



U.S. Department of Education FY 2014 Annual Performance Report and FY 2016 Annual Performance Plan

U.S. Department of Education

Arne Duncan
Secretary

February 2, 2015

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FY 2014 Annual Performance Report and FY 2016 Annual Performance Plan:

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Foreword

As required by the *Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Modernization Act of 2010*, each federal agency must report annually on its progress in meeting the goals and objectives established by its *Strategic Plan*. The United States Department of Education's (the Department's) *Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Annual Performance Report and FY 2016 Annual Performance Plan* presents to Congress, the President, and the American people detailed information about progress in meeting the Department's strategic goals and objectives and performance metrics, in addition to providing information on Departmental efforts in FY 2016. This report accompanies the administration's budget request to Congress. The complete budget request for the Department will be available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/performance.html>.

This year, the Department is consolidating its *FY 2014 Annual Performance Report* and the *FY 2016 Annual Performance Plan* to report on its *U.S. Department of Education Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2014–2018*. The data for the *FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan* metrics are the most current data available to the Department. Unless noted, targets are based upon the most current data the Department expects to have available at the time of the *Annual Performance Report*. The Department's FY 2014 annual reporting includes these three documents:

FY 2014 Summary of Performance and Financial Information [available February 2015]

This document provides an integrated overview of performance and financial information that consolidates the *FY 2014 Agency Financial Report (AFR)* and the *FY 2014 Annual Performance Report (APR)* and *FY 2016 Annual Performance Plan (APP)* into a user-friendly format.

FY 2014 Annual Performance Report and FY 2016 Annual Performance Plan

[available February 2015]

This report is produced in conjunction with the FY 2016 President's Budget Request and provides more detailed performance information and analysis of performance results.

FY 2014 Agency Financial Report (AFR) [published November 14, 2014]

The AFR is organized into three major sections:

- The Management's Discussion and Analysis section provides executive-level information on the Department's history, mission, organization, key activities, analysis of financial statements, systems, controls and legal compliance, accomplishments for the fiscal year, and management and performance challenges facing the Department.
- The Financial section provides a Message From the Chief Financial Officer, consolidated and combined financial statements, the Department's notes to the financial statements, and the Report of the Independent Auditors.
- The Other Accompanying Information section provides improper payments reporting details and other statutory reporting requirements.

All three annual reports will be available on the Department's website at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/index.html>.

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**FY 2014 Annual Performance
Report and FY 2016 Annual
Performance Plan**

Mission and Organizational Structure

Our Mission

The U.S. Department of Education's mission is *to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.*

Who We Are. In 1867, the federal government formally recognized that furthering education was a national priority and created a federal education agency to collect and report statistical data. The Department was established as a cabinet-level agency in 1979. Today, the Department supports programs that address every area and level of education.

The [Department](#) engages in four major types of activities: establishing policies related to federal education funding, including the distribution of funds, collecting on student loans, and using data to monitor the use of funds; supporting data collection and research on America's schools; identifying major issues in education and focusing national attention on them; and enforