

# BUILDING BLOCK 9: SUPPORTING DATA



INSTITUTE A GOVERNANCE SYSTEM TO DEVELOP POWERFUL  
POLICIES AND IMPLEMENT THEM AT SCALE

# DATA

## **INDICATOR 9: INSTITUTE A GOVERNANCE SYSTEM THAT HAS THE AUTHORITY AND LEGITIMACY TO DEVELOP COHERENT, POWERFUL POLICIES AND IS CAPABLE OF IMPLEMENTING THEM AT SCALE**

### **Are there shared goals across the system?**

- Are goals known to all partners in the system?

### **Is there a place where the buck stops?**

- Who has responsibility for pre-school, K-12, teacher education, higher education and vocational education?
- Is it clear what the roles of various partners are?
- Are there clear lines of authority to make and implement policies?
- Is system progress tracked, publicized and easily located?

### **Is there an effective way to hold the other parts of the system accountable and to provide effective help to non-performing parts of the system?**

- Does the system have an effective way of identifying non-performing teachers, principals, schools, districts and schools of education?
- Does the system have a way to help less successful teachers and principals?
- Does the system have a way to help less successful schools and districts?

### Are there shared goals across the system?

### Are goals known to all partners in the system?

#### *International Jurisdictions:*

The top performing international jurisdictions are notable for their development of broad, widely shared visions for their education systems accompanied by specific goals and benchmarks to measure progress towards these goals. Top performing international systems tie the goals for education to economic development objectives and build public support for the goals, plans for carrying them out and benchmarks to measure whether or not the goals were reached.

- **Finland**

The idea that a free and equal common education should be available to all students is a deeply held belief in Finland, and one that is widely shared by the public. As stated in their Constitution, everyone in Finland has the right to free education and the principle of equality is strongly held and reflected across all policy areas. The Ministry's website states: "The same opportunities to education should be available to all citizens irrespective of their ethnic origin, age, wealth or where they live."<sup>1</sup> More specific goals for education are identified in the Education Research and Development Plan, which is created every four years by the Ministry of Education and Culture and adopted by the Government. Each goal in the plan is accompanied by specific policy initiatives, has specific benchmarks, and is reported on annually. Goals are broadly discussed: Helsinki conducted a yearlong city-wide discussion of education in shaping its municipal goals for 2012.<sup>2</sup>

- **Ontario**

Since 2003 the Ministry of Education has worked closely with the teachers' unions to develop goals for the education system, recognizing that they are better able to meet these goals as partners. The three priority goals are:

- Increase student achievement;
- Reduce gaps in student achievement; and
- Increase public confidence in publicly funded education.<sup>3</sup>

Targets were established for each goal and the Ministry structured itself and its strategies around reaching these goals. These goals were and still are widely known and shared. In 2013, the Ministry released a new strategic plan, *Achieving Excellence*, based on "...input from representatives within the education system, including parents and students, teachers, support staff and school and system leaders, as well as input from individuals and groups outside the education sector, including businesses and non-profit organizations." The 2013 plan set new goals, building on what had been accomplished in the previous decade:

- Achieving excellence;
- Ensuring equity;
- Promoting well-being; and
- Enhancing public confidence.<sup>4</sup>

- **Shanghai**

The Ministry of Education of China sets 10-year plans for education that are broadly communicated across the country, and sets education in the context of building a strong nation. China envisions comprehensive development of students that includes social participation, knowledge and culture, and self-management.<sup>5</sup> Each municipality creates its own local plan and reports yearly on progress towards national goals. The current plan, *The National Outline for Medium and Long-Term Education Reform and Development for 2010 to 2020*, aims to “build a country rich with human resources”. It sets a series of concrete goals to be achieved by 2020, including:

- Universalizing preschool education;
- Improving nine-year compulsory education;
- Raising the senior high school gross enrollment rate to 90%; and
- Increasing the higher education gross enrollment rate to 40 percent.<sup>6</sup>

Shanghai reports annually on progress toward these goals and its own provincial goals.

- **Singapore**

Singapore’s education system is explicitly tasked with building the future of the country, both preparing workers who can drive the economy and building good citizens. The mission of the Education Service is to “mold the future of the nation, by molding the people who will determine the future of the nation. The Service will provide our children with a balanced and well-rounded education, develop them to their full potential, and nurture them into good citizens, conscious of their responsibilities to family, society and country.”<sup>7</sup> Singapore aims to give students three sets of skills: 1) communication, collaboration and information; 2) civic literacy, global awareness, and cross-cultural; and 3) critical and inventive thinking. These will help students become confident people, concerned citizens, active contributors, and self-directed learners.<sup>8</sup> These goals are widely shared. Broad consensus is sought for specific reforms, with year-long public discussions and wide dissemination of agreed upon goals. In 2012, a “National Conversation” was initiated about what Singapore education in 2030 should look like. Over 300 forums were held throughout the country. These were documented and will, according to the Ministry, inform future education planning. Themes emerge that focus education planning, such as *Teach Less, Learn More* which was the organizing idea for pedagogical reforms from 2006.

**States:**

Most U.S. states have a vision statement or goal statement, articulated by the State Education Agency or another executive branch agency, that describes the kind of graduates they want their students to be. While many states have report cards to measure progress on state tests and graduation rates, not many have benchmarks of progress towards broader goals like success in post-secondary education.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires states to set ambitious, long-term goals for academic achievement, the student graduation rate and English

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## Building Block 9 Data

language proficiency for English-language-learners, and to describe how they will measure them. These new state goals, laid out in the states' draft or final 2017 ESSA plans, are described below. In general, these goals are focused on the accountability system and not connected to the broader vision statements the states already have in place.

State	Goal: Academic Achievement	Goal: Graduation Rate	Goal: English Language Proficiency
MA	Reduce the proficiency gap by one-third over the next six years for all student subgroups in all subjects on Next-Gen MCAS	Increase overall and subgroup four-year graduation rates by 5 percentage points and reduce the graduation gap for all student subgroups by 29 percent by 2020	Reduce students not making satisfactory progress toward proficiency (calculated using an algorithm set by the ACCESS exam) by 50 percent by 2022.
NH	65% of 25-63 year olds have a high quality post-secondary credential by 2025;  74 percent proficiency in English and 54 percent proficiency in mathematics by 2025 for all students (SBAC Level 3 or higher, or proficient on the Performance Assessment for Competency Education (PACE)).	Four-year graduation rate of 93 percent by 2025	Did not set a goal yet because baseline data does not exist
NJ	By 2030, have 80 percent of all students and subgroups meet or exceed expectations on PARCC (4 or 5 score)	95 percent four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for all students and subgroups by 2030	By 2023, 86 percent of English learners will achieve satisfactory progress toward proficiency (defined as a composite score of 4.5 on ACCESS assessment)
MD	Reduce by half the number of students who are not proficient by 2030 (proficient is 4 or 5 on PARCC)	4-year graduation rate of 88.5% and a 5-year graduation rate of 90% by 2020	Reduce by half the number of students not reaching proficiency (defined as a score of 5.0 on ACCESS assessment) within 6 years by 2030

- **MA:**

The Executive Office of Education (EOE) is an arm of the Governor's Office and led by a State Secretary of Education. It was created to oversee the broad education system including early childhood education, K-12 and higher education. The EOE describes the goals of the comprehensive system as "Realizing a more rigorous, comprehensive and successful 21st century education system that expands on our achievements so that we ensure all Massachusetts students are prepared to succeed in the global economy. By investing in research-based strategies, raising standards and accountability, improving assessments, increasing the quality of teaching, promoting innovation, enhancing student supports and rewarding excellence, Governor Baker is ensuring that all Massachusetts students not only remain at the head of the class nationally, but are positioned to successfully compete internationally and to realize the American Dream."<sup>9</sup>

The EOE was created in 2008 following Governor Deval Patrick's Readiness Project. The Project was created to develop "fundamental and systemic reforms to education" to meet the demands of a global economy.<sup>10</sup> The Project was co-chaired by leaders of the K-12 system, higher education and business and involved a yearlong planning process that resulted in a pre-K to workforce strategic plan. The EOE was created to implement this plan.

The two key agencies for education in the state — the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Board of Higher Education — have their own sets of goals. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, which oversees K-12 education, has a strategic plan, released in 2015 which identifies its mission as: "to ensure that all students have the requisite knowledge, skills and experiences in the academic, workplace readiness, and personal/ social domains to successfully navigate to completion an economically viable career pathway in the 21st century economy. Put simply, we aim to prepare all students for success in the world that awaits them after high school." It details a set of core strategies with specific goals and one-year and five-year benchmarks for these goals.<sup>11</sup>

In addition, the state's ESSA plan lays out a set of three separate goals:

- *Academic Achievement:* Reduce the proficiency gap by one-third over the next six years for all student subgroups in all subjects on Next-Gen MCAS.
- *Graduation Rate:* Increase overall and subgroup four-year graduation rates by 5 percentage points and reduce the graduation gap for all student subgroups by 29 percent by 2020.
- *English Language Proficiency:* Reduce students not making satisfactory progress toward proficiency by 50 percent by 2022.

- **NH:**

The mission of the Department of Education is: "... to provide educational leadership and services, which promote equal educational opportunities and quality practices and programs that enable New Hampshire residents to become fully productive members of society."<sup>12</sup> This mission is not translated



into a specific set of goals that drive specific system-wide policies nor does there appear to be public or system-wide input in the creation of the mission or a goals statement. There is no current strategic plan for education in the state.

The state's ESSA plan lays out goals in two of the three areas required. The state does not yet have a goal for English language learners as it does not yet have baseline data. New Hampshire is the only one of the benchmark states to include a goal related to postsecondary attainment within its achievement goals.

- *Academic Achievement:*
  - 65% of 25-63 year olds have a high quality post-secondary credential by 2025;
  - 74 percent proficiency in English and 54 percent proficiency in mathematics by 2025 for all students (SBAC Level 3 or higher, or proficient on the Performance Assessment for Competency Education (PACE).
- *Graduation Rate:* Four-year graduation rate of 93 percent by 2025
- *English Language Proficiency:* Did not set a goal yet because baseline data does not exist
- **NJ:**

Governor Christie outlined a package of reforms to improve New Jersey public schools in 2010, with the intent of making teacher effectiveness and student achievement the driving force behind every policy and practice. This has been the mission of reforms during his tenure as Governor and his office has been consistent in disseminating this message.<sup>13</sup> While policies of the Department of Education have reflected this goal, the Department has not developed, or worked with other agencies or the public to develop, a system-wide set of goals.

The New Jersey State Board of Education does have a draft mission, which is to "Provide leadership to achieve excellence in New Jersey public education. Engage legislators, school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders in formulating policies that enhance education, empower families, and broaden opportunities for students."<sup>14</sup> This mission has not been translated into a specific set of goals. As the state developed its draft ESSA plan and school performance reports, it has solicited public input, often through surveys.

