schools. As part of overall turnaround efforts, in partnership with CIS-GA and based on needs of those Participating LEAs that have lowest-achieving schools, the State will determine the optimal mix of PLCs and LLAs among the 4 centers/academies that it supports through the RT3 grant. The State's investment in the 4 additional PLC/LLAs will be further leveraged through CISGA's Investing in Innovation (I3) application—CIS-GA aims to increase the total number of PLCs in Georgia by 30, utilizing both RT3 funding and I3 funding.

i. In addition, the **State will provide tool kits to Participating LEAs on key strategic programmatic issues,** e.g., best practices in implementing teacher and leader effectiveness reforms, and in conducting school and student segmentation, and developing "multiple pathway" strategies for students. The State recognizes that, in order for turnaround efforts to be successful, the unit of analysis cannot be only the lowest-achieving school, in isolation from the rest of the district's strategy with respect to how students are segmented and "serviced" most appropriately and according to their needs. Rather the "unit of analysis" should be the district, and the State aims to utilize RT3 funds in part to develop ongoing district capacity to study and meet the needs of its student population. In order to turn around a lowest-achieving school, a district will likely need to take a "portfolio" view of its schools and academic options for students. In this portfolio, there may be ample room for magnet schools, specialty schools, career academies, Performance Learning Centers, Life and Learning Academies, expansion of Work-Ready Certificate programs and use of CTAE Peach State Pathways sequenced electives which emphasize career readiness. But in order to determine the optimal portfolio of options for its students, a district will first need to conduct a careful analysis of the needs of its student population and only then develop the right set of multiple pathways for those students. The State is setting aside some funds, as part of its portion of the

overall RT3 budget, to assist districts with these kinds of strategies (See *Appendix A30: Budget Narrative* for additional details). This is an area where the private sector and philanthropic organizations can also get involved in very meaningful ways, by helping to fund the kind of external technical expertise that may be required to assist districts in developing ambitious but achievable plans to appropriately segment their student populations and to develop systemic solutions that will allow each and every student to graduate.

j. Finally, the State will also work collaboratively with participating LEAs to develop strategic initiatives appropriate for LAS feeder schools. In particular, the State is excited to participate in a new national **Grade Level Reading Initiative** for ages 0-8, beginning in SY2010-11 and led by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The initiative will be rolled out in 2010 with twenty states, and Georgia has agreed to serve as one of the lead states. The reading strategies and reading indicators developed by the participating group of states will be tested in Georgia in the feeder elementary schools and pre-K programs in two to four of the participating LEAs that have persistently lowest-achieving schools. Georgia will take a leading role in defining reading strategies and reading indicators (e.g. appropriate assessments in grades 1-3 and use of Lexiles) and will share findings from its demonstration sites nationally. More detail on this initiative is provided under *Invitational Priority 3: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes.*

Georgia's detailed action plan to support participating LEAs in turning around their lowest-achieving schools follows.

GOAL 1: Support participating LEAs through STRUCTURAL initiatives (turnaround model, teacher and leader reforms) *Rationale: Provides State with appropriate influence over turnaround model choice, comprehensive reforms, and funding allocations while working collaboratively with district leadership.*		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	**TIMELINE**	**RESPONSIBILITY**
ACTIVITY (1): State approaches all LEAs whose schools are persistently lowest-achieving to seek MOU commitments. Obtain initial MOU commitments from participating LEAs to turn around the LAS in their systems through one of the four models outlined in the RFP.	Dec 2009-Jan 2010	Governor, RT3 SC
ACTIVITY (2): State forms team of turnaround experts to conduct LEA/LAS "diagnostics" outlined in the MOU (GaDOE and GOSA staff, and 1-2 superintendents)	Jan-Feb 2010	RT3 SC

ACTIVITY (3): State, in collaboration with participating LEAs, conducts an intensive diagnostic of each LAS. State-level experts perform the GAPSS analyses, and develop a summary of findings (including a leadership assessment, certified staff survey summary, interview summary, and classroom observation summary). Based on the diagnostic, the State recommends to the LEA one of the four turnaround models outlined in the RFP.	Feb-May 2010	State team including School and/or System voluntary representatives
ACTIVITY (4): State coordinates timing of diagnostics with LEA application timeline for School Improvement 1003(g) funds. The School Improvement Grant (SIG) application is based on the same LAS list as the RT3 application and the two sources of funds reinforce the same turnaround goals. The diagnostic will provide valuable data to LEAs to help inform the choice of intervention model (that LEAs need to submit in both their application for SIG funds and in their action plan required for the RT3 MOU).	Feb-May 2010	State Superintendent, RT3 SC
ACTIVITY (5): State provides appropriate support to participating LEAs in developing specific action plans. [Action plans to be finalized within 90 days of the RT3 award being announced.] Supports will include action plan templates and technical assistance workshops.	Feb-April 2010	RT3 SC, RT3 Director, DSST
ACTIVITY (6): Participating LEAs develop detailed action plans. Action plans will include the agreed upon intervention model (Activity 3 above). LEAs whose action plans meet the criteria specified by the State will be invited to sign final MOUs with the State. Final MOUs are due back to US ED within 90 days of RT3 award being announced.	May-July 2010	RT3 SC, RT3 Director, DSST
ACTIVITY (7): The State assists participating LEAs in conducting a rigorous review of existing resource allocations in participating LEAs. The State will appoint a committee to select appropriate technical assistance firm to conduct this analysis in participating LEAs in first year of RT3 grant (2010-11). The firm will conduct initial reviews in up to 5 districts, while building State-level capacity to conduct reviews in remaining districts.	April-July 2010 (vendor selection) Aug 2010-May 2011 (strategic resource review)	RT3 SC, DSST, Technical Assistance Firm; Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (8): LEAs will utilize review results to inform decision about what funds may be reallocated over remaining 3 years of grant funding to ensure sustainability of reforms that are put in place to turn around lowest-achieving schools	Sept 2011- June 2014	State Turnaround Director, LEAs
ACTIVITY (9): State awards funding to participating LEAs, based on their shares of Title I A allocations. In the case of LEAs with LAS, these funds will be used to cover costs associated with implementing the commitments outlined in the MOU. The State may make additional funds available to LEAs from its share of the RT3 grant, based on a competitive process.	May-Aug 2010 (amts finalized) Sept 2010 (distribution)	RT3 SC, GaDOE, DSST

ACTIVITY (10): State assists participating LEAs in implementing the full complement of teacher effectiveness and principal effectiveness reforms. The reforms are outlined in the MOU and reform implementation detail is provided in Section D. The State may provide external technical assistance to participating LEAs in the form of proven teacher and principal effectiveness tools and strategies.	Starting in Fall 2010	DSST, OESI, GOSA, External technical assistance firms
GOAL 2: Support LEAs through targeted <u>PROGRAMMATIC</u> initiatives *Rationale: State leverages professional development and disseminates lessons learned targeted to program reforms.*		
ACTIVITY (11): State provides appropriate supports for principals in lowest-achieving schools. Targeted professional development and ongoing support to principals will help them be more effective in turning around schools. State builds on the existing Summer Leadership Academy (SLA) program organized by OESI within GaDOE. OESI defines SLA program curriculum and format; engages practitioners to teach; requires superintendents of LEAs with any NI schools to send leadership teams to SLA; revises format and curriculum based on participant feedback, and formalizes program of ongoing support to principals (e.g., network of state directors that they can tap into for expertise; plus network of principals who attend SLA).	Starting in Summer 2010	DSST, OESI
ACTIVITY (12): State helps participating LEAs provide appropriate supports for teachers in lowest-achieving schools. The State will share with participating LEAs best demonstrated practices in targeted professional development for teachers (from its work across broad portfolio of NI schools). Special attention will be given to PD related to: (a) use of formative and benchmark assessments; (b) use of data to modify instruction to boost student learning; (c) use of new web reporting tools based on the State's SLDS (once these tools become available). Through these tools, teacher will be able to access a classroom view of their students (historic academic achievement data, current benchmark assessments, student attendance, student characteristics – demographics, SPED, ELL, FRL, etc), which will allow them to group students into meaningful groupings and adjust instruction delivery accordingly.	Starting in Fall 2010 Web reporting tools will not be available till late 2012	DSST, OESI SLDS Director and Staff
ACTIVITY (13): State provides targeted support to participating LEAs for instructional improvement systems. State selects appropriate vendor to provide tools to teachers in lowest-achieving schools that allow teachers to understand students' personal interests, preferred learning and expression styles. These individualized student profiles will allow teachers to appropriately adapt instruction to students' needs.	May-Dec 2010	DSST, Vendor Selection Committee
ACTIVITY (14): In collaboration with Participating LEAs, State determines which LEAs will be beneficiaries of the 4 PLCs in which State invests. This will depend on need of LEA (student demographics) and fit of PLC with overall turnaround strategy being employed by the LEA. The State envisions that there would be one PLC per district, so up to 4 LEAs can benefit from this programmatic initiative.	May – July 2010	DSST, CISGA, Participating LEAs

ACTIVITY (15): State identifies LEAs which will benefit from additional technical expertise in the area of teacher and leader effectiveness reforms or multiple pathway development for students. The State will determine best use of available funds (e.g., "deeper dive") with a handful of districts or broad support to all districts through sharing of higher level processed and frameworks provided by external technical experts.	After action plans are finalized in July 2010	DSST, Participating LEAs, External technical assistance
ACTIVITY (16): State launches the Grade Level Reading Initiative for ages 0-8 in elementary feeder schools and pre-K programs in participating LEAs with LAS. The State will partner with 19 other states, will take a leading role in defining reading strategies and reading indicators (e.g. appropriate assessments in grades 1-3 and use of Lexiles), and will share findings from its demonstration sites nationally.	Starting in fall 2010	DSST, Participating foundations, Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (17): State continues to support all schools with GAPSS analysis and schools in NI status with State Directors. The GAPSS team and the State Directors represent an important body of school improvement knowledge that will continue to be made available to principals and schools in need of support.	Ongoing	OESI, State Directors, GAPSS Team
GOAL 3: Enter into State-level partnerships to significantly bolster all turnaround efforts. *Rationale: The State is in a unique position relative to LEAs to solidify/expand partnerships with providers which can substantially boost resources needed for reform.*		
ACTIVITY (18): State formalizes partnership with TFA to support turnaround efforts at the LEA level. The success of turnaround models depends on a strong pipeline of effective teachers and principals. The partnership with TFA will include expansion in metro areas where TFA already has a presence.	May-June 2010	RT3 Director, DSST
ACTIVITY (19): State formalizes preliminary discussions with TNTP into a partnership focusing TNTP as provider of alternative certification and recruiting services to four primary geographic clusters in GA. TNTP will also be able to provide similar services in metro areas.	May-June 2010	RT3 Director, DSST
ACTIVITY (20): State works with participating LEAs to formalize which LEAs will act as primary "sponsors" for TFA and TNTP (recruiting commitments). Once formalized, TFA and TNTP will begin recruiting for programs/cohorts in Georgia in July-Aug 2010; new TFA and TNTP first teaching cohorts begin to teach in schools in Aug-Sept 2011. TFA and TNTP will provide ongoing support to their teachers	May-July 2010	RT3 Director, DSST
ACTIVITY (21): State formalizes preliminary discussions with Education Management Organizations into partnership with a provider that will focus on managing schools identified as best matches for the restart model.	May-June 2010	RT3 Director, DSST

ACTIVITY (22): State formalizes partnership with CEISMC (Georgia Tech) or other provider to contribute to STEM reform statewide, but especially in lowest-achieving schools. Support from provider could come in the form of: (a) innovative applied STEM modules, aligned to standards, that can be disseminated broadly throughout K-12 classrooms; (b) innovative professional development programs targeted at increasing STEM content and content delivery skills of teachers in grades 3-12; or (c) both.	May-Aug 2010	RT3 Director, DSST
ACTIVITY (23): State formalizes partnership with the business and philanthropic communities in Georgia by establishing a public/private Innovation Fund to provide competitive awards to low performing districts that have innovative ideas about partnering with businesses or IHEs to encourage applied learning, especially in STEM.	May-Dec 2010	RT3 Director, DSST

Performance Measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-2011	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014
The number of schools for which one of the four school intervention models will be initiated each year.	9	34	34	34	34

Explanation:

- From the RFP notice, page 74: *"If a school identified as a persistently lowest-achieving school has implemented, in whole or in part within the last two years, an intervention that meets the requirements of the turnaround, restart, or transformation models, the school may continue or complete the intervention being implemented."*
- Georgia has included in its baseline 9 of the 34 persistently lowest achieving schools (in the 23 LEAs that signed MOUs with the State) because these schools had both a new principal and have made AYP in the last 2 years. Although these 9 schools have not yet been removed from the Needs Improvement list, it appears that they are beginning to improve to sufficient performance levels and may not require a new principal. The State aims for these schools to continue the transformational model in 2010-11.Of course, all schools (including these 9 baseline schools) will go through an intensive diagnostic conducted by the State in collaboration with participating LEAs. The final recommendation on turnaround models for these 9 schools depends on findings identified through the State/LEA diagnostic.

(F) General *(55 total points)*

State Reform Conditions Criteria

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

The extent to which—

(i) The percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice) that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2009 was greater than or equal to the percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice) that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2008; and

(ii) The State's policies lead to equitable funding (a) between high-need LEAs (as defined in this notice) and other LEAs, and (b) within LEAs, between high-poverty schools (as defined in this notice) and other schools.

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

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

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

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

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

F)(1)(i) Percentage of total revenues available to State to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education (FY09 vs. FY08)

Education is a very high priority for Georgia. **State funding for education relative to overall spending has increased steadily despite very challenging economic conditions.** While State revenue plunged 9% from FY08 to FY09, the percentage of State appropriations allocated to education **increased from 58% to 62% of total expenditures** during the same time period. In dire economic times, Georgia has protected education to the extent possible. In FY10, LEA budgets were deliberately reduced only 3% while other State budgets were reduced by 10% or more. See Table F1 below.

Table F1: State Funds Appropriations by Policy Area FY08-FY10

($ in millions)	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
Educated Georgia			
Early Care and Learning	$329	$337	$354
State Board of Education	$7,974	$7,372	$7,393
Regents, University System of Georgia	$2,142	$2,023	$2,080
Student Finance Commission	$557	$575	$626
Teachers' Retirement System	$2	$1	$1
Technical College System of Georgia	$373	$315	$332
Total Educated Georgia	**$11,377**	**$10,623**	**$10,786**
Total Healthy Georgia	$4,076	$3,311	$3,528
Total Safe Georgia	$1,691	$1,559	$1,508
Total Best Managed State	$1,324	$1,206	$810
Total Growing Georgia	$1,107	$960	$807
State Obligation Debt	$970	$970	$906
Total State General Funds	$20,545	$18,629	$18,345
Less:			
Brain and Spinal Injury Trust Fund	-$2	-$2	-$2
Motor Fuel Funds	-$988	-$1,028	-$913
Nursing Home Provider Fees	$0	$0	-$123
Care Management Organization Fees	$0	$0	-$43
Total Lottery, Tobacco and State General	**$19,555**	**$17,600**	**$17,265**
Education/Total Available State Funds	***58.2%***	***60.4%***	***62.5%***

(F)(1)(ii) State's policies lead to equitable funding

a) Between High-Need LEAs and other LEAs. The QBE formula is the state's primary education funding formula; earnings are based upon student Full Time Equivalent Segments and are earned at the school level. (See *Appendix F1: The Quality Basic Education Act.*) Total statewide QBE funds at the beginning of FY 2010 amounted to $8.462 billion of which $1.697 billion was funded through LEAs—LEAs are required to provide 5 mills worth of local funding (the amount is subtracted from the LEA's QBE payments from the state). By utilizing the actual millage values of LEAs (as established in the adjusted local tax digests), the state provides a relatively higher portion of funds to less wealthy districts (since the value of a mill in a poor district is less than the value of a mill in a wealthier district). Additionally:

- The state provides a **grant called Equalization,** which is intended to **subsidize less wealthy districts** to the wealth level of the 75th percentile district. Specifically, the state will subsidize the difference between what a given district would earn on a mill and what the 75th percentile district (in terms of wealth) would earn on a mill. The state generally matches up to 12 mills. At the beginning of FY 2010 the amount of State funding for Equalization was $423 million.
- The state provides **funds to support schools through its Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESAs).** This provides for a distributed network of education support in various regions. The **funding formula used to support this network is weighted heavily toward rural and poorer districts.** In FY 2010 the funding for the RESA network was $11 million.
- Starting in FY 2009, Georgia implemented a **special bond appropriation to supplement low income districts for renovation and capital projects.** This special appropriation is in addition to bond funds provided for construction, and provides for a higher square foot construction cost reimbursement than that provided for other capital projects. Only chronically low wealth districts are able to use the bond funds. For FY 2010, $10 million in bond authorization was provided for this supplemental program.

b) Within LEAs, between high-poverty schools and other schools. High-need schools are mandatorily identified through the State's official Accountability Profile and related AYP determination. Schools failing to meet AYP for two years or more fall under increasingly strict remediation requirements. Per state law, schools failing to meet AYP for two years must be provided technical assistance by the LEA. As part

of this technical assistance, the school and LEA must jointly develop a school improvement plan, such plan to be approved by the local board and be available to the GaDOE. The official school improvement plan requirement facilitates additional resource allocation. Local, Federal and State funds are considered in the resource allocations. The state has initiated the following funding policies to assist LEAs in dealing with Needs Improvement schools (including persistently low achieving schools):

- **State law (HB 1187)** has been modified, in all years since 2003, to **allow funding flexibility for LEAs to direct additional state Quality Basic Education (QBE) funds to schools considered persistently low achieving.** Without this funding flexibility, LEAs would be required to direct state QBE funds to the schools where funds were earned, regardless of relative challenges faced by particular schools within the district.
- **Remediation funds** and **Early Intervention Program (EIP) funds** are QBE program funds that provide **supplemental funding for students at risk.** The funding flexibility mentioned above extends to these funds as well, and **allows systems to direct remediation resources to the highest need schools.** At the beginning of FY 2010 State QBE funds for Remediation and EIP totaled $345 million ($40 million and $305 million, respectively).