The state's ESSA plan lays out a set of goals in the three required areas:

- *Academic Achievement:* By 2030, have 80 percent of all students and subgroups meet or exceed expectations on PARCC (4 or 5 score)
- *Graduation Rate:* 95 percent four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for all students and subgroups by 2030.
- *English Language Proficiency:* By 2023, 86 percent of English learners will achieve satisfactory progress toward proficiency.

- **MD:**

There are a number of different goal-setting bodies and processes in Maryland that have developed sets of separate but overlapping goals. The State Department of Education, the State Board of Education and the P-20 Leadership Council all have different goals and benchmarks for success. In addition, the state's required ESSA Plan lays out a separate set of goals and measures for them.

The Maryland State Department of Education does not have a mission statement or state-wide strategic plan, but does have a set of goals and objectives: close the achievement gap, increase college and career readiness, reduce the need for remediation, attract and develop great educators, support a fair system of evaluation, turn around the lowest-performing schools, and expand high quality school models. In addition, it has a "master planning process" for local school districts that was put in place by the Bridge to Excellence Act of 2002. Districts are required to submit "master plans" to MSDE that detail how they will use their funds to improve student achievement for all groups of students in their district, including at-risk populations. The Secretary must approve these plans and, if they do not meet their achievement goals, can require districts to change their plans.<sup>15</sup>

The State Board of Education's mission also includes a set of goals: "Provide every student with highly effective teachers, educational leaders, and all other school personnel necessary to achieve success consistent with measurable goals; Promote standards of quality and conduct for all adults in school-based contact with students consistent with the state's mission and goals for all students; Promote a safe, healthy and orderly environment in which all students have positive experiences every day; Provide for meaningful engagement with parents, families and community members to support academic achievement and individual success; Be innovative leaders in integrating evolving technologies, instructional strategies, and emerging skills that enable all students to reach their fullest potential in a globally competitive environment; Be accountable by operating under objective measures of success determined by state and national standards with data driven actions to enhance learning for every student; Promote an environment in which all students, teachers and school based personnel achieve personal growth and fulfillment; Promote student physical and mental health and fitness to help students achieve academically and develop the habits of healthy living." There does not appear to be a process for soliciting public input or benchmarking against goals.

The state's ESSA plan also lays out goals in the three required areas:

- *Academic Achievement:* Reduce by half the number of students who are not proficient by 2030 (proficient is 4 or 5 on PARCC)
- *Graduation Rate:* 4-year graduation rate of 88.5% and a 5-year graduation rate of 90% by 2020.



- *English Language Proficiency*: Reduce by half the number of students not reaching proficiency within 6 years by 2030.

The Governor's P-20 Leadership Council was created to provide a "forum" for the various parts of the broad education and workforce system to come together and discuss priorities and alignment. It was initially created in 1995 but put into statute in 2010. The MSDE, the Higher Education Commission, the University System of Maryland and the State Department of Commerce are all partners. They are required to submit an annual report with recommendations to the Governor and the legislature on broad system policy, as well as progress towards career and college readiness and college completion. They have structured their work around seven areas of focus — at-risk students, college and career readiness implementation, Maryland College and Career Readiness/PARCC, GED and adult education, the Maryland longitudinal data system, teacher induction and retention and workforce development. Their 2016 report issued recommendations in each area, with suggestions for implementation of each.<sup>16</sup>

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### Is there a place where the buck stops?

#### Who has responsibility for K-12 education, teacher education, higher education, pre-school and vocational education?

##### *International Jurisdictions:*

The top-performing international jurisdictions generally have a more centralized governance structure of the broad education system than does any state in the United States. Although all systems have school districts with some authority for overseeing schools, a centralized decision-making body at the level of the province or nation has oversight of broader decisions related to K-12 education, such as curriculum frameworks and staffing, and coordinates those decisions with oversight for teacher education, higher education, early childhood, and vocational education.

- **Finland:**

The Ministry of Education and Culture oversees all publically funded education in Finland, including early childhood education, vocational education and higher education. It develops national education policy, prepares education legislation and oversees the education budget. The Finnish National Board of Education operates under the Ministry's authority but is semi-autonomous; it is responsible for implementing national education policies. It develops national core curricula and requirements for qualifications for primary, secondary, adult and vocational schools and provides support services to teachers, schools and municipalities. Teachers have the flexibility to use instructional strategies and lessons of their choice but they adhere to the national curriculum. The National Board works with employer organizations and trade unions to develop the qualifications for vocational education. At the local level, municipal authorities operate compulsory schooling within their jurisdictions. Municipal councils are awarded funding by formula by the national government but then can allocate national funding and the funds they raise at the municipal level to schools as

they think best. Municipal councils also hire principals (and, in some cases, teachers) for schools. The Ministry of Education and Culture also oversees higher education, including teacher education, and approves training curricula for teachers as well as certifies teachers.

The Finnish Education Evaluation Centre is an autonomous agency tasked with carrying out evaluations related to education from early childhood education to higher education. The Centre is comprised of an Evaluation Council, a Higher Education Evaluation Committee and units for the evaluation of general education, vocational education and training (VET) and higher education.

- **Ontario:**

The Ontario Ministry of Education oversees all primary and secondary public education in the province. The Ministry develops and implements both broad education policy and specific education curricula for all school levels and subjects. The Ministry provides rubrics for formative assessments teachers are expected to give. Beginning in 9th grade, schools administer school-based summative assessments for all subjects. The MOE develops education materials for educators and provides professional development, either directly or through designated funding given to school boards or teachers' unions.

There are two independent agencies that play key roles in the education system. The Education Quality and Accountability Office is an independent agency of the Ontario government created to provide independent scrutiny of the quality and standards in the Ontario education system. It is accountable to the Minister of Education. The Ontario College of Teachers is an independent group that accredits teacher education programs and licenses teachers in the province.

The Council of Ministers of Education is a Canada-wide advisory group that plays an informal but key role in sharing best practices and benchmarking across provinces. Ministers of Education in each province are members of the Council.

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) oversees postsecondary education and skills training. MAESD develops policies for universities and colleges of applied arts and technology; plans and administers policy related to basic research; authorizes universities to grant degrees; distributes funding to postsecondary institutions; provides financial assistance programs; and registers private colleges. The Ministry of Children and Youth Services is responsible for childcare.

- **Shanghai:**

China's Ministry of Education (MOE) has authority for the implementation of national laws and regulations related to the educational system in China. The MOE oversees regulations related to educational reform and development at all levels of the educational system including early childhood education, the nine-year compulsory "basic education," secondary education, vocational education, and tertiary education which includes colleges, universities, and other adult education opportunities. The MOE has overall management responsibility for the national education funds and supports local

governments in their ability to raise local funds and, recently, has also focused on ensuring more equity in resources across the system by supplementing funding in areas with fewer resources. While the MOE typically monitors and evaluations the implementation of education directives and programs, Shanghai is often given the privilege of experimenting with reforms before they are endorsed by other parts of the nation. Since 1988, Shanghai has undertaken curriculum reforms designed to encourage conceptual and experiential learning. Shanghai has also been one of the pilot experimental regions for reforming the *gatka* (the national college entrance examination).<sup>17</sup>

The MOE's Department of Teacher Education oversees and regulates teacher education programs and the certification exams for teachers. The National Education Inspectorate is the agency that monitors and assesses educational activities and the work of primary and secondary schools. The National Inspectorate office hires inspectors from local provinces and liaises with local governments' departments of inspection. For higher education, the MOE approves all programs and monitors student enrollment.

Shanghai is one of four province-level municipalities in China. Governments at the provincial, municipal, and county levels each have Education Commissions responsible for the administration of education programs and compliance with national laws and regulations. The regional Education Commissions make local implementation decisions about regional development plans, provide local funds to subsidize national funding, make curriculum choices with approval from the national level, provide professional development and training for teachers, and administer school programs. The Shanghai Municipal Education Commission is responsible for ensuring compliance with national laws and setting provincial-specific policy. The curriculum framework is developed at the municipal level so there is a Shanghai-wide compulsory curriculum for all schools in all subjects. Shanghai was granted special authority to create its own college admission examination.<sup>18</sup>

- **Singapore:**

The Ministry of Education oversees all education in Singapore including preschool, primary school, secondary school, and higher education (both vocational and academic). The Ministry sets standards and course syllabi for all primary and secondary education and sets and scores national examinations. It develops a list of approved texts. There are five polytechnics and several statutory boards/institutes under the direction of the Ministry. These include the National Institute of Education; the Institute of Technical Education; Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board and the Council on Private Education. The National Institute of Education is the sole teacher education provider in Singapore and also develops and provides professional development for teachers and does ongoing research on all aspects of education. The Institute of Technical Education is a principal provider of career and technical education and principal authority in developing national occupational skills certification and standards. The Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board (formerly the Examinations Division of the Ministry of Education) was formed in 2004 to develop and administer national

examinations in Singapore, and to provide other examination and assessment services and products.

The more than 350 schools in Singapore are grouped into 30 clusters. A Cluster Superintendent leads each cluster. The Cluster Superintendents develop, guide and supervise the school leadership teams to ensure that schools are effectively run.

The Early Childhood Development Agency (EDCA) was launched in 2013 to oversee childcare and kindergartens. The ECDA is an autonomous agency jointly overseen by the MOE and the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), and is hosted under the Ministry of Social and Family Development.

### Global Top Performers and the U.S.: Roles and Responsibilities for Parts of the Education System

	Early Childhood Education	Primary and Secondary Education	Secondary Vocational Education	Higher Education	Schools of Education
<b>Finland</b>	Ministry of Education and Culture	Ministry of Education and Culture, National Board of Education	National Board of Education, Employer organizations and labor unions	Ministry of Education and Culture	The Ministry of Education and Culture approves training programs and sets national credentialing criteria. Professional development is managed at the school and municipal level.
<b>Ontario</b>	Ministry of Education (kindergarten for ages 4-5), Ministry of Children and Youth Services (childcare)	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development	Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development	The Ontario College of Teachers accredits teacher education programs and licenses teachers.
<b>Shanghai</b>	Ministry of Education, Shanghai Municipal Education Commission (kindergarten for ages 3-6)	Ministry of Education, Shanghai Municipal Education Commission	Ministry of Education, Shanghai Municipal Education Commission	Ministry of Education, Shanghai Municipal Education Commission (authority for university entrance exam)	The Ministry of Education licenses teacher education programs, approves training content and licenses teachers. SMEC develops provincial higher education examination.
<b>Singapore</b>	Ministry of Education (kindergarten for ages 4-6), Ministry of Social and Family Development (childcare)	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Education, Institute of Technical Education	Ministry of Education, Institute of Technical Education	The National Institute of Education (NIE) conducts teacher training and professional learning. Ministry of Education approves course content and certifies teachers.