Through the GaDOE, the State ensures that all federal mandates related to NI schools are applied. The GaDOE has a robust oversight process that leverages State and Federal Funds in the area of NI, with increased focus on persistently low achieving schools. GaDOE resources are formalized contractually, to ensure progress in addressing school specific needs. This oversight also ensures local board focus on improving persistently low performing schools through the contract monitoring process. (See *Appendix F2: Example of Contract with State Directed School*.)

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

The extent to which—

(i) The State has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools (as defined in this notice) in the State, measured (as set forth in Appendix B) by the percentage of total schools in the State that are allowed to be charter schools or otherwise restrict student enrollment in charter schools;

(ii) The State has laws, statutes, regulations, or guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools; in particular, whether authorizers require that student achievement (as defined in this notice) be one significant factor, among others, in authorization or renewal; encourage charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations, especially relative to high-need students (as defined in this notice); and have closed or not renewed ineffective charter schools;

(iii) The State's charter schools receive (as set forth in Appendix B) equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal revenues;

(iv) The State provides charter schools with funding for facilities (for leasing facilities, purchasing facilities, or making tenant improvements), assistance with facilities acquisition, access to public facilities, the ability to share in bonds and mill levies, or other supports; and the extent to which the State does not impose any facility-related requirements on charter schools that are stricter than those applied to traditional public schools; and

(v) The State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.

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

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

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

Evidence for (F)(2)(ii):
- A description of the State's approach to charter school accountability and authorization, and a description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- For each of the last five years:
  - The number of charter school applications made in the State.
  - The number of charter school applications approved.
  - The number of charter school applications denied and reasons for the denials (academic, financial, low enrollment, other).
  - The number of charter schools closed (including charter schools that were not reauthorized to operate).

Evidence for (F)(2)(iii):
- A description of the State's applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- A description of the State's approach to charter school funding, the amount of funding passed through to charter schools per student, and how those amounts compare with traditional public school per-student funding allocations.

Evidence for (F)(2)(iv):
- A description of the State's applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.
- A description of the statewide facilities supports provided to charter schools, if any.

Evidence for (F)(2)(v):
- A description of how the State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.

(F)(2)(i) Non-restrictive charter school laws

Georgia's charter school laws do not prohibit or inhibit the development of high-performing charter schools and the State proactively encourages high-quality charter school development. In fact, according to a report released earlier in January by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, Georgia is ranked fourth in the nation in terms of charter laws and commitment to charter quality.[18] Unlike the majority of the forty chartering states, Georgia has no caps on the number of charter schools that can be authorized or on the number of

18 *How State Charter Laws Rank Against the New Model Public Charter School Law,* National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, Jan. 13, 2010

students charter schools can enroll. Georgia supports charter schools as a critical component in the State's efforts to maximize access to a wide variety of high-quality educational options for all students regardless of disability, race, or socioeconomic status, including those students who have struggled in a traditional public school setting. However, the State does not vary from its approach that all schools must meet high standards and charters fit into those expectations to the extent that they are actively managed and supported. Since the passage of the first Charter Schools Act in 1993 (O.C.G.A. 20-2-2061 through 20-2-2071), charter school activity in Georgia has been growing steadily, and Georgia now has 121 approved charter schools (which represents approximately 6% of all schools in Georgia). The Charter Schools Act was amended in 1998 to provide for start-up charter schools. There are **seven types of charter schools in Georgia—**conversion charter schools, Commission charter schools, startup charter schools, LEA charter startup schools, LEA charter startup schools that are Career Academies, state chartered special schools, and system charter schools. (Definitions are provided in *Appendix F3: Charter Schools by Type*.) One interesting example of LEA startup schools are Career Academies**,** which offer high school students exciting opportunities for a 21st Century education through partnerships between local school systems, the state technical colleges, and business and industry. Career Academies were started in 2007 with $1 million annually in operating funds and $15 million in revolving bond funds for construction/renovation. Career academies fast-track high school students on pathways to careers and college by focusing on career themes reflecting the local economy. The curriculum is sequenced and integrates academics and career-based learning, and dual credit courses give students the opportunity to earn high school and college credits.

Of the 121 approved charter schools, 34 are start-up charter schools, 32 are conversion charter schools, 25 are system charter schools, 18 are LEA startup schools, 6 are chartered Career Academy schools, 4 are state chartered special schools, and 2 are Commission charter schools. (See *Appendix F4: GA Charter School Activity* for additional data on these schools.)

In addition, to ensure that charter school applicants have an opportunity to apply to more than one authorizer, **the Georgia General Assembly enacted legislation in 2008 creating the Charter Schools Commission, a single-purpose, state-level Commission that can authorize**

charter schools directly. This legislation was designed to serve two purposes: 1) To develop and support charter schools to better meet the growing and diverse needs of some of the increasing number and array of charter schools in this state and to further ensure that charter schools of the highest academic quality are approved and supported throughout the state in an efficient manner; and 2) To maximize access to a wide variety of high-quality educational options for all students regardless of disability, race, or socioeconomic status, including those students who have struggled in a traditional public school setting. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2080 through 20-2-92.) . See *Appendix F5: SBOE Charter Schools Rules.*

(F)(2)(ii) State laws, statutes, regulations or guidelines regarding how:

Charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools. Georgia's Charter Schools Act and related State Board regulations contain a host of guidelines governing the approval, monitoring, reauthorization, and closing of charter schools. While any particular authorization, renewal, or termination decision is multi-faceted, the principal goal of the Charter Schools Act is to increase student achievement. Indeed, **the Georgia Charter Schools Act is expressly designed "to increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation by encouraging local school systems to utilize the flexibility of a performance based contract called a charter."** O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2061 (2009). With this intent in mind, the authorizing bodies in Georgia consider student achievement improvement when making any decision relative to a particular school. Since the Charter Schools Act was amended in 1998 to allow for the creation of start-up charter schools, the SBOE has authorized a total of 117 charter schools. Of these 117 schools, the SBOE has terminated or non-renewed 13, for reasons ranging from poor academic performance to lack of financial viability. More than a few of these termination decisions have been contentious and opposed by local school leaders and community members. The State Board, however, is focused on high-quality charter authorizing, not merely authorizing for the sake of adding more charter schools to the Georgia sector. The SBOE works very diligently to ensure that high quality applications receive a fair and receptive authorizing environment in Georgia.

- **Application Approvals.** Since 2004, The State Board has reviewed 139 charter school applications, approved 113 and denied 26. A combination of increased rigor throughout the process and a decline in the quality of applications, coupled with weakness in the

proposed leadership teams at the schools resulted in a decrease in the percentage of applications approved in recent years. See Table F2 on the next page for more detail.

Table F2: Number of Charter School Applications, 2004-09

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Cum
Number of New Charter School Applications	9	15	11	14	29	21	99
Number of Renewal Charter School Applications			8	8	10	14	40
Total Number of Applications	9	15	19	22	39	35	139
Number of New Applications Approved	6	15	11	12	21	12	77
Number or New Renewals Approved			8	7	9	12	36
Total Number of Approvals	6	15	19	19	30	24	113
% New Applications Approved	**67%**	**100%**	**100%**	**86%**	**72%**	**57%**	**78%**
% Renewals Approved			**100%**	**88%**	**90%**	**86%**	**90%**

- **Application Denials.** In 2009, 3 applications were denied and 8 withdrawn with a recommendation for denial. The three applications the State Board denied had a variety of shortcomings including: poor academic performance, poor fiscal viability, and failure to comply with the state charter law. Petitioners can withdraw their applications at any time without an official reason. In 2009, petitioners withdrew their applications for the following reasons: Two petitions were withdrawn for projected fiscal issues; one petition was withdrawn as a result of prior poor academic achievement; and five petitions were withdrawn to continue to develop their charter concept to align with charter law and to create more rigorous academic goals
- **Charter School Closures.** Over the last six years, 14 approved charter schools were closed by the SBOE. Charter schools rarely close as a result of a single factor; more often the schools close for a combination of performance related issues. If one had to isolate the reason for the ten closures, they would be summarized as follows: Five schools closed for academic performance and poor fiscal management; two schools closed as a result of poor academic performance; one school closed as a result of low student enrollment; one school reverted back to a traditional public school. See Table F3 for data on number of charter schools closed or denied.