	Early Childhood Education	Primary and Secondary Education	Secondary Vocational Education	Higher Education	Schools of Education
<b>United States</b>	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Head Start, childcare for low-income parents), U.S. Department of Education (pre-k), state departments of education and of health and human services	U.S. Department of Education, State Departments of Education	U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Labor, State Departments of Education and of Labor	U.S. Department of Education, various state agencies and accreditation boards	State Departments of Education typically license teachers based on the completion of an accredited program. States usually have an accreditation board or office that uses state developed accreditations or the national Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards.

**States:**

All states in the United States are responsible for maintaining their education system. Although the federal U.S. Department of Education is responsible for enforcing federal law related to education in the states, the recent passage of The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2016 has sharply circumscribed its authority. The role of the state government varies, but, in general, all states have a strong tradition of local control. Individual school district offices do most of the oversight of individual schools. District superintendents who are appointed by elected or appointed local school boards lead these offices. Local school boards also have authority for funding, procurement, and some curricular decisions, although these are subject to standards and other requirements laid out in state board regulations and state statute.

- **MA:**  
The Executive Office of Education reports to the governor and organizes the work of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; the Department of Higher Education; the Department of Early Education and Care; and the University of Massachusetts system. Although the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education is considered the Chief State School Officer of Massachusetts, the Secretary of Education is an appointed head of the Executive Office of Education within the Governor’s Office and the authority on all education matters in the state. The relationship between the Commissioner and the Secretary is somewhat unclear.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has oversight of K-12 school districts, charter school authorizing, teacher licensure and teacher education programs (through their Office of Educator Licensure). A 12-member Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (which by law includes the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education) can vote on and set policy for licensure, assessment, teacher quality, interventions for underperforming schools, governance, and other matters. Ten members are elected (including one student member), the chair is appointed by the governor, and the governor also appoints the Secretary of the Board, who by



law also serves as the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The Department of Early Education and Care reports to the Executive Office of Education and is led by a Commissioner appointed by the Governor. It is responsible for licensing and regulating childcare providers and adoption and child placement agencies, providing professional development to early education and care providers, distributing financial assistance to families for early education and out-of-school-time programs, and matching needy families with additional services, as required. It is also accountable to a Board of Early Education and Care, consisting of 11 members appointed by the governor (including the Secretary of Education).

The state Board of Higher Education is theoretically the ultimate authority on higher education in the state of Massachusetts. It consists of 11 voting members: nine are appointed by the governor (including the State Superintendent of Education,) and two are university representatives elected by the trustees for University of Massachusetts and the State Community Colleges and Universities. There are also two nonvoting student members. The Department of Higher Education reports to the Executive Office of Education and the state board, and implements the policy set by the board in partnership with the UMass system. The state board also oversees the University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees and the Board of State Colleges and Universities. The University of Massachusetts and State College Boards have broad authority for setting programmatic, strategic and fiscal policy for their organizations, but they are expected to submit all of their five-year plans, including strategic plans and budgets, to the Board of Higher Education for approval. However, they also report to the Executive Office of Education.

- **NH:**  
The Department of Education has oversight of K-12 education, vocational education, teacher licensure and higher education. The Department also has oversight of pre-school special education. The state does not have a state-funded pre-kindergarten program. The Department develops model curriculum frameworks but districts and schools can develop or choose their own materials and lessons. The State Board of Education provides oversight to the Department of Education. A Professional Standards Board advises the state board of education on professional growth, certification, and governance of the education profession in the state. A Higher Education Commission under the Division of Higher Education within the Department is responsible for regulating institutions of higher education.

The Department of Health and Human Services oversees child care.

- **NJ:**  
The New Jersey Department of Education oversees K-12 education as well as early childhood education and career and technical education. The Board of Education adopts education policy regulations in all of these areas and advises on the Commissioner's proposals. In addition, the State Board advises on educational policies proposed by the Commissioner and confirms Department of Education staff appointments made by the Commissioner. The Secretary of



Higher Education oversees higher education and its Secretary is the primary advisor to the Governor on higher education issues. A Higher Education Council gives advice to both the Governor and the Secretary. The State Board of Examiners is the educator-licensing agency in New Jersey. The Commissioner of Education appoints board members.<sup>19</sup> The New Jersey Department of Human Services has oversight of childcare.

- **MD:**

The Maryland State Department of Education oversees PreK-12 education, vocational education, and educator certification and preparation program accreditation. It is responsible for developing curriculum resources to support Common Core implementation, administering statewide assessments, running the school and educator evaluation system, producing data reports and analysis for the public based on evaluation and assessment data, designing supports for school turnaround interventions, certifying educators, managing food and nutrition programs in schools and overseeing special education identification and support. It also administers all state grants to schools and districts, although the State Board is responsible for developing the budget. It does not have direct oversight of charter schools, as local school boards serve as charter school authorizers, but it does provide some support and guidance to charter school operators and local school systems. Furthermore, although it is not directly responsible for higher education, it does have a Division of College and Career Readiness that collaborates with the Higher Education Commission to ensure that students are meeting readiness benchmarks and graduation requirements and receive additional support if they do not do so.

The Department of Education is accountable to the State Board of Education, and the State Board appoints the Superintendent to a renewable four-year term. The Maryland State Board of Education is in charge of oversight of all school districts, preparing the draft state education budget, setting education standards and graduation requirements, identifying schools that are at risk of not meeting standards and developing performance improvement plans, drafting legislative proposals and hiring the State Superintendent.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) is the higher education coordinating board responsible for establishing statewide policies for Maryland public and private colleges and universities and for-profit career schools.

Maryland also has a P-20 Leadership Council that was initially created in 1995 and put into statute in 2010 to provide a “forum” for the governor, legislators and stakeholders from elementary and secondary education, postsecondary education and workforce and economic development to discuss “policy priorities and the alignment of the various elements of our education and workforce systems.” The Council is also charged with ensuring that college and career readiness strategies are implemented. The Council is required by the 2013 College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act to submit an annual report summarizing its activities and providing recommendations

to the Governor and the legislature. It is also required to submit a biennial report on progress on college and career readiness and college completion.<sup>20</sup>

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### Are there clear lines of authority to make and implement policy?

#### *International Jurisdictions:*

- **Finland**  
In Finland, the Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for all publically funded education in the country and prepares all education legislation, makes national decisions and prepares and oversees the national budget for education. The Ministry is then accountable to the national Government for the performance of the education system. Municipalities are given authority to set their own funding priorities and manage inspections of schools, and organize district-level professional development. Schools are also given a great deal of authority in the management of resources, how they implement the national curricula, and how they organize their schools.
- **Ontario:**  
In Canada, responsibility for education is vested in the provinces. The Ontario Ministry of Education is the primary actor in setting education policy in the province on funding, curriculum, assessment and accountability. The Ministry also proposes education legislation to the Prime Minister's Office. The Ministry is a partner with the teacher's unions in setting strategies and goals for the system and negotiating with them to come to province-wide agreements on teacher pay and other school-level issues. Elected district boards are required to implement the policies of the Ministry.
- **Shanghai:**  
The Shanghai Municipal Education Commission (SMEC) oversees all public and private education in Shanghai, except for higher education, which is overseen nationally by the Ministry of Education in Beijing. SMEC implements the broad directives of the national Ministry. Shanghai has been granted special status within China to shape its system with more autonomy than other regions; as the leading school system in the country, it is a model for reforms nationally. For example, in 1985 Shanghai was allowed to design its own university entrance examination.<sup>21</sup>
- **Singapore:**  
In Singapore, the Ministry of Education makes and implements policy throughout the jurisdiction. The Ministry is accountable to the government for the outcomes of the system and it controls all aspects of policy within the system. At the district and school level, where there is discretion granted to teachers and administrators, it is always within a framework set by the Ministry (for example, course syllabi and a national evaluation system). The independent or semi-autonomous agencies that partner with the system, like the National Institute for Education (teacher training), the Examinations and Assessment Board (national assessments) and the Institute of Technical Education (developing course syllabi for vocational education), have clearly defined areas of responsibility and work closely with the Ministry.

### *States:*

- **MA**  
In Massachusetts, the appointed State Boards (of Elementary and Secondary Education; of Early Education and Care; and of Higher Education) are responsible for setting the strategic and budgetary priorities of the departments under their purview. However, the Executive Office of Education, which is a part of the governor's office, also has oversight of each department. In addition, the University of Massachusetts system maintains significant autonomy despite reporting to the Board of Higher Education and the Executive Office of Education. In theory, the Executive Office of Education consolidates authority for education with the governor, so that there is one clear line of accountability. However, duplicative lines of authority with the various boards mean that the authority for making policy is not always clear.
- **NH**  
The state has a strong tradition of local control. While the Department of Education has statutory authority to set policy and budget priorities for the system, the state education department leaves a great deal of discretion to local districts and schools. For example, some schools and districts have adopted a competency-based system and the use of performance-based assessments, while others are still using traditional teaching and testing methods. The state, unlike most others, is allowing districts to define their own teacher and principal evaluation and accountability systems.
- **NJ**  
The New Jersey Board of Education has authority to make proposals to the Governor on education policy and budget priorities and adopt state curriculum, standards, assessments and accountability systems as well as define qualifications for professional development providers and accredit local schools and teacher preparation. The Department of Education is charged with implementation of these policies. But the lines of authority are not always clear. For example, while the State Board can set criteria for professional development providers, oversight of the quality or appropriateness of the professional development content provided is not clearly assigned to the state, the district or the school (nor are criteria provided).
- **MD**  
In Maryland, the Governor appoints members of the State Board of Education, who, in turn, appoints the Superintendent of Schools. The State Board of Education, in general, sets policy and regulations for the schools, and the Department implements these policies and regulations. The Board approves the Department's budget as well as the budget for state aid to the schools. In some areas, the lines of authority are not completely clear. An example is overseeing teacher training and certification. The State Board is responsible for developing regulations that lay out what is required to be certified as a teacher, but the Department is responsible for program review and approval and managing the certification process which gives it wide latitude. Furthermore, the semi-autonomous 25-member Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board, with members also appointed by Governor, is

responsible for setting standards for teacher education programs. The Maryland Higher Education Commission also plays a role in the review of teacher education programs. Recent legislation (HB715) added approval authority over teacher education programs to the MSDE.<sup>22</sup>

### Top Performing States and Maryland: Roles and Responsibilities for Parts of the Education System

	Early Childhood Education	Primary and Secondary Education	Secondary Vocational Education	Postsecondary / Higher Education
MA	Department of Early Education and Care, Board of Early Childhood and Care	Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Board of Education	Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	Department of Higher Education, Board of Higher Education, Board of Trustees: UMass System, Board of Trustees: Community Colleges and Public Universities
NH	Department of Health and Human Services	Department of Education, Board of Education	Department of Education, Board of Education	Department of Education, Division of Higher Education
NJ	Department of Education (preschool), Department of Health and Human Services (childcare)	Department of Education, Board of Education	Department of Education, Board of Education	Department of Higher Education
MD	Department of Education, State Board of Education	Department of Education, State Board of Education	Department of Education, State Board of Education	Maryland Higher Education Commission

### Is system progress tracked, published and easily located?

#### *International Jurisdictions:*

The top-performing international jurisdictions generally determine broad indicators of system success, and track progress on those indicators to measure whether the system is on track to meet goals laid out in the system's ongoing strategic plan. This tracking informs policy-making, and enables policymakers to design interventions if the system is not on track and to inform the public of progress and celebrate successes.