Table F3: Number of Charter Schools Denied/Withdrawn or Closed, 2004-09

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Cum
Number of New Charter School Applications	9	15	11	14	29	21	99
Number of New Applications Denied	3	0	0	2	8	9	22
% New Applications Denied	**33%**	**0%**	**0%**	**14%**	**28%**	**43%**	**22%**
Number of Renewal Charter School Applications			8	8	10	14	40
Number of Renewals Denied			0	1	1	2	4
% Renewals Denied			**0%**	**13%**	**10%**	**14%**	**10%**
Total Applications	9	15	11	14	29	21	139
Total Denied or Withdrawn	3	0	0	3	9	11	26
% Denied or Withdrawn	**33%**	**0%**	**0%**	**14%**	**23%**	**31%**	**26%**
Total Number of Charter Schools	35	48	59	71	98	121	
Number of Charter Schools Closed	4	1	1	1	3	4	14
Closed as % of Total	**11%**	**2%**	**2%**	**1%**	**3%**	**3%**	

Charter school authorizers encourage charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district populations. Georgia's charter laws also encourage charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations, especially relative to high-need students. As part of a charter school petition, prospective charters are required to submit an operations and management plan that includes, among other things, "steps that shall be taken to reach students representative of the racial and socioeconomic diversity in the school system." (See *Appendix F5: SBOE Charter Schools Rules.*) In terms of gender and racial composition, charter schools in Georgia are equally likely to enroll female students and are somewhat more likely to enroll racial minorities. In fact, when multiracial students are included, racial minorities comprise 60% of all charter school students, compared to 54% statewide: 43% of charter schools students are African-American (compared to the statewide average of 38%); 9% are Hispanic (compared to 10% statewide); 4% are Asian (compared to 3% statewide); and 4% are multiracial (compared to 3% statewide).[19]

19 2007-08 Annual Report on Georgia's Charter Schools, prepared by the Georgia Department of Education

(F)(2)(iii) State charter schools receive equitable funding for charter schools compared to traditional public schools

The Georgia Charter Schools Act provides for commensurate funding for all charter schools in Georgia, with the exception of State Chartered Special Schools. All locally approved charter schools – that is, charter schools approved by local boards of education – are entitled to be treated "no less favorably" than traditional district schools with respect to funding. The law requires that charter schools be included in the allotment of all relevant formula earnings: "The local board and the state board shall treat a start-up charter school no less favorably than other local schools within the applicable local system with respect to the provision of funds for instruction, school administration, transportation, food services, and, where feasible, building programs." (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2068.1(a)). As a result, **Georgia charter schools are entitled to equitable funding levels. The average per pupil expenditure for charter schools is $8,456, compared to $8,875 for traditional schools (2008-09 data).** The only exception set forth in statute is for facilities funding, where a district is required to provide facilities funds if "feasible." There are two critical features that distinguish Georgia charter funding from many of the chartering states: (1) in Georgia, charter schools are entitled to state, federal, *and* local revenue; and (2) in Georgia, funding for charter schools is built into the funding formula that is generally applicable to all public schools and does not rely on special appropriations to supplement funding levels for charter schools. These two features are crucial to ensuring that charter schools have access to equitable, predictable funding streams. Charter schools located in states that make only state and federal revenue available to charter schools almost always structurally underfund schools, which makes it difficult for charter schools to attain viability. Moreover, states that rely on separate appropriations to fund charter schools have to fight the appropriations battle annually. When revenues are down, this makes charter school funding particularly precarious. Georgia believes that charter schools deserve to be funded like public schools throughout the state in a clear and transparent manner. With respect to State Chartered Special Schools – schools approved by SBOE after a local district denial – they are entitled only to state and federal funds. Because the Georgia leadership recognized this as a problem, the Charter Schools Commission Act was signed into law in 2008. As noted above in (F) (2) (i), the Commission is a single-purpose state-level Commission that can authorize charter schools directly. More critically, and unlike State Chartered Special Schools, these schools are fully funded. Accordingly, **the era of the State Chartered Special School in Georgia is likely over.**

- **Strengthening of Charter School Funding in Recent Years.** The funding landscape for charter schools in Georgia has changed dramatically during the past two years to ensure that charter schools are funded equitably. Earlier reports—such as the one issued by the Fordham Foundation purporting to show a dramatic underfunding of charter schools relative to traditional public schools—are now out of date. In addition, it should be noted that the Fordham Report relied exclusively on data gathered from a single district in Georgia, the Atlanta Public Schools, which accounts for less that 8% of the statewide charter sector. While there were certainly substantial funding disparities in the City of Atlanta when the Fordham Report was issued, those disparities have largely been remedied during the last two legislative sessions. The current Georgia Charter Schools Act requires commensurate funding for all charter schools in Georgia, even those approved by the Georgia Charter Schools Commission (with the exception of State Chartered Special Schools). This means that **in Georgia, charter schools are entitled to state, federal, *and* local revenue as a matter of law.** This requirement is restated in the Georgia Charter Schools Rule promulgated by the State Board of Education, which requires a forward funding requirement to ensure that charter schools with a significant expansion of enrollment (either due to opening or adding a grade a year), are funded prospectively based on actual enrollment. A single-purpose state-level Commission is empowered through the Charter Schools Commission Act of 2008 to authorize charter schools directly and make sure that such schools are fully funded. Most recently, the Commission approved seven schools in December 2009. When these schools open in the fall of 2010, they will receive the same funding based on student population and characteristics as they would if they were traditional public schools, just as the two current Commission charter schools do.

(F)(2)(iv) <u>The State provides charter schools with funding for facilities and assistance with facilities acquisition</u>

Regarding facilities, the Georgia General Assembly created a special charter school facilities grant program in 2004 and has funded it every year since 2005: "From moneys specifically appropriated for such purpose, the state board shall create a facilities fund for local charter schools, state chartered special schools, and commission charter schools as defined in Code Section 20-2-2081 for the purpose of establishing a per pupil, need based facilities aid program." (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2068.2(a)). This fund was designed to provide facilities funding to charter

schools through a competitive grant program administered by the GaDOE. As a result, **charter schools in Georgia have been able to apply for facilities funding each year since 2006, with individual annual awards ranging from $20,000 to $280,000 per school.** These are annual awards, so schools can reapply every year. Still, the Georgia General Assembly has continued to refine its charter facilities statutes, enacting a provision of law in 2009 that provides buildings to charter schools at absolutely no lease cost. The 2009 Charter School Facilities Expansion Act marked a truly transformational change in Georgia law:

- **Each local board of education shall make its unused facilities available to local charter schools.** The terms of the use of such a facility by the charter school shall be subject to negotiation between the board and the local charter school and shall be memorialized as a separate agreement. A local charter school that is allowed to use such a facility under such an agreement shall not sell or dispose of any interest in such property without the written permission of the local board. **A local charter school may not be charged a rental or leasing fee for the existing facility or for property normally used by the public school which became the local charter school.** A local charter school that receives property from a local board may not sell or dispose of such property without the written permission of the local board. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2068.2(h) (emphasis added). In essence, the law now requires local districts to make unused facilities available to charter schools at no lease cost. Since the law became effective on July 1, 2009, more than a dozen charter schools have used the provision to locate in buildings and rid themselves of onerous leasing costs. This provision of law has particular impact in urban districts which have experienced declining student enrollments and thus have multiple unused facilities. These districts also tend to have concentrations of students of exceptional need, the precise sort of location in which the state has encouraged charter schools to locate. The beneficial impact of this law is difficult to overstate. **Rather than spend 15% or 20% of their operating revenue on facilities costs, charter schools located in districts with unused facilities are now able to maximize operational funding and spend it directly on classroom costs.**

(F)(2) (v) The State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools

Early Colleges are innovative partnerships between local school systems and a USG institution and are an example of innovative, autonomous public schools other than charter schools operating in the State. The SBOE has student achievement waiver authority under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-244. This has been the historical vehicle for allowing innovation at the school level with respect to some of these provisions. In addition, O.C.G.A. 20-2-161.1 enables Early College by allowing the grant of both secondary and postsecondary credit for the same courses, and 160-4-2-.34 is the corresponding SBOE rule. Early Colleges (ECs) enroll students who may not be well served by traditional schools and are underrepresented on college campuses. Students can graduate with a high school diploma and up to two years of college credit. Early College High Schools have alternative education program waivers or other waivers referenced above that allow them to operate in many ways different from a typical school. With regard to their autonomy, there are different levels that vary from system to system. The control of budget often depends on the principals' relationship with the superintendent; some have more and some have less. The admission policies vary as well because the schools make a special effort to focus on a target population (low income, high needs). Georgia's 12 Early Colleges have a total enrollment of 2,201 students, with 82% from low income families, 85% minority, and 85% first generation. The percentage of EC students passing the GHSGT ranges from 91% to 97% and the percentage of EC students passing the four components of the 8th grade CRCT ranges from 80% to 100%. The first Early College in Georgia, Carver Early College, produced its initial graduating class in May 2009 with a 100% graduation rate and 100% of students earning between 12 and 52 hours of college credit. See *Appendix F6: Early Colleges.*

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

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

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

Evidence for (F)(3):

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

Governance

Georgia is committed to creating conditions favorable to reforms that focus on student achievement. In April 2008, in view of the gaps in the school system governance model, the State Board of Education passed a resolution asking four business partners – the Metro Atlanta Chamber, the Georgia Chamber, the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education and AdvancED—to create a commission to study the issue of board governance and recommend best practices. The Commission for School Board Excellence was formed and met from June-August 2008, holding public meetings in Atlanta, Macon and Dalton. With the consulting assistance of Dave Peterson, North Highland, and three Commission co-chairs (John Rice, Vice Chairman, GE; Gary Price, Market Managing Partnership, PriceWaterhouseCoopers; and Phil Jacobs, retired President, AT&T Southeast Business Communications Services, AT&T Southeast), the Commission reported recommendations to the State Board of Education in September. The State Board of Education accepted the Commission's recommendations. Governor Sonny Perdue adopted key legislative recommendations in his legislative package in 2009 – Senate Bill 84. SB 84 passed out of the full Senate and the House Education Committee, but did not get the full-House vote during the session.

The State Board of Education assembled a collaborative team, including the Georgia School Boards Association, the Georgia School Superintendents' Association, principals, superintendents, educators, business representatives, that developed performance-based "governance team" standards in the spring and summer of 2009. Co-chairs of the Board standards committee were Phil Jacobs, retired President, AT&T Southeast Business Communications Services, AT&T Southeast (Phil also co-chaired the Commission for School Board Excellence) and Wanda Barrs, State Board of Education Chair. Based on this work, SB 84 will be considered again in January 2010 as part of the 2010 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly.

Key elements of SB 84 include: (1) requirements for minimum qualifications for candidates; (2) board election requirements; (3) board size requirements; (4) conflicts of interest laws; (5) clarification of school board roles and responsibilities; (6) performance-based training to build board capacity; and (7) accountability of school boards for their actions resulting in state intervention when systems are on Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) probation. SB 84 recognizes that "School board members hold special roles as trustees of public funds, including local, state, and federal funds, while they focus on the singular objective of ensuring each student in the local school system receives a quality basic education. Board duties require specialized skills and training in the performance of vision setting, policy making, approving multimillion dollar budgets, and hiring a qualified superintendent. The motivation to serve as a member of a local board of education should be the improvement of schools and academic achievement of all students. Service on a local board of education is important citizen service. Given the specialized nature and unique role of membership on a local board of education, this elected office should be characterized and treated differently from other elected offices where the primary duty is independently to represent constituent views. Local board of education members should abide by a code of conduct and conflict of interest policy modeled for their unique roles and responsibilities. And although there are many measures of the success of a local board of education, one is clearly essential: maintaining accreditation and the opportunities it allows the school system's students." See *Appendix F7: SB 84*.

If passed, SB 84 will address key gaps in Georgia law relating to school board governance (i.e., state's inability to intervene when a school board is dysfunctional, no statewide code of ethics or conflicts of interest provisions, no penalties for failure to participate in school board training). It will also, according to President and CEO of AdvanceED, parent organization of SACS, make Georgia a **model state for the nation** in terms of school board governance.

Investing in Educational Excellence (IE^2)

Georgia has created further conditions favorable to innovation through **Investing in Educational Excellence (IE^2)** legislation, passed in 2008 (SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.33), which grants increased flexibility to LEAs in return for increased accountability. The legislative intent of IE^2 is to provide local school boards of education the opportunity to negotiate performance-based contracts with the SBOE that clearly delineate the additional student achievement results the district intends to reach, the flexibility from state laws and rules needed to reach those results, and the loss of governance consequences (i.e. conversion to charter school or management by an EMO) they will accept if they do not reach the specified performance goals. Local districts must set performance goals that are above and beyond NCLB requirements in the area of high school graduation rate, SAT or ACT scores, CRCT or EOCT scores, or AP or International Baccalaureate (IB) participation and performance to request flexibility from class size requirements, expenditure controls, certification requirements, or salary schedule requirements, Plan approval is strictly aligned with the State's student achievement priorities. GOSA evaluates progress of IE^2 districts annually and publicly reports results. (See *Appendix F8: IE^2 legislation*.) To date, Gwinnett County Schools and Forsyth County Schools, which together comprise approximately 12% of the state's student population, have entered into IE^2 performance contracts, while three additional metro counties have committed themselves to the negotiation process to be approved by the SBOE for the 2010-11 School Year. (See *Appendix F9: Example of IE^2 Contract*).

Redesign of Preparation Programs for School Leaders and Teachers

Georgia has positioned itself for success by redesigning preparation programs for school leaders and teachers. None of the reforms proposed herein will be possible without effective teachers and leaders, and the State's agencies and preparation programs have transformed their

approaches to focus on preparing educators with strong content knowledge, the skills to impart that knowledge, and opportunities to hone and refine their skills within real classrooms with real students in a variety of settings.

Leadership Preparation Programs:

The State has completely redesigned its standards and programs for leadership preparation. The new Georgia Performance-based Leadership System for the preparation of school leaders replaces an outdated model with one which is research-based and state-of-the-art. Research shows that important characteristics in the design of an exemplary leadership program include a rigorous candidate selection process, a blend of theory and practice, real-world guidance from practitioners, and well-designed and supervised internships. Georgia's new preparation programs for leaders require that leader candidates are jointly selected by the districts in which they will work and by the programs which will prepare them. The large majority of their coursework occurs within partner schools, with strong mentorship from the schools and site-based supervision by the IHE. Coursework and assessments are performance-based. Recognizing the differential skills demanded, the new programs provide distinct tracks for building level and district-level leaders. The programs also provide "bridges" for teacher leaders to enter the program and for graduates to move from building-level to district-level positions. The State's leadership preparation programs have been redesigned to meet the new standards, and the first candidates enrolled in Fall 2008. (See *Appendix F10: Educational Leadership Rule 505-2-.300.*)

Teacher Preparation Programs: Redesign of teacher preparation programs has been underway for a number of years, and the teacher pipeline system in the State has improved in both quality and quantity. Guided by PSC's standards, the State's public and private providers offer high quality programs through numerous alternative certification routes. All PSC-approved programs require a GPA of at least 2.5 for admission as well as a passing score on basic skills exams. All PSC-approved programs must prepare teacher candidates in diverse school settings, and all candidates must have strong content knowledge. The State's public teacher preparation program providers (USG) require 900 hours of clinical experience within partner LEAs and have increased content requirements for all teachers. Before recommending them for certification, USG institutions require that secondary teacher candidates have a major in their content area; middle grades candidates have the equivalent of a minor in two content areas, and early childhood candidates have four courses in math, four courses in science, and four courses

in the teaching of reading. USG provides quality assurance through a "take-back" guarantee that the institution will provide additional training at no cost for any graduate who fails to meet provisions of the Guarantee, as determined by the employing LEA. In order to achieve a certificate, all candidates must pass the State's GACE II licensure tests to demonstrate high levels of content knowledge and pedagogical skill. Even as USG teacher preparation programs have applied more rigorous standards, they have increased production in order to meet the State's constant and growing need for effective teachers. (See *Appendix A10: Sources of New Teachers in Georgia.)*

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

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

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

STEM has been a priority in Georgia for many years now, and RT3 provides Georgia the opportunity to open the throttle further to propel STEM reforms to greater heights and across a wider range. As indicated in its RT3 proposal, the State's STEM focus has already produced important reforms: rigorous science and math standards, including an integrated math curriculum; increased high school graduation requirements; differentiated pay for new science/math teachers and for early childhood education teachers with science/math endorsements; promising partnerships among K-12 and higher education; science mentors; technology-enabled delivery of STEM content for the new GPS; set-asides for service-repayable loans for science/math teachers; GeorgiaONmyLINE programs for career changers; and the creation of Adjunct Faculty alternative certification routes which allow highly trained subject matter experts (e.g. university professors, engineers, chemists, etc.) in the community to teach science and/or math courses part-time. See *Appendix A13: Alliance Math and Science Task Force Recommendations.*

Differentiated pay for new STEM teachers and for elementary school teachers with mathematics and science endorsements will continue along with other compensation reforms proposed herein for participating LEAs, including individual performance bonuses on the basis of TEM, individual bonuses available to core teachers in high-needs schools if they reduce the student achievement gap, and incremental pay for career ladder responsibilities. See Section (D) (2). The State's RT3 plan scales these successful STEM initiatives and bolsters their effect with new, high-impact strategies. One such strategy is a major policy change which the State believes will catalyze STEM reforms: **the State will require that all elementary and middle schools make Science their second AYP Indicator** to put an instructional focus on the subject and to provide additional interdisciplinary connections with the teaching of math and with real world problem-solving tasks. Georgia will also broaden its existing partnership with the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech), through its outreach center, the Center for Education Integrating Science, Mathematics and Computing (CEISMC). Georgia Tech has a first-rate track record for STEM education and research and in the use of distance learning, both for adult learning and advanced student instruction. (Georgia Tech is the #3 provider of distance learning engineering programs in the nation.). See *Appendix D19: State Partnership with Georgia Tech/CEISMC*.

The State will also scale its successful *Math + Science = Success* public awareness campaign (developed through NSF funding) to influence student selection of challenging courses by positively altering their perceptions about science and mathematics, reinforce parental and guardian involvement to increase student interest in science and mathematics; and encourage public support for science and mathematics teaching methodologies.

The Table on the next page below summarizes the State's STEM-related initiatives in each of the assurance areas as well as any overarching STEM initiatives. In addition, the State's overall STEM plan is summarized in the Action Plan table at the end of this section.