- **Finland**

The Education Research and Development Plan that the Ministry of Education and Culture develops every four years covers all part of the education system from early childhood to adult education as well as research conducted in universities and polytechnics. This is the key document in Finnish education and research. After the Ministry prepares it, Parliament adopts it. The Ministry then directs the implementation of its goals over a four-year period, with a set of policies to implement and benchmarks to measure progress towards those goals. The focus in the period 2011–2016 (the latest available) is on alleviation of poverty, inequality and exclusion, stabilizing the public

economy and fostering sustainable economic growth, employment and competitiveness.<sup>23</sup>

Finland also monitors system progress through sample testing of students. Almost every year samples of students are tested across the country in Finnish and mathematics to assess overall progress. Other subjects are tested when the Ministry is conducting an evaluation of a particular curriculum area. The results of national sample testing are not publicized or meant to be for the public. They are meant to inform national policymaking.<sup>24</sup>

In 2014, Finland integrated the evaluation functions of three different organizations — the National Board of Education, the Finnish Education Evaluation Council and the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council — into a new Evaluation Center. The aim was to assess the progress of the system overall in a more comprehensive way. The new Center will produce overall evaluations every three years, combining the information from participation in international assessments like the OECD's PISA, the national sample testing and curriculum reviews done by the Finnish National Board of Education as well as the reviews of higher education done by the Higher Education Evaluation Council.<sup>25</sup>

- **Ontario**

The Ministry of Education monitors progress annually against a set of overall goals and indicators it developed in its current strategic plan. An example was the goal of raising the high school graduation rate in the province to 80 percent, which the province has now exceeded. It was reported on each year for almost a decade before it was reached. There is a published report each year. In addition, all school districts publish annual school board progress reports on ten indicators: reading results on 6th grade provincial tests; progress on 6th grade provincial tests; percentage of students passing the grade 10 literacy test; progress in the percentage of students passing the grade 10 literacy test; credit accumulation by the end of grade 10; progress in credit accumulation at the end of grade 10; credit accumulation at the end of grade 11; progress in credit accumulation at the end of grade 11; percent of primary grade classes with 20 or fewer students; progress in percentage of primary classes with 20 or fewer students.<sup>26</sup> There is also information showing statewide achievement on provincial reading and mathematics exams at tested grade levels and the percentage change in each over three years.<sup>27</sup> Ontario also participates in the Pan Canadian Assessment and in international comparisons like OECD's PISA.

- **Shanghai**

The Shanghai Municipal Education Committee publishes an annual report on progress towards the goals set out in the National Ten Year Educational Development and Reform Plan and towards its own goals for the municipality. Shanghai also was the first province in China to participate in the OECD's PISA in 2009. The PISA data give Shanghai a way of benchmarking their educational performance against OECD and other participating countries. Standardized test scores are not made available to the



public by school although secondary schools publish “cut” scores on the *zhongkao* entry exam required for admittance to their school.<sup>28</sup>

- **Singapore**

Singapore’s Ministry of Education, along with its research arm at the National Institute of Education, continuously monitors system progress and benchmarks Singapore’s system against the leading systems in the world. Every new policy is benchmarked internationally. They participate in international assessments like PISA and TIMSS and the results are widely shared in the media.

Singapore’s School Information Service provides parents with information about schools but does not publish outcome data. In fact, publishing test scores is specifically banned. For secondary schools, it does publish a Primary School Leaving Exam score average for acceptance to each school.<sup>29</sup>

### States

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) includes requirements for states and districts to prepare and disseminate annual report cards that provide information on state, district, and school performance and progress towards long-term goals. The report cards must be widely accessible to the public. State report cards are required to report on student achievement, high school graduation rates, English learners achieving English language proficiency, student progress towards long-term goals and measures of interim progress, educator qualifications, per-pupil expenditures, postsecondary enrollment, and more. The data must be disaggregated by student subgroup. Districts must report district-level and school-level reports.

- **MA**

The state makes detailed school and district profiles available to the public online. These report on proficiency rates on standardized tests, the progress of subgroups toward proficiency targets, student demographics, teacher licensure, student-teacher ratios, total and per-pupil expenditures, and other data for each school and district.<sup>30</sup> According to the draft ESSA plan, the state will use a hybrid approach of normative and criterion-referenced school rankings.<sup>31</sup>

- **NH**

The New Hampshire Department of Education produces annual school and district profiles. They currently provide information on the percent of students proficient by grade level in reading and mathematics on the Smarter Balanced assessments and the SAT.<sup>32</sup> According to the draft ESSA plan, New Hampshire will rate schools using percentile rankings.

- **NJ**

The New Jersey Department of Education prepares annual reports of school performance. One of the state’s goals is to empower parents to make more informed decisions about their children’s education by providing greater transparency and accountability.<sup>33</sup> In addition, the Department’s NJ Standards Measurement and Resource for Teaching (NJ SMART) is a comprehensive statewide longitudinal data system with published district level data



including high school graduation rates and district and statewide reports on assessment performance.<sup>34</sup> ESSA plans include enhancements to school and district reporting that add information on pre-school, pre-K and K access and enrollment; suspensions; post-secondary outcomes; per-pupil expenditures; teacher experience and credentials; and more. This broader set of indicators helps to inform and empower students, parents, and communities.<sup>35</sup>

- **MD**

The state has a [website](#) that publishes data on the following indicators for all schools and districts:

- English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science assessments for Grades 3-8 (typically PARCC)
- High School End of Course Assessments in English 9, 10, 11, Algebra 1, 2, Geometry, Government, and the MISA Science Assessment.
- Graduation rates
- Demographic and enrollment data
- Attendance and graduation rates

In 2017, the state passed the Protect Our Schools Act, legislation limiting testing-based academic indicators of success to no more than 65 percent of a school's accountability score. This includes PARCC proficiency and growth to graduation rates and English-language proficiency. The other 35 percent of a school's score is made up of school quality indicators.<sup>36</sup> Most states are choosing to give academic indicators more weight (usually in the range of 70 to 90 percent). The state's draft ESSA plan adheres to the 65/35 divide. The ESSA plan also includes an online performance management system so that the state, schools and districts can monitor needs and resources.<sup>37</sup>

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**Is there an effective way to hold parts of the system accountable and to provide effective help to non-performing parts of the system?**

**Does the system have an effective way of identifying non-performing teachers, principals, schools, districts, and schools of education?**

***International Jurisdictions:***

The international jurisdictions identify non-performing individuals and schools, but the focus of the system is on providing supports, not just to under-performers, but to all educators, to help them succeed. These supports are often in the form of coaching and mentoring from high performing peers. Because these systems are focused on continuous improvement, receiving additional help in certain areas is not stigmatized the way it can be in the United States. In addition, the problem of under-performing teachers is not as common because teachers and principals have met much higher standards to enter the profession. These systems are able to recruit much stronger teachers and principals because the schools of education are held to very high standards for program approval, as described below, and in more detail in Building Block 5.

- **Finland**

**Teachers/Principals:** Finland relies on professional accountability for teachers and principals and does not have formal evaluations since the national

inspectorate was abolished in 1990. Teachers and principals work together and are expected to maintain a high level of practice. Still there is an expectation that principals will evaluate teachers annually. The structure of these evaluations is left to the discretion of principals. In Helsinki, there is an agreed upon format used citywide that requires principals to evaluate teachers based on: personal performance, versatility, initiative and ability to cooperate.<sup>38</sup>

**Districts/Schools:** In Finland, the system does not label schools as “high performing” or “low performing,” but collaboration across all schools is the norm. Municipalities (districts) are responsible for inspections of schools and also organize schools into networks to encourage them to collaborate and support each other. School staffs are expected to regularly collaborate, with the more experienced leaders and staff becoming mentors to those with less experience.<sup>39</sup>

**Schools of Education:** There are eight research universities in Finland that are approved by the Ministry of Education to offer the official teacher training curriculum. The Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC) monitors all higher education institutions. Legislation requires all universities and polytechnics to perform external evaluations of their institutions and to publish the results. FINHEEC is an independent expert body that audits the quality systems and evaluations of all higher education institutions in Finland.<sup>40</sup>

- **Ontario:**

**Teachers:** Ontario’s Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) is structured by the Ministry of Education and administered by principals. Teachers are rated every five years on 16 competencies aligned to three standards of practice: professional knowledge; professional practice and leadership in learning communities; and on-going professional learning. The emphasis is on providing recommendations for ongoing growth, rather than on punitive accountability.<sup>41</sup>

**Principals:** Ontario’s principal/vice-principal performance appraisal process, an essential component of the Ontario Leadership Strategy, is designed to ensure that school leaders are well supported in their growth and development. It was implemented across the province in 2010. The goals are to encourage principals and vice principals to engage with their supervisors in frequent and meaningful dialogue about their performance; consider the supports they need in order to achieve their goals and identify ways in which they can enhance their professional growth. Principals and vice principals create annual performance plans that must include a goal of increasing student achievement. Supervisors create a summative report at the end of the year with a satisfactory or unsatisfactory rating.<sup>42</sup>

**Districts/Schools:** The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) is responsible for the creation and administration of provincially administered examination programs, intended to provide accurate and reliable student achievement information to parents, teachers, and the public. The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (LNS) was established as an arm of the Ministry to provide coaching and support to low performing schools.<sup>43</sup> The LNS works

with school boards (districts) to identify ways to improve student achievement, shares successful practices within and across school boards, and provides funding.<sup>44</sup>

**Schools of Education:** The Ontario College of Teachers accredits teacher education programs. Accreditation panels review applications from teacher education programs for initial accreditation and then review their status to ensure that they continue to meet required standards. In fall 2015, Ontario's teacher education program changed. The two-year program has increased practicum (residency) of 80 days and includes an enhanced focus in areas such as special education, teaching using technology, and student diversity.<sup>45</sup>

- **Shanghai:**

**Teachers:** Principals conduct annual evaluations of teachers, primarily based on classroom observation. This observation is done at least three times a year providing formative, midterm and summative feedback. This feedback (including collecting data from students) is focused on developing performance goals for each teacher.<sup>46</sup>

**Principals:** Principals are chosen from among the highest performing teachers. Once made principal, they are largely held accountable by their peers and regarded by teachers and parents as experts in what they do. There are, however, appraisals of performance done at specific promotion points on the principal career ladder. (See Building Block 8). When promoting a principal to the master level, the municipality conducts the appraisal. The Shanghai Education Commission conducts "master level" appraisals every three years.<sup>47</sup>

**Districts/Schools:** The Shanghai Municipal Education Commission inspects all schools at least every three years and identifies schools that are struggling.<sup>48</sup> School district officials are responsible for matching low- and high-performing schools under the Empowered Management Program. The high performing school is contracted (usually for a two-year period) to turn around the performance of a low-performing school by having teachers and leaders develop capacity of their peers.