Goal	Standards & Assessments	Data Systems	Great Teachers and Leaders	Turning Around Lowest-Achieving Schools
(i) Rigorous course of study in STEM	• Current—Integrated high school math curriculum • Current—Rigorous GPS rolled out statewide in core subjects, including math and science. Math roll-out will be completed by 2011-12 **(*Section B*)** • New—First phase of Common Core Standards (ELA, math) will be rolled out in 2011 ***(Section B)*** • New—Science will become second AYP indicator for grades 3-8 **(*Section B*)**	• Current—Teachers (incl. in STEM areas) linked to students • New—Ability to track effectiveness of teacher preparation programs and determine which programs are producing most effective STEM teachers ***(Section D4 and Section C)***	• Current—Adjunct Faculty Certification • Current—Increased teacher prep program focus on shortage areas • Current—Differentiated pay for math and science teachers in grades 6-12 (HB 280). Will continue. • Current—Teacher stipends for math and science endorsements at the elementary level. Will continue	• Current—Access to additional rigorous STEM courses online for all students • Current—Science Mentor Program • New—Provide math coaches in lowest-achieving schools (outlined in MOU with Participating LEAs) • New—Allow for schools to designate themselves as STEM Specialty Schools
(ii) Cooperation with STEM-capable partners	• New—Collaboration with Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) to raise awareness of standards (incl. math) and resources in support of standards (***Section B***) • New—Collaboration with Georgia Virtual School (GAVS) to deliver PLUs on standards and use of data to teachers, incl. math and science (**Section B**)	• New—Ability to track students who take CEISMC courses through high school and into postsecondary—fields /majors selected; persistence in college; etc. (***Section C)***	• Current—Math and Science Partnerships (prof. dev. grants) • New—Increase pipeline of effective teachers in STEM areas through partnerships with TFA, TNTP and UTeach **(*Section D3*)** • New—Provide additional supports / professional development for teachers in STEM through partnership with Georgia Tech/CEISMC (***Section D5***) • New—Expand GIFT program (Georgia Tech/CEISMC)	• New—Innovation Fund to support K12 partnerships with IHE, nonprofits and other organizations to expand applied (STEM) learning opportunities for students (***Section A2***)
(iii) Preparing more students for advanced careers in STEM	• New—Rigorous courses offered to students through partnership with Georgia Tech/CEISMC (focuses on underrepresented groups) aligned to GPS	• New—Ability to track all students through postsecondary—enrollment, major selected, persistence (***Section C***)		New—Rigorous courses offered to students through partnership with Georgia Tech/CEISMC will be made available to students in lowest-achieving schools
Cross-Cutting Initiatives	• **Math+Science =Success**: Awareness/communications campaign, targeted especially at underrepresented groups (students and parents). Key goals: Increase awareness of and interest in STEM studies; break down some common stereotypes associated with STEM.			

GOAL 1: Offer a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology, and engineering		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	**TIMELINE**	**RESPONSIBILITY**
ACTIVITY (1): Require Science as the second AYP Indicator for grades 3-8-policy change	Policy change 2010; Implement in 2012	SBOE, GaDOE
ACTIVITY (2): Develop new courses for mathematics and science endorsements for early childhood education (elementary school) teachers in response to new legislation providing $1,000 stipend per endorsement to elementary teachers. See Section (A) (3) for description of action taken in response to the recommendations of the Alliance Math/Science Task Force.	Starting in 2010	USG, RESAs, other providers; PSC
ACTIVITY (3): Provide math coaches at participating LEAs. See model MOU.	Starting in 2010	Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (4): Use TEM scores of STEM teachers within participating LEAs to identify teachers who need professional development and deliver tailored PD for these teachers. See Section (D) (2).	Starting Fall 2012	RT3 SC, Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (5): State formalizes preliminary discussions with the UTeach Institute to provide technical expertise in setting up UTeach programs in IHEs in four geographic regions of the state to recruit and train undergraduate math/science majors as teachers. The number of students who enroll in UTeach programs ranged from 47-120 per site in 2008-2009 with an average of 85.	First cohort starts January 2012	RT3 SC RT3 Ex. Director, IHEs
ACTIVITY (6): Continue GPS implementation in science and adoption of common core in mathematics. See Section (B) (1).	Starting Fall 2010	OSIA
ACTIVITY (7): Offer college-level calculus II and III to advanced high school students through Georgia Tech/CEISMC, which has pioneered the use of live video conferencing for these courses. The RT3 initiative will expand the reach of the program by 150 students (to 400/year), add additional school systems and individual students in rural counties, and will investigate the feasibility of offering other advanced distance course such as Computer Science, Introductory Engineering, or post-AP chemistry or physics. See *Appendix D19: State Partnership with Georgia Teach/CEISMC* for comprehensive outline of CEISMC contributions under RT3.	Starting Fall 2010	Georgia Tech (CEISMC)
ACTIVITY (8): Utilize the Georgia Virtual School to provide rigorous STEM courses, including AP, to students who are unable to access such courses in their home schools.	Ongoing	GAVS, Participating LEAs
ACTIVITY (9): Use information from Teacher Preparation Program Effectiveness Measures (TPPEM) for teachers produced in STEM content areas to determine which prep programs are producing effective science and math teachers, and a) focus on expanding those programs; and b) recruit more heavily from those programs. See Section (D) (4).	Starting Fall 2012	Teacher Preparation Programs, LEAs, SLDS staff

GOAL 2: Cooperate with industry experts, museums, universities, research centers, or other STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines, in promoting effective and relevant instruction, and in offering applied learning opportunities for students.		
ACTIVITY (10): Partner with Georgia Tech through CEISMC to provide online teacher professional development and course offerings in robotics, problem-based inquiry science, statistics, online learning, genetics/biotechnology, climate science, instructional technology, and nanochemistry.	Starting in 2010	RT3 SC, RT3 Director, CEISMC
ACTIVITY (11): Partner with Georgia Tech through CEISMC to develop an Instructional Technology Toolkit for administrators and teachers to support the effective use of technology in a standards-based classroom. CEISMC will expand the current GaDOE digital library of resources and videos demonstrating "best practices" integrating classroom technology (laptops, student response systems, interactive whiteboard, digital probes, virtual manipulatives, graphing calculators, etc.) within the science and math GPS frameworks.	Starting Fall 2010	RT3 SC, RT3 Director, CEISMC
ACTIVITY (12): State formalizes partnership with the business and philanthropic communities in Georgia by establishing a public/private Innovation Fund to provide competitive awards to low performing districts that have innovative ideas about partnering with businesses or IHEs to encourage applied learning, especially in STEM.	May-Dec 2010	RT3 SC, RT3 Director
ACTIVITY (13): Expand Georgia Intern-Fellowships for Teachers (GIFT) from 80 to 105 teachers annually. GIFT places high school STEM teachers in mentored, paid, challenging STEM content summer internships in industry and university research laboratories, providing first-hand real world immersion in meaningful STEM applications. See Section (D) (5).	Starting Fall 2010	RT3 SC, RT3 Director, CEISMC
ACTIVITY (14): Publicize and promote Adjunct Teacher Alternative Route to Certification which allows highly trained subject matter experts (e.g. university professors, engineers, chemists, etc.) in the community to teach science and/or math courses part-time. *See Appendix A13: Recommendations of Alliance Math/Science Task Force*.	Fall 2010	PSC, GaDOE, Communications Team
ACTIVITY (15): Provide a new Math4-Operations Research (OR) course featuring real STEM examples to inspire young learners which students can take as their 4th high school math course or as an alternative or complement to pre-calculus and calculus courses. Math-OR was developed by an Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISyE) professor from Georgia Tech's #1-ranked ISyE department, OR is a "mathematics for the real world" course in which students learn such applied practical mathematics skills as linear programming, inventory theory, scheduling theory, probability and statistics, queuing theory, and computer simulation. Students will be asked to apply those skills to useful and engaging problems such as humanitarian logistics, airplane scheduling, college selection, and optimal diet management.	Starting Fall 2010	RT3 SC, RT3 Director, CEISMC
ACTIVITY (16): Use Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) to promote STEM fields and themes to change the culture around STEM learning and encourage entrants to the field.	Fall 2010	GPB

GOAL 3: Prepare more students for advanced study and careers in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including by addressing the needs of underrepresented groups and of women and girls in STEM areas.		
ACTIVITY (17): Scale the Math + Science = Success Campaign to increase the interest of students and their families in science/math, especially those from underrepresented groups. *See STEM Appendix: Math + Science = Success*	Starting Fall 2010	GPB, PRISM partners, Communications Team
ACTIVITY (18): Reduce gaps in student achievement in science/math by underrepresented groups through AYP policy change and retention bonuses for teachers in high-need schools who reduce the achievement gap. See Section B and Section (D) (3).	Policy change 2010; retention bonuses starting in 2012-13	RT3 SC, SBOE, GaDOE
ACTIVITY (19): Provide Robotics and Engineer Design courses for 8th grade physical science. Robotics course, funded by NSF, utilizes robotics and engineering design to teach physics concepts in a way that engages students from diverse demographic groups and achievement levels. Georgia Tech also works with schools participating in its Lego League state competition to develop curricular connections to engineering and robotics. The Lego competition impacted more than 1,800 middle school students, 30% of whom were from underrepresented ethnic groups in 2009.	Starting Fall 2010	RT3 SC, RT3 Director, CEISMC
ACTIVITY (20): Bring more science/math teachers representing diverse groups into Georgia classrooms through UTeach and routes to certification for career-changers. The majority of students (62 percent) enrolled in the UTeach programs are female; Thirty-four percent of students enrolled in the UTeach programs at Texas universities are underrepresented groups. (Hispanic, African-American, Native American).	Jan-Aug 2010	RT3 SC, RT3 Director, IHEs
ACTIVITY (21): Bring more science/math teachers representing diverse groups into Georgia classrooms through implementing Math+Science = Success companion campaign targeting recruitment of diverse math/science teachers. *See STEM Appendix: Math + Science = Success.*	Fall 2010	GPB, Communications Team, PRISM partners

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

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

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

Georgia is proposing three initiatives as part of this invitational priority. Two of the initiatives will be implemented by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), and the third will be led by the Annie Casey Foundation in Georgia. The first two initiatives aim to improve the quality of Georgia's Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) programs feeding into the elementary schools identified as lowest achieving. An evaluation component is also proposed to test the feasibility of expanding both initiatives and to ensure that quality is improved in the programs receiving the services. If successful, both initiatives will improve the social, emotional, and cognitive skills that translate into improved school readiness and facilitate a smoother transition between Pre-K and kindergarten. The third initiative aims to ensure that children are at grade three reading level by the time they get to grade three.

The first initiative will utilize The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to provide targeted technical assistance to specific Georgia Pre-K classrooms. The CLASS is an instrument used to assess classroom quality in areas specifically related to the interactions that take place throughout all elements of formal and informal instruction (Pianta, La Paro, and Hamre, 2008). According to the authors, the CLASS can be used for program accountability purposes, program planning and evaluation, and for professional development and supervision (Pianta, La Paro, and Hamre, 2008). All three purposes would be used in this proposed initiative. The CLASS is comprised of ten unique dimensions that cover three broad domains—Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. The Emotional Support

domain measures interactions that facilitate children's social and emotional functioning. Skills related to social and emotional functioning are good indicators of school readiness.[20] The authors report that the Emotional Support Domain, "collectively and separately predicts students' performance on standardized test of literacy skills in preschool and first grade, levels of mother-reported internalizing behaviors in kindergarten and first grade, and students' engagement in the classroom across all grade levels." (Pianta, La Paro, and Hamre, 2008, pg. 3). The Classroom Organization domain measures the way teachers manage and organize specific classroom processes that relate to students behavior and time. This domain measures varying aspects of classroom organization that have demonstrated associations with children's learning. Teachers who rate high in this domain facilitate classroom environments where students are active participants in the learning experience and not just passively engaged. Finally, the Instructional Support domain measures the ability of teachers to support children's cognitive and language development. The authors report that this domain forms an index that predicts literacy and general knowledge skills; however this is the domain that programs score the lowest and where assistance is most needed (Pianta, La Paro, and Hamre, 2008, pg. 3). It is important to note that the interactions measured with the emotional support and instructional support domains are particularly important for students identified at risk for school failure (Pianta, La Paro, and Hamre, 2008).

As previously mentioned, the CLASS will be utilized in programs in multiple ways. First, Georgia's Pre-K consultants would conduct an observation with the CLASS to assess a program's strengths and challenges related to the different domains. Currently, all Georgia's Pre-K consultants and management have been trained on the CLASS. Second, the consultants would use the results from the CLASS to offer targeted technical assistance to programs based on needs identified through the observation. Third, a separate evaluation component would be undertaken to measure improvement with the programs that have received the targeted technical assistance. The grant will be used to form this evaluation team either at Bright from the Start or with a university partner. The team will be used for baseline observations, to measure improvement among programs that are participating, and to study trends across all Georgia's Pre-K classrooms. This is important to compare the quality of Georgia's Pre-K between programs that feed into the lowest achieving schools and those programs that feed into all other

20 Pianta, La Paro, and Hamre, 2008; Ladd, Birch, & Buhs, 1999; Izard, Fine, Schultz, Mostow, Ackerman, & Youngstrom, 2001

schools. The CLASS was developed to define and measure classroom quality from preschool through third grade. Ways that the different concepts measured by the CLASS may vary depending on the age level, but the underlying concepts that indicate high quality interactions classrooms are continuous. By training key staff from preschool how to use the CLASS to assess and provide targeted technical assistance, instruction will be improved for these children in Pre-K classrooms.

The second initiative focuses primarily on the transition process between Pre-K and kindergarten. Currently, Georgia's Pre-K programs are able to apply for a separate resource coordination (RC) grant to provide specific family and children services related to transition. These services range from activities aiding families in being active participants in their child's transition, providing literacy workshops, discipline trainings, and facilitating, for those families who need extra support, eye, ear, and dental follow-ups based on screening referrals. Programs that receive the grant hire Resource Coordinators to oversee the service. These resource coordinators are trained under the Strengthening Families model that has been proven to effectively foster resilience translating into impacts related to improved academic achievement, reduced juvenile delinquency, and increased graduation rates. To be eligible for an RC grant, at least 50 percent of the children served in the program are eligible for means tested benefits such as free and reduced lunch, Medicaid or PeachCare, and transportation assistance. These are the students who are at the greatest risk, due to socio-economic circumstances, of school failure.

This initiative will focus on three aspects related to the RC program. First, the grant will be used to ensure that **all** programs that feed into the lowest achieving schools would receive RC services. If a program that feeds into a lowest achieving school was not eligible for a RC grant or had not applied, the grant will be used to train the program director in the Strengthening Families model and to provide specific technical assistance to the program on RC services. Second, the grant will be used to extend the Strengthening Families training to elementary school counselors and Title I family liaisons. Successful transition encompasses activities throughout Pre-K , Kindergarten, and elementary school experiences. Having both Georgia's Pre-K and elementary school personnel trained will greatly facilitate the transition process and ensure that students entering these schools were ready to learn. Finally, the grant will be used to conduct a thorough evaluation of the RC services provided

to these programs. The evaluation will ensure that all programs were offering consistent services to their families and help determine which activities provided the most transition benefit. Currently, an internal evaluation is underway measuring the feasibility of tracking the wide array of services offered through the RC program, but additional evaluation components need to be undertaken to adequately measure the impact of RC services.

In summary, the first DECAL initiative will take a research-based classroom observation tool that measures classroom processes and interactions demonstrated to predict school readiness skills among young children. By using the CLASS to provide targeted technical assistance to programs, teachers will be able to improve these skills in the classroom and an improvement in factors related to school readiness will be seen. The second DECAL initiative will be used to provide additional services to families of children enrolled in Georgia's Pre-K programs that feed into the lowest achieving schools and ensure that the services are consistent throughout. Furthermore, the evaluation component of this initiative will measure which services provide the most impact on the transition process for these families. These two initiatives, utilizing the CLASS and expanding RC services, will focus on improving Georgia's Pre-K program in areas that directly impact student outcomes and improve the transition process. Costs associated with implementing both initiatives are captured in the overall budget, and further details are provided in the project level section under the project labeled Invitational Priority 3.

The third initiative will be a new national Grade Level Reading (GLR) Initiative for ages Birth to 8, under the leadership of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and other national foundations. The Annie E. Casey Foundation has selected Georgia to serve as its lead in this campaign. The expectation is that a coalition of foundations and school districts will launch a decade long initiative, leveraging public, private, and philanthropic dollars, to make a significant improvement in reading proficiency, starting in third grade and extending throughout the life cycle of schooling. As a lead in this effort, Georgia will establish a policy and practice framework that better links the state's public health and human services infrastructure (Developmental Screenings and Early Intervention) to its early care and learning and K -3 educational systems. This Birth to age 8 framework will explicitly identify policies, practices and partners that must be engaged to effectively target grade level

reading and the key measures (data) that must be tracked to promote all children reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade. Numerous findings suggest that children who are not reading at or above grade level by third grade are far less likely to ever read at grade level or graduate from high school.

Georgia has the unique opportunity to consolidate and integrate what we know from a variety of child and family serving sectors and then focus them on grade level reading proficiency by: developing coordinated data systems; shared and linked early learning standards; increased access to quality programs; and significant engagement of parents, thus improving a child's transition from sector to sector and optimally to our K-16 system. The grade level reading Birth to age 8 framework will launch initially in feeder schools in several Regional Clusters (districts), then statewide. The framework and any early findings related to the work of promoting grade level reading are expected to be portable to other states.