**Schools of Education:** Shanghai has two teacher training institutions, Shanghai Normal University and East China Normal University. Both are accredited by the Ministry of Education and operate under its auspices. The Ministry oversees teacher training guidelines and holds all teacher training programs accountable through regular inspections.<sup>49</sup>

- **Singapore:**

**Teachers:** Singapore's Educational Performance Management System (EPMS) includes an annual evaluation of all teachers. Teachers receive a set of competencies for effective teaching at the beginning of each year and must set personal targets for improvement that must include qualitative goals for professional improvement and quantitative goals for student improvement. A supervisor evaluates the teacher against these goals at mid-year and at the end of the year.<sup>50</sup>

**Principals:** Singapore's Educational Performance Management System (EPMS) includes an annual evaluation of all principals in addition to teachers.

Cluster superintendents evaluate principals in three areas: Professional Practice, Leadership Management and Personal Effectiveness. The evaluation takes into account: vision for the school, strategic planning and administration, development and management of staff and management of resources and school processes. Principals who are not performing are counseled, coached, and if need be, redeployed.<sup>51</sup>

**Districts:** Schools are grouped into geographic clusters intended to provide local support for the Ministry's education policies and initiatives. These clusters can help determine how the curriculum will be implemented and can choose teaching materials, though the Ministry makes recommendations. The cluster superintendents, who are successful former principals, are responsible for providing leadership to principals and to facilitate the sharing of resources and best practices between cluster schools.

**Schools:** in Singapore set their own goals and do self-assessments each year, against nine functional area using the School Excellence Model framework. They have external assessments every six years by the School Appraisal Branch of the Ministry of Education. During these external assessments, outstanding teachers and principals are identified who are tapped to serve as mentors and coaches for other teachers and principals. Within each cluster, certain schools are designated as "autonomous." These schools are typically the top-performing government schools, and due to their success, they are allowed to take greater responsibility for their governance. Autonomous schools are allowed to choose some of their staff and to set their own admissions policies.<sup>52</sup>

**Schools of Education:** Singapore has only one teacher training institution, the National Institute for Education (NIE). The Ministry of Education oversees NIE and the training programs for teachers are tightly regulated by the Ministry, which also controls the numbers of teachers allowed admittance to programs by gauging the need for teachers across the nation. NIE also serves as the national education research institute for Singapore and is continually evaluating school curriculum and integrating new research into recommendations for school curriculum and teacher training.<sup>53</sup>

### *States*

In general, all states have adopted teacher and principal evaluation systems designed to hold educators accountable for performance. Race to the Top grant funding from 2009 to 2014 encouraged many states to incorporate student achievement measures into these evaluation systems, but the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act and the end of the Race to the Top grant period gives states an opportunity to revisit these systems.

Under the requirements of ESSA, all states are required to track the performance of schools using: student academic performance, disaggregated by federally recognized student subgroups, graduation rate (for high schools only) and at least one additional indicator of school quality or student success, to be measured using something other than standardized test scores. States determine their school rating systems based on this federal framework.

ESSA also requires states to identify low-performing schools and to offer them support. The law requires the states to identify criteria for two groups of low-performing schools: those eligible for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI). The criteria for CSI schools must include the lowest-performing five percent of Title I schools and any public high school with less than a 67 percent graduation rate. The criteria for TSI schools must include any schools with one or more subgroups of students performing at or below the performance of all students in the lowest performing schools in the states, or with one or more subgroups that are underperforming for two or more years. States can add additional criteria. The definitions of CSI and TSI schools are similar to the Priority and Focus schools that states identified as a condition of receiving a waiver under NCLB. All of the benchmark states as well as Maryland received NCLB waivers and had already been identifying Priority and Focus schools for support.

States are not required to track the performance of school districts, but typically states will aggregate the results of schools within a given district using their school rating system in order to assign ratings to districts as well. States typically have a division of the Department of Education, or an independent commission, in charge of accrediting teacher education institutions. The extent to which these bodies have, or choose to exercise, the authority to require teacher education institutions to make improvements varies by state. See the chart below for a comparison of how Maryland and the benchmark states have constructed their school rating systems. This chart shows the percentage of academic, or test score-based, measures, as compared to the percentage of non-academic, or non-test-based, measures in the school accountability systems. We constructed the chart in this way in order to align with Maryland’s Protect Our Schools Act, which requires that the accountability system limit the weight of academic (that is, test-based) measures to 65 percent.

### Top Performing States and Maryland: School Accountability Academic and Non-Academic Indicators in ESSA Plans

State	Level	Academic/Test-Focused	Non-Academic/Non-Test-Focused
<p><b>MD</b> (NOTE: Plan is in draft form and has not yet been submitted)</p> <p>Schools would be rated on a five-star scale.</p>	<p><b>Elementary/ Middle School</b></p>	<p><b>Total Weight: 65%</b></p> <p>Academic Achievement (20%): Performance Composite on PARCC ELA and mathematics (4 or 5)</p> <p>Academic Progress (35%):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth in ELA and mathematics (25%);</li> <li>• Credit for completion of a well-rounded curriculum (10%): percentage of grade students earning passing grades in social studies, fine arts, physical education and health, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students earning passing grades in ELA, math, science and social studies; and passing MISA in science and Maryland EOC exam in social studies</li> </ul> <p>English Language Proficiency Progress (10%)</p>	<p><b>Total Weight: 35%</b></p> <p>School Quality or Student Success (35%):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chronic absenteeism (15%);</li> <li>• Climate survey (10%);</li> <li>• Access to a well-rounded curriculum (10%): percentage of 5<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in science, social studies, fine arts, physical education, health and, for 8<sup>th</sup> grade only, computational learning</li> </ul>



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## A Gap Analysis for MD

State	Level	Academic/Test-Focused	Non-Academic/Non-Test-Focused
	<b>High School</b>	<p><b>Total Weight: 65%</b></p> <p>Academic Achievement (20%): Performance Composite on PARCC ELA and mathematics (4 or 5)</p> <p>English Language Proficiency Progress (10%)</p> <p>Readiness for Postsecondary Success (20%):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-track in 9<sup>th</sup> grade (10%);</li> <li>• Credit for completion of a well-rounded curriculum (10%): percentage of students graduating with one of the following:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ AP score of 3 or higher,</li> <li>○ IB score of 4 or higher,</li> <li>○ SAT math score of 530+ and reading score of 480+,</li> <li>○ ACT composite score of 21 or higher,</li> <li>○ Dual enrollment credit,</li> <li>○ Meeting University of Maryland entry requirements,</li> <li>○ CTE industry certification,</li> <li>○ Minimum score on ASVAB,</li> <li>○ A Maryland Certificate for Program Completion (for students with special needs) who have entered the world of work or higher education.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Graduation Rate (15%)</p>	<p><b>Total Weight: 35%</b></p> <p>School Quality or Student Success (35%):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chronic absenteeism (15%);</li> <li>• Climate survey (10%);</li> <li>• Access to a well-rounded curriculum (10%): percentage of students graduating who:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Enrolled</b> in an AP or IB course,</li> <li>○ <b>Enrolled</b> in dual enrollment,</li> <li>○ <b>Completed</b> a CTE concentration,</li> <li>○ <b>Enrolled</b> in a general core high school course (for special education students pursuing a Certificate of Program Completion only)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>MA</b></p> <p>Based on an index of 1-100, schools fall into one of six performance tiers.</p>	<p><b>Elementary/ Middle School with Measurable English Learner Group</b></p>	<p><b>Total Weight: 95%</b></p> <p>Academic Achievement (60%)</p> <p>Academic Progress (25%)</p> <p>English Language Proficiency (10%)</p>	<p><b>Total Weight: 5%</b></p> <p>School Quality or Student Success (5%): Chronic absenteeism</p>
	<p><b>Elementary/ Middle School without Measurable English Learner Group</b></p>	<p><b>Total Weight: 95%</b></p> <p>Academic Achievement (70%)</p> <p>Academic Progress (25%)</p>	<p><b>Total Weight: 5%</b></p> <p>School Quality or Student Success (5%): Chronic absenteeism</p>



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## Building Block 9 Data

State	Level	Academic/Test-Focused	Non-Academic/Non-Test-Focused
	<b>High School with Measureable English Learner Group</b>	<p><b>Total Weight: 92.5%</b></p> <p>Academic Achievement (50%): Grade 10 ELA, math and science Next-Gen MCAS</p> <p>Academic Progress (20%)</p> <p>English Language Proficiency (5%)</p> <p>Graduation Rate (17.5%)</p>	<p><b>Total Weight: 7.5%</b></p> <p>School Quality or Student Success (7.5%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chronic absenteeism;</li> <li>• Success in grade 9 courses;</li> <li>• Successful completion of “broad and challenging coursework” (measured as percentage of students successfully completing AP, IB, or Honors courses)</li> </ul>
	<b>High School without Measureable English Learner Group</b>	<p><b>Total Weight: 92.5%</b></p> <p>Academic Achievement (50%): Grade 10 ELA, mathematics and science Next-Gen MCAS</p> <p>Academic Progress (25%)</p> <p>Graduation Rate (17.5%)</p>	<p><b>Total Weight: 7.5%</b></p> <p>School Quality or Student Success (7.5%):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chronic absenteeism;</li> <li>• Success in grade 9 courses;</li> <li>• Successful completion of “broad and challenging coursework” (measured as percentage of students successfully completing AP, IB, or Honors courses)</li> </ul>
<b>NH</b> (NOTE: Plan is in draft form and has not yet been submitted.) All indicators will be reported on an index scale of 1-4	<b>Elementary/ Middle School</b>	<p><b>Weights not yet specified</b></p> <p>Academic Achievement: Smarter Balanced and PACE (NH competency assessment) performance levels will be reported on a scale of Levels 1-4</p> <p>Academic Progress</p> <p>English Language Proficiency Progress</p> <p>School Quality or Student Success: Mean Student Growth Percentile (MGP) for the lowest-achieving quartile of students, reported on a scale of Levels 1-4</p>	<b>None: All elementary and middle school measures are based in test scores.</b>

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## A Gap Analysis for MD

State	Level	Academic/Test-Focused	Non-Academic/Non-Test-Focused
	<b>High School</b>	<p><b>Weights not yet specified</b></p> <p>Academic Achievement: SAT and PACE performance levels will be reported on a scale of Levels 1-4</p> <p>English Language Proficiency Progress</p> <p>Graduation Rate</p> <p>School Quality or Student Success: Career Readiness (CCR): Graduating seniors achieve CCR if they meet two of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NH Scholars Standard, STEM or Arts program of study;</li> <li>• Grade of C or better in dual-enrollment course; SAT scores at or above CCR benchmark;</li> <li>• ACT scores at or above CCR benchmark;</li> <li>• AP exam score of 3, 4, or 5;</li> <li>• IB exam score of 3, 4, or 5;</li> <li>• CTE industry-recognized credential;</li> <li>• NH career pathway program of study;</li> </ul> <p>AFQT score of Level III</p>	<p><b>None: All high school measures are based in test scores.</b></p>
<p><b>NJ</b></p> <p>New Jersey's plan would use a summative score, which represents a percentile rank, to rate schools.</p>	<b>Elementary/Middle School</b>	<p><b>Total Weight: 90%</b></p> <p>Academic Achievement (30%): Proficiency on PARCC in ELA and mathematics (Levels 4 and 5)</p> <p>Academic Progress (40%):</p> <p>English Language Proficiency Progress (20%)</p>	<p><b>Total Weight: 10%</b></p> <p>School Quality or Student Success (10%): Chronic absenteeism</p>
	<b>High School</b>	<p><b>Total Weight: 90%</b></p> <p>Academic Achievement (30%): Proficiency rates on PARCC in ELA and mathematics (grades 3-10)</p> <p>English Language Proficiency Progress (20%)</p> <p>Graduation Rate (40%)</p>	<p><b>Total Weight: 10%</b></p> <p>School Quality or Student Success (10%): Chronic absenteeism</p>

- MA**

**Teachers:** To date, teachers in Massachusetts have been evaluated based on student growth measures, observations, artifacts and student and staff feedback. Student growth measures, including the results of teacher designed assessment and statewide standardized test scores, account for 50 percent of the total evaluation score. Growth on PARCC tests are only one of several measures of student growth. Teachers are rated on performance (exemplary, proficient, needs improvement or unsatisfactory) and on student impact (high, medium and low). Under ESSA, the state intends to calculate educator equity gaps, noting which sub-groups of students are taught by ineffective, inexperienced, and out-of-field teachers. The state is encouraging districts to

implement robust evaluation systems to promote teacher professional learning and growth and as a means to close gaps in equitable access.<sup>54</sup>

**Principals:** Principals are assessed on four Standards established by state regulation. The four Standards are: Instructional Leadership, Management and Operations, Family and Community Engagement, and Professional Culture. No administrator can be considered to be Proficient unless his or her rating on Instructional Leadership is Proficient. Principal evaluation includes Mid-Year Reviews. Principals develop a Self-Assessment and goals for professional practice, student learning and school improvement.

**Schools:** Massachusetts has a framework for school accountability and assistance that includes “school turnarounds” for Level 4 and 5 (the lowest of five levels) schools. Level 4 schools are identified by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as both low performing on MCAS over a four-year period and not showing signs of substantial improvement or strong positive annual student growth over that interval. Level 5 is the most serious category. Level 4 schools that do not improve by the expiration of their redesign plans may be placed into Level 5, which requires receivership by the state.<sup>55</sup> The state ESSA plan includes a school performance index for classifying schools into performance levels that equates them with percentiles. The state will use those percentiles to identify schools for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI).<sup>56</sup>

**Districts:** Massachusetts identifies low performing districts using statewide test data and graduation rates and puts districts into one of five categories. The state has tiered requirements and supports for districts based on these categorizations, ranging from level 1 districts which are granted considerable autonomy and flexibility and have access to online tools and resources to level 5 districts which results in the district being taken into receivership.<sup>57</sup> A district’s accountability is determined by its lowest performing school. When a district has one or more Level 4 schools, it receives a district designation of Level 4 as well. However, this would change under the state’s ESSA plan. Under ESSA, a district’s accountability level would be determined by its overall performance of its students rather than the level of its lowest performing school.

**Schools of Education:** The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is responsible for program review and accreditation of schools of education. In the past, it has accredited based on a review process that includes site visits every five years. However, Massachusetts was chosen by the Council of Chief State School Officers to participate in the two-year pilot Network for Transforming Educator Preparation (NTEP). The goal of the initiative is to implement CCSSO recommendations for improving licensure, one of which is the use of data for program approval, continuing accreditation, and continuous improvement. All preparation programs are required to assess candidates’ readiness for licensure using a state-defined Candidate Performance Assessment (CPA).<sup>58</sup> Successful completion of the CPA will be required for program completion. The state also intends to encourage

preparation programs to partner with school districts to improve pre-service and induction programs.<sup>59</sup>

- **NH**

**Teachers:** A state evaluation model for teachers was implemented in 2014-2015. Local districts can implement the state model or adapt their own teacher performance evaluation system.<sup>60</sup> The model includes classroom observations done annually by principals in addition to multiple measures of student learning, including portfolios and standardized test results. Teachers who receive the lowest rating for two years in a row may not renew their teaching license. The frequency of summative evaluation is tied to educators' length of time teaching and previous evaluation rating. Highly effective, experienced teachers undergo a summative evaluation at least once every three years, while new and/or teachers previously rated ineffective are evaluated every year. All teachers, however, are expected to receive formative feedback and participate in SLOs and the professional portfolio process each year.<sup>61</sup> The draft ESSA plan does not discuss changes to teacher evaluation.<sup>62</sup>

**Principals:** Principals are evaluated against eight standards: educational leadership, school culture and instructional practice, school management, school and community, integrity and ethics, social and cultural context, local district goals, and student growth. They are required to have regular meetings with supervisors (beginning of the year, mid-year and year end) and are rated Unsatisfactory, Emerging, Proficient and Distinguished based on observations and a portfolio of evidence principals put together. Supervisors are supposed to discuss supports and help principals throughout the year to achieve the goals in the plan. Novice principals are evaluated every year and experienced principals are evaluated every three years.<sup>63</sup> The draft ESSA plan does not discuss changes to principal evaluation.<sup>64</sup>

**Schools:** According to New Hampshire's draft ESSA plan, the state will identify four levels of low-performing schools. The four levels are:

1. Not identified;
2. Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI);
3. Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI-CUS) for schools with chronically underperforming subgroups; and
4. Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI-LPS) for schools with one or more low-performing subgroups.

New Hampshire will use the required federal criteria for these levels: CSI schools are Title I schools that score in the bottom fifth percentile in the state according to its combined indicators or whose graduation rates are below 67 percent; TSI schools are those with either one or more subgroups of students underperforming for two or more years or with one or more subgroups of students performing at or below the bottom fifth percentile of all schools.<sup>65</sup>

**Districts:** New Hampshire does not publically identify low performing districts currently. Schools, not districts, are the focus of support under ESSA.

**Schools of Education:** The state approves teacher preparation programs based on program approval standards. Approvals are for up to seven years. There is a Council on Teacher Education that acts in an advisory role to the Department's Bureau of Credentialing and participates in site visits. However, the state has not set minimum standards for program performance and therefore is not holding teacher preparation programs accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce. No programs have been identified as low performing in the past three years. There is no report card or way for the public to review and compare program performance.<sup>66</sup> The draft ESSA plan does not outline any new approaches to program approval, only that programs will continue to meet the state's standards.<sup>67</sup>

- **NJ**

**Teachers:** The AchieveNJ System for teacher evaluation and support requires annual evaluations of teachers. The system relies on multiple measures of performance for teacher practice and student achievement. For teachers in grade and subjects tested in state tests (PARCC), teacher evaluation is 30 percent student achievement and 70 percent teacher practice. For teachers in grades or subjects not tested statewide, the ratio is 20 percent student achievement and 80 percent teacher practice. The evaluations include observations and "value-added" measures of student growth on standardized tests. Results are high stakes and can cause teachers to lose tenure. Value added measures based on standardized tests account for 10 percent of a teachers rating although that will change to 30 percent. There are four levels of teacher ratings: highly effective, effective, partially effective or ineffective. To maintain tenure, teachers need to receive a rating of effective or highly effective.<sup>68</sup> The state will continue using AchieveNJ under ESSA.

**Principals:** The AchieveNJ System also evaluates principals. Principals are evaluated annually based on 50 percent student achievement and 50 percent principal practice. Student achievement is measured by: student growth goals (10 percent); student growth percentile (10 percent) for those principals whose students are tested; and administrator goals (30 or 40 percent). Principal practice is measured by observation by the superintendent (30 percent) and leadership (20 percent) in implementing the new teacher evaluation plans.<sup>69</sup>

**Schools:** Currently, New Jersey releases annual School Performance reports. These snapshots provide data on how each school performs in relation to state averages and to "peer schools" in terms of academic achievement, college and career readiness, graduation rates, and postsecondary enrollment. There is also detail on the achievement gap that exists within a school in comparison to the state gap.<sup>70</sup>

According to New Jersey's ESSA plan, the state will identify low performing schools for Comprehensive Services and Improvement (CSI) and Targeted Service and Improvement (TSI) using its summative ranking of schools. As required by ESSA, Title 1 schools with school wide performance in the bottom five percent of all schools as well as high schools with graduation rates less than 67 percent will be identified for CSI and schools with low performing or consistently underperforming subgroups will be identified for TSI. Schools will be sorted into three tiers of support (universal, comprehensive, and



targeted) with an emphasis on building district capacity to help low performing schools.<sup>71</sup>

**Districts:** New Jersey requires school districts to report on student performance on state tests, graduation rates and attendance. The state places districts into three performance levels based on an extensive list of indicators created by the 1988 School Intervention Law. If districts are placed in the lowest performance level, the state can take them over if they fail to improve within two year.<sup>72</sup> This will continue under ESSA.

**Schools of Education:** New Jersey Department of Education approves teacher education programs in the state if they are accredited by one of a list of regional and national accrediting bodies but does not have a state accreditation or approval process.<sup>73</sup> Starting in 2014, NJDOE began releasing annual Educator Preparation Provider Performance Reports that include information on certification and hiring rates, persistence rates, evaluation results, and more. The state also created an online approval system for educator preparation programs. ESSA plans include partnering with the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) to research teacher preparation best practices.<sup>74</sup>

- **MD**

**Teachers:** Maryland requires that districts evaluate teachers, principals and schools annually. The Council for Educator Effectiveness was convened in June 2010, at the same time the Common Core State Standards were adopted, in order to provide recommendations on a teacher evaluation system. The Council provided a statewide framework for educator evaluation that could be adapted slightly according to district needs. The framework specifies that both professional practices (measured by at least two classroom observations) and student growth (to be measured by teacher designed assessment and PARCC) each account for “significant” components of the evaluation results. Districts can adapt the framework from there: they can assign slightly different weights to student learning outcomes, set slightly different cut scores, and determine the rewards or sanctions associated with different levels of evaluation. The system was piloted in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, with full implementation in 2013-2014. Also in 2014, the state convened an advisory board of teacher’s union representatives, state officials, and other stakeholders to recommend improvements to the framework. Teacher evaluations will begin having high stakes for teachers, with some teachers eligible to be dismissed for poor performance, this year. In 2015, 97 percent of teachers were rated effective or highly effective.<sup>75</sup> The draft ESSA plan does not suggest changes to the educator evaluation system.