Significant investments are already being made to support Georgia's ability to immediately work closely with three to five prototype districts and particularly feeder schools to their lowest achieving schools by the fall of 2010. The State's human services commissioner is facilitating leaders across all child and family serving sectors to develop a comprehensive Birth to 8 framework that will identify and integrate their activities to focus on grade level reading. To date, Casey has invested resources to help move these efforts and identify how national best practices can be coordinated with the State's programs and resources. Statewide, in human services, we have already launched a major training and certification effort to ensure that family home visiting programs are using proven practices when they are working with Georgia's most vulnerable families. In addition, the Georgia Department of Human Services and the DECAL have partnered, using ARRA funds, to enhance the quality of each of the State's licensed child care facilities and homes, ensuring that every child statewide will have access to high quality programs that can be expected to prepare young children (birth to 3) for Pre-K and school. This partnership between human services and early childhood education is also implementing, for the first time in Georgia, a set of 0 to age 3 standards which will be used across all early childhood settings. In addition, a grant from the National Institute of Health to the Satcher Health Leadership Institute – Center of Excellence

on Health Disparities at the Morehouse School of Medicine, is creating a partnership to focus on early brain development and parental bonding to enhance the mental health of minority children ages 0-5. This partnership will engage parents and childcare providers in better understanding and supporting the positive social and emotional health of young children.

Over the course of the Race to the Top grant, Georgia expects to have increased significantly the coordination of the State's early childhood and family serving systems on improving school readiness and particularly promoting grade level reading. As school districts work to turn around low achieving schools, this initiative will re-align the Birth to 8 systems and re-focus resources to ensure that key transactions that are most likely to contribute to academic success for students are targeted and tracked, school by school, and child by child.

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

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

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

Georgia began its P-20 collaborative work over sixteen years ago by establishing the first P-16 Council in the nation. Over the past sixteen years, the state's education agencies and partners have collaborated on an array of initiatives and projects that promote successful transitions for all students through the P-20 education pipeline. Georgia's P-20 council has evolved into its current structure, the Alliance of Education Agency Heads (the Alliance).

Alliance of Education Agency Heads. In early 2006, Governor Perdue convened the leaders of Georgia's seven education agencies and the Governor's Education Policy Director. Through the Alliance, Georgia has established a cohesive vision for education and aligned its education priorities. The State Superintendent of Schools chairs the Alliance. The Alliance coordinates and meets with the Joint Education Boards Liaison Committee (JEBLC) that is comprised of members of each of the seven state education agencies' boards. The Alliance's member agencies include the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Professional Standards Commission, Georgia Student Finance Commission, Governor's Office of Student Achievement, Technical College System of Georgia and

University System of Georgia. An Alliance Implementation Team is composed of two senior-level staff leaders from the seven agencies and representatives from business and workforce development. The Implementation Team coordinates the implementation of strategies for the Alliance's five priority education goals. The Alliance of Education Agency Heads statewide education goals are:

(1) Increase the high school graduation rate, decrease the high school dropout rate, and increase postsecondary enrollment;
(2) Strengthen teacher recruitment, teacher retention, and teacher quality;
(3) Improve workforce readiness skills;
(4) Develop strong education leaders, particularly at the building level; and
(5) Improve the SAT/ACT scores of Georgia's students.

In strong collaborations between GaDOE, USG, TCSG, GSFC, and business and workforce development partner organizations, Georgia has aligned K-12 and post-secondary expectations, enacted policies and practices designed to get students better prepared for their opportunities after high school, and implemented strategies to increase college access and success, especially for students traditionally underrepresented in higher education.

American Diploma Project (ADP). Georgia joined the ADP Network in 2005 to raise expectations and achievement in high schools so that students graduate with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in college and the workplace and that many more students succeed in college once enrolled. Georgia's ADP Plan was approved by the SBOE, the Board of Regents of the USG, and the State Board of TCSG in 2006. The state's ADP Plan focuses on the following four-point ADP agenda: 1) Standards: Align academic standards in high school with the expectations for college and workplace success so that all students who meet the standards are prepared for their next steps in life. 2) Course Requirements: Upgrade high school course requirements so that all students are required to complete a college and work ready curriculum in order to earn a high school diploma. 3) Assessment: Redesign selected high school tests in English and mathematics so that they also serve as readiness tests for college and work. 4) Accountability: Hold high schools and colleges accountable for the success of their students.

Through Georgia's participation in the ADP Network, Achieve worked with the state to align the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) with college- and career-ready expectations. Achieve's benchmarking and analysis of Georgia's K-12 curriculum standards found that the state's standards are rigorous and well aligned with the expectations of colleges and employers. In coordinated actions taken in 2007 by the SBOE, the Board of Regents of the USG, and the State Board of TCSG, the State adopted rules and policies that align high school diploma requirements with expectations for college and workplace success. USG changed its college admission policy to require the same courses for admission as the more rigorous courses required for high school graduation. TCSG fully supported the SBOE's high school graduation requirements.

College and Career-Readiness and College & Career-Ready Policy Institute (CCRPI). The collaborative work of the Alliance and the individual work of each education agency in Georgia are focused on preparation, readiness and success throughout the education pipeline from preschool through postsecondary and into the workforce. **Building on the successful implementation and progress on the state's ADP plan**, Georgia was one of eight states selected to participate in the College & Career-Ready Policy Institute (CCRPI) in September 2008. CCRPI is an initiative designed to accelerate efforts of leading states to ensure every student graduates from high school ready for college and productive careers. The national initiative is supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and directed by Achieve, Inc., the Data Quality Campaign, the EducationCounsel, Jobs for the Future, and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices.
Georgia's CCRPI plan focuses on the following key areas targeting student readiness and success for college and careers:1) Clear and rigorous goals and measures for improving high school graduation, college and career-readiness, and postsecondary attainment rates established to benchmark the State's progress. 2) Comprehensive assessment system aligned with college and career-ready standards, and used for postsecondary course placement in English Language Arts and Mathematics. 3) P-20 Longitudinal Data System to track and measure student progress and success longitudinally from preschool through postsecondary and into the workforce, and utilized to inform instructional practice and student learning.4): Statewide indicators for measuring and monitoring high school graduation, college and career-readiness, and postsecondary attainment rates aligned to college and career-readiness standards.5) Statewide system of supports and interventions to assist low

performing districts and schools and ensure continuous improvement for all schools and districts around the state. Through the Alliance, ambitious college and career-readiness goals have been set and initiatives are being implemented ensuring that Georgia will be internationally competitive in this global economy.

College Access Challenge Grant. Georgia's College Access Challenge Grant, under the umbrella of the Alliance and in collaboration with the Governor's Office, is led by the University System of Georgia with a Leadership Team including members from GaDOE, GSFC, TCSG, GOSA, the Governor's Office of Workforce Development, Southern Regional Education Board, Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, and Communities in Schools of Georgia. Georgia's College Access Challenge Grant, funded for $4 million by US ED, targets a) P-12 students who are underrepresented in postsecondary education and their families; and b) low-income adults at risk of not completing college. The Goals of the Plan are 1) To increase the number of underrepresented students who graduate from Georgia high schools academically ready, informed about, supported for, and motivated for postsecondary education; 2) To increase the number of underrepresented students graduating from Georgia high schools who successfully transition into, persist in, and complete postsecondary education; 3) to increase the college degree attainment of low-income adults who have some college credit but have not been enrolled in the past year and have not attained a degree. Major accomplishments to date include 1) updates and enhancements to GACollege411 resulting in a 5% increase in numbers of GACollege411 accounts; 2) Georgia Apply to College Week resulting in a 16.2% increase in the applications submitted statewide and 256% increase at Georgia Apply to College Week host sites. 3) mobilization of community and business organizations across the State to spread the college-going message, resulting in outreach to over 500,000 students and over 36,000 parents, guardians, and community members. 4) College Access Public Awareness Campaign, kicked off by the Governor's Proclamation of October 2009 as Georgia College Access Month and highlighted by "Friday Night, College Light events across the state; 5) providing books for Early College students taking college courses, resulting in increases in the number of EC students taking and successfully passing college courses; 6) formation of an Adult Learning Consortium of five USG institutions to design recruitment, enhanced services, and accelerated options for adult learners; 7) development and

launch of three online PLU courses to increase the knowledge and skills of school counselors, graduation coaches, and other school personnel in helping all students learn about, become motivated for, and prepared college and careers.

Standards Alignment from Pre-K to K-12 and Establishment of a BSEd with a major in Birth-to-Five. DECAL developed Pre-K Content Standards to provide a foundation for instruction in all Pre-K classrooms. They reflect current educational research and are aligned with Georgia's Performance Standards for grades K-12. These standards can be used for planning instruction and assessing child growth and development. Content standards cover seven key curricular areas: Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Creative Expression, Social and Emotional Development, and Physical Development. Additionally, DECAL partnered with TCSG and private and public teacher preparation programs to develop standards aligned with those of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and common courses for a new baccalaureate degree for educators teaching children from birth to five years. The new degree program allows teachers who have completed an approved two year program in early childhood education at a TCSG institution to transfer these credits into baccalaureate programs at USG institutions. The new degree will increase the number of Pre-K program directors who are highly trained in programs aligned with NAEYC standards. Currently there are BOR-approved BSEd programs with a major in Birth-to-Five at Albany State University, Georgia State University, Valdosta State University, and the University of West Georgia.