**Principals:** Principals are measured by 50 percent qualitative measures and 50 percent quantitative measures. The qualitative measures must include the domains of the state’s Professional Standards for Educational Leaders. These focus on mission, vision, and core values; ethics and professional norms; equity and cultural responsiveness; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; community of care and support for students; professional capacity of school personnel; professional community for teachers and staff; engagement of

families and communities; operations and management; and school improvement. Local districts can add additional measures. The other component is based on student test scores and student growth.<sup>6</sup> The draft ESSA plan does not change the educator evaluation system.

**Schools:** Maryland currently designates two types of schools in need of improvement: Priority Schools, which are the 5 percent of lowest-achieving Title I schools as measured by the Maryland School Assessment or PARCC, and Focus Schools, which are the 10 percent of Title I schools that have the largest gaps in performance between all students and traditionally underachieving subgroups, or schools with graduation rates of 60 percent or lower. These schools receive additional funding and staffing supports from the state. According to the state's draft ESSA plan, the state will begin identifying schools needing support according to the new requirements. Schools that will receive Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) services will be all schools in the lowest five percent of performance. The state will include all schools, not just Title I schools. High schools with less than a 67 percent graduation rate will also be identified for CSI. Schools will be identified for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) services if they have subgroups performing at or below the level of the lowest five percent of all schools on the state's academic indicators. Maryland has also proposed a new five-star school rating system for schools. The state will submit a final ESSA plan to the federal Department of Education in September 2017.<sup>7</sup>

**Districts:** Under ESSA, each district that has schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) services will receive an on-site visit to assess LEA capacity, commitment and fiscal responsibility. Available resources for technical assistance include a resource "hub" with best practice tools and information including templates, rubrics, research articles and planning documents

**Schools of Education:** The State Board of Education is responsible for setting the standards and general guidelines for approval of teacher preparation institutions, while the State Department of Education, with the advice of the 25-member Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board, manages the process of oversight, periodic program reviews (every five to seven years, depending on the quality of the program's previous review), approval and reaccreditation. The Higher Education Commission plays a role in review of teacher education programs as well. All teacher preparation programs must collect data on a variety of indicators (e.g., "on average, 80 percent of institutions' graduates must pass the Praxis"; "institutions can provide evidence that its graduates possess skills aligned with the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards," etc.) in order to prepare for their reaccreditation. ESSA plans include enhancing clinical experience requirements to ensure teacher candidates have exposure to diverse school populations. The plan also calls for examining Institutional Performance Criteria (designed in 2014) to assure the use of evidence-based assessment of teacher candidates.<sup>8</sup> The Maryland General Assembly just passed a new bill,

HB 715, that gives the MSDE authority to approve teacher education programs directly rather than just approve any program with national accreditation. This gives the MSDE more authority to raise and enforce teacher education program standards. The P20 Council's Teacher Workgroup and more recently the Task Force on Teacher Education that was created as part of the 2016 Act on Teacher Induction, Retention and Advancement (SB 493) has been studying teacher education redesign and making recommendations over the last three years. The Task Force is releasing a final report this fall on strengthening the teacher development system in the state, including initial training, induction, and professional development.

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**Does the system have a way to help less successful teachers, principals, schools, and districts?**

***International Jurisdiction:***

- **Finland**

**Teachers:** Principals and teachers jointly come up with professional development plans for individual teachers. There is extensive mentoring of new teachers, which again is done informally. Teachers are generally evaluated by their principals which is generally done informally with one-on-one conversations about goals and professional development. In Helsinki, a common form is used for evaluation which is focused on four key features of teaching — personal performance, versatility, initiative and ability to cooperate.<sup>79</sup>

**Principals:** The strong self-evaluation culture means that principals themselves and their schools should identify what supports a struggling principal might need. Assistance for principals is often informal: other principals in the district provide coaching, teachers within the school might help, or the municipal leadership might provide training or support.<sup>80</sup>

**Schools:** While municipalities inspect schools, there is no clearly proscribed set of actions to take if a school is thought to be low performing. The district is expected to organize supports and work with the school to improve.<sup>81</sup>

- **Ontario**

**Teachers:** As part of the Teacher Performance Appraisal system, teachers complete Annual Learning Plans with goals for growth and principals coach them to meet their goals annually even though formal evaluations are every five years.<sup>82</sup>

**Principals:** Principals or vice principals who receive an unsatisfactory rating develop an improvement plan with a timeline in partnership with their supervisor. A second unsatisfactory rating results in a review of the improvement plan and the principal or vice principal being placed on review status. A third unsatisfactory rating results in the case being sent to the board to determine next steps.<sup>83</sup>

**Schools:** Low performing schools are assigned Student Achievement Officers, who are high performing former teachers or school leaders who provide ongoing coaching and support to schools.<sup>84</sup>

- **Shanghai**

**Teachers:** Shanghai teachers who are thought to need assistance are assigned mentors for at least three years, often more, and receive support from peers and others to improve their performance.<sup>85</sup>

**Principals:** Each year, the Shanghai Education Commission assigns high performing principals from a pool of 200 master principals to mentor their low performing peers.<sup>86</sup>

**Schools:** Schools that the Shanghai Education Commission identifies as struggling sign contracts with high performing schools. As a result of these contracts, the principal of a high performing school either takes sole responsibility for both the high performing and the low performing school (receiving funding, time and support to do so), or instead mentors the low performing school's current principal. The Shanghai Education Commission monitors these partnerships closely, and will revise, renew or terminate them as needed.<sup>87</sup> Shanghai also establishes programs of "sister schools" where staff across two schools—typically one higher performing and one lower performing—partner with one another to observe each other, give feedback on lessons, and communally develop tools, lesson plans, and other materials. The Education Commission reviews these partnership arrangements every two years; partnerships that demonstrate positive outcomes and satisfy both parties may be renewed indefinitely.<sup>88</sup>

- **Singapore**

**Teachers:** Teachers are encouraged to take professional development courses if they do not meet the goals developed as part of the Enhanced Performance Management System (EPMS). Extensive professional development is provided through NIE courses as well as on-site coaching and mentors.

**Principals:** Cluster Superintendents are in charge of monitoring the performance of all principals within their cluster, mentoring them, giving them opportunities to collaborate, and giving them appropriate professional development opportunities. Principals that score poorly on the Enhanced Performance Management System (EPMS) receive more structured mentorship experiences; principals who score well have less oversight from their cluster superintendents. As Cluster Superintendent is the next rung of the leadership track, all cluster superintendents are former principals who were highly effective themselves.<sup>89</sup>

**Schools:** Principals are assigned to schools centrally by the Ministry of Education, which systematically rotates principals among schools. As such, the most experienced and highly accomplished principals are rotated between and among the most challenging schools.<sup>90</sup>

### **States:**

In the United States, each state develops their own educator evaluation system. Some states may create evaluation systems that are common across the state, including setting specific professional development requirements for teachers at certain levels. Other states allow districts to determine their own evaluation systems within a given

statewide framework, including what supports and/or sanctions are given to teachers based on the results of the evaluations.

States are required by ESSA to designate any school with any subgroup of students consistently underperforming for “Targeted Support and Improvement” from the state, and a second group of schools, including no less than the lowest-performing Title I schools and any high school with lower than a 67 percent graduation rate, for the more intensive “Comprehensive Support and Improvement.” They are required to provide additional supports to these schools, including additional funding and support opportunities, but states have the autonomy to determine exactly what form this support takes.

- **MA:**

**Teachers:** The rating the teacher receives determines the length, level of proscription and content of the professional growth plan. Teachers with high ratings follow a two-year self-directed professional development plan. Teachers with lower ratings follow one year self-directed or proscribed professional development plans. All of these action plans require teachers (and, in the case of proscribed plans for lower performing teachers, their supervisors) to set goals for both student performance and professional practice, describe the actions they will take (including professional development) to achieve those goals, the resources they will need to take advantage of, and the Professional Development Points (required for recertification) that these activities will earn them.<sup>91</sup> In this way, the plans are linked to 5-year recertification. State policy does not mandate that evaluation results be used for high-stakes personnel decisions, but state guidance encourages individual districts to do so if they wish.<sup>92</sup>

**Principals:** Principals develop an annual professional development plan based on their annual evaluation results in partnership with the superintendent. In these plans, they set goals for improvement and lay out the professional development resources they will need from their districts to meet those goals.<sup>93</sup> This system would not change under ESSA.

**Schools:** The state has a history of intervening with low-performing schools through supports ranging from increased technical assistance to more significant interventions such as mandated personnel changes (including requiring all staff to reapply for their jobs) and loss of funding. State law requires that districts with a Level 4 school develop a Turnaround Plan for the school that identifies strategic initiatives and benchmarks towards achieving Measurable Annual Goals that are used as the basis for exiting Level 4 status.<sup>94</sup> In 2010, the state Department of Education announced that it would partner with local school districts to assist with recruiting and placing teachers at specific low performing schools through the website [amazingteachers.org](http://amazingteachers.org). Massachusetts has also taken specific low performing schools into receivership, meaning that the State Department of Education can determine who will be the leaders of those schools.<sup>95</sup> Under ESSA, struggling schools will implement a turnaround plan to improve student performance with the state providing schools greater access to direct, expert assistance, research-based resources and preferred access to professional development.<sup>96</sup>



**Districts:** Under the current system, districts that are categorized as low performing based on statewide test data and graduation rates have tiered supports and requirements:

- Level 1 districts are granted considerable autonomy and flexibility and have access to the online tools and resources available to all districts.
- Level 2 districts are granted some autonomy but must perform an annual needs assessment based on the state's Conditions for School Effectiveness to implement and/or improve conditions in their schools that are not effectively supporting the needs of all students.
- Level 3 districts receive priority assistance from the regional District and School Assistance Center (DSAC) and engage with the DSAC in both the needs assessment process and in the identification of interventions.
- Level 4 districts must rapidly implement all 11 Conditions for School Effectiveness in their Level 4 schools, are assigned a liaison from ESE to engage their leadership team in system-level analysis of district support activities, and are closely monitored for efficacy and impact.
- If a school is placed in Level 5, the most serious designation on ESE's framework, ESE will engage a receiver to oversee management of the school.<sup>97</sup>

Currently, three districts are in receivership, Southbridge, Lawrence and Holyoke. Level 5 districts are assigned a new leader called a receiver, with equivalent authority to a superintendent, who reports directly to the Commissioner. They must engage a Local Stakeholder Group (of parents, teachers, principals, union leaders, higher education, and social service agency representatives) to produce a turnaround plan for raising student achievement and graduation rates. In some cases, teachers must reapply for their jobs, and parents are granted the authority to transfer their kids to public schools outside their home district.<sup>98</sup>

Under ESSA, the state will continue Commissioner's Districts, the state's 10 largest, highest poverty school districts. They are supported through full-time liaisons, program specialists, and content experts. ESE has also established a network of regional assistance to support small to medium districts through six regional District and School Assistance Centers.<sup>99</sup> Other state supports for districts include webinars, technical assistance calls, online self-assessment tools, grants, District Analysis and Review Tools (DARTS) which are online data dashboards, PD programs, and an Early Warning Indicator System for students at risk of dropping out. These supports are coordinated by six Regional Assistance Directors throughout the state, each of whom is a recently retired superintendent who is assigned a portfolio of districts (of various levels) to support. Each Regional Assistance Director has a data specialist, a math specialist and a literacy specialist on his or her staff to deploy to support districts in planning, as needed.<sup>100</sup>

- **NH:**  
**Teachers:** The teacher evaluation system was designed to ensure that teachers with low evaluation ratings are supported by a directed professional growth plan that includes receiving targeted mentoring and support in order to

improve their teaching performance. If the teaching performance, as reflected in the evaluation scores, is low for a second year, the level of support is intensified for at least another year. If the teaching performance has not improved after two years of progressively more intensive support, the educator's contract may be non-renewed. In other words, severe consequences cannot be applied unless multiple tiers of support have been provided.<sup>101</sup>

**Principals:** Like teachers, principals given ineffective ratings are supported by a directed professional growth plans that include receiving targeted mentoring and support.<sup>102</sup>

**Schools:** The state has in place a process of integrating all technical assistance to low performing schools and using a statewide technology platform to deliver support services.<sup>103</sup> Department of Education staff assigned to each Priority and Focus School work with a school's leadership team to develop an innovation plan. This plan is submitted through the Indistar Online Tool to allow state agency staff to identify classroom practices, organizational structures, and policies and programs showing evidence of success in local schools. This tool also enables school improvement staff to identify common challenges across schools and to direct available resources through a networked strategy of support. For example, networks have included educator effectiveness, principal leadership, data collection and use, curriculum alignment, and performance-based assessments.<sup>104</sup> According to New Hampshire's draft ESSA plan, low-performing schools will be required to work with their district leadership to establish an improvement plan with strategies for improving the performance of underperforming subgroups. The state will support districts with identified schools in developing personalized learning approaches, including participation in the PACE competency-based initiative, the development of personalized learning plans, opportunities for extended learning, etc.<sup>105</sup>

**Districts:** Currently, New Hampshire does not provide supports focused specifically on districts. The draft ESSA plan indicates that the state will support districts serving low-performing schools through a variety of means, including the tri-annual review process, quarterly innovation meetings, needs assessment and gap analysis tools, and professional learning opportunities. Districts may also attend PACE training to shift towards competency-based educational approaches.<sup>106</sup>

- **NJ:**  
**Teachers:** Schools are required to develop professional development plans (PDP). These plans are required to include goals related to observations and evidence in the teacher evaluation as well as additional goals related to district initiatives and teachers "role as a member of a collaborative community". Effective and Highly Effective teachers are encouraged to include leadership activities in the plans such as grant-writing, mentoring, serving on school teams, developing curriculum or teaching new courses. Teachers must provide a narrative and evidence that they have met the goals of their PDP. Teachers who are rated Ineffective or Partially Ineffective develop a "corrective action plan" (CAP) rather than a professional development plan

with specific goals related to improvement. Teachers with a CAP are required to meet with their supervisor mid-year to check on progress.<sup>107</sup>

**Principals:** Principals whose rating on AchieveNJ indicate a need for improvement are required to create a corrective action plan which specifies additional supports for the principal, a timeline for improvement and clear responsibilities for who is to provide what supports. Principals with corrective action plans are observed an additional time each school year.<sup>108</sup>

**Schools:** New Jersey Regional Achievement Centers were created to assist low performing schools in the state with turnaround strategies. Strategies include ensuring that school leaders have the authority to lead the turnaround effort; ensuring that teachers use research-based instructional strategies and instructional materials necessary to help students learn; making effective use of time to give teachers more time to collaborate and to better meet student needs; and increasing academically based parent and community involvement. New Jersey also received a Teacher Incentive Fund grant in 2012 to fund the School System Improvement Project to develop a comprehensive “human capital development system” with a performance-based pay system with four levels of performance for high need schools in the state to help them attract and retain high quality teachers and principals.<sup>109</sup> There are currently 17 charter schools participating in the project which is slated to release an evaluation in 2018.<sup>110</sup> Under ESSA, low-performing schools will follow a systematic process of data-needs assessment, improvement plan development based on the needs assessment, implementation of evidence-based practices, and evaluation of the plan’s effectiveness. The state will issue tools and models for schools to focus their improvement efforts on evidence-based interventions.<sup>111</sup> Schools not making progress within two years would be subject to intensive data review by the state and could be paired with an outside turnaround partner. The education commissioner could also intervene by reworking teachers’ collective-bargaining agreements, directing staff retraining or assignment, revamping curriculum and programs, and more.<sup>112</sup>

**Districts:** Currently, the state department of education monitors districts and places them in the following categories:

- Level I: County superintendents monitor districts by conducting desk audits and on-site evaluation visits. The Commissioner recommends the certification status of each school district to the State Board based on this on-site evaluation.
- Level II: Districts not certified upon their initial review are subject to the second monitoring level. These failing districts are required to develop a plan to address their shortcomings-districts progress is monitored every three months, and failure to achieve the stated performance goals would lead to level III monitoring. Those in level II go through an on-site evaluation by the county superintendent to determine compliance with all requirements. The district board of education must report the results of the district monitoring at a public meeting. If the district is placed in Level II, the board must approve the district’s corrective action plan. The county superintendent is responsible for informing the district of its monitoring responsibilities.

- Level III: This level requires the development of corrective action plans by an external review team. Failure to implement this program could result in a state takeover of the school district. Districts with schools which continue to fail have also fallen under New Jersey's "academic bankruptcy law," under which a district can be taken over by the state.<sup>113</sup>

Under ESSA, districts in Levels II and III must draft improvement plans that address instruction, personnel, operations management, governance and fiscal management. If the districts fail to improve after two years of reviews, the state commissioner can take corrective action, including providing direct oversight over district budgets and staffing. The state commissioner also has the authority to demand more rigorous interventions for schools that fail to make progress over time, including staffing and curriculum changes or reallocation of budgets.<sup>114</sup>

- **MD**

**Teachers:** The teacher evaluation framework for the state requires that all teachers be evaluated based on 50 percent qualitative "professional practices" measures (planning, instruction, classroom environment and professional responsibilities) and 50 percent quantitative measures which are based on student growth on test results but different for level of schools and subjects taught. The state allows districts some room to adapt this framework to local needs. The state framework for educator evaluation requires that low-performing teachers develop professional learning plans to address their weaknesses. These plans are co-designed by teachers and principals. The state also requires that mentoring and support are available to all low-performing teachers.<sup>115</sup>

**Principals:** The state framework for educator evaluation requires that low-performing principals develop professional development plans to address their weaknesses.<sup>116</sup> The state also provides targeted supports for principals of low-performing schools. According to the draft ESSA plan, principals of schools identified for CSI and TSI support will receive "targeted professional learning experiences". CSI schools that do not improve and are identified for more rigorous intervention will be assigned a leadership coach who will "provide guidance on the implementation of school improvement strategies."<sup>117</sup> In addition, Maryland currently has an Aspiring Leaders Academy, which is designed to build leadership capacity in low-performing schools. Participants are nominated by principals at these schools and the program involves a leadership project, coaching and the development of a network of peers.<sup>118</sup>

**Schools:** Under ESSA, the state will identify low-performing schools for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) services. Once identified, these schools are required to develop a school action plan. To develop these plans, schools must do a school level needs assessment and a root cause analysis. The plan development will include engagement with a broad range of stakeholders (parents, students, community partners, etc.) and, according to ESSA requirements, will include assessing allocation of resources to determine if there are inequities to be corrected. CSI and TSI schools will be required to use

MSDE vetted curriculum in ELA and mathematics. Principals and other school leaders will participate in MSDE professional learning experiences. Finally, MSDE will develop a resource hub that contains evidence-based research and other resources for schools to use.<sup>119</sup> For schools needing more rigorous interventions, local school superintendents will be required to assign experienced and effective leaders and teachers to these schools and use MSDE school leadership coaches to help them develop improvement plans and oversee their implementation. MSDE will conduct monthly school visits to monitor progress.<sup>120</sup> Schools are required to submit monthly quarterly data reports on student achievement and student culture and climate indicators, as well as monthly financial reports.<sup>121</sup> The Protect Our Schools Act, legislation passed in 2017, allows three years to improve low-performing schools before the state steps in to intervene. The legislation also says that no school turnaround plan can overrule an existing collective bargaining agreement.<sup>122</sup>

**Districts:** Under ESSA, each district with schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) will be visited on-site to assess LEA capacity, commitment, and fiscal responsibility. This can include leadership team interviews, school support plan review, and review of district-wide support of the implementation of evidence-based strategies to address prioritized needs. The state will develop a “resource hub” that districts can access with evidence-based tools, resources and documents to help with school improvement. If more intensive support is needed, a Central Support Team in the district will meet monthly and a Turnaround Executive Support Team will meet three times per year with MSDE.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Koulutus/koulutuspolitiikka/?lang=en>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/education/school/39928629.pdf>, p.

<sup>3</sup> Tucker, M. (2011). *Surpassing Shanghai: An Agenda for American Education Built on the World's Leading Systems*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/excellent.html#display>

<sup>5</sup> “Different Education in a Different Society” PowerPoint presentation by Professor Kai-ming Cheng of the University of Hong Kong, shared at the NCEE CIEB Advisory Board meeting, July 2017.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.moe.edu.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/moe/s3501/index.html>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.moe.gov.sg/about/>

<sup>8</sup> “Different Education in a Different Society” PowerPoint presentation by Professor Kai-ming Cheng of the University of Hong Kong, shared at the NCEE CIEB Advisory Board meeting, July 2017.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.mass.gov/courts/docs/lawlib/eo400-499/eo489.pdf>

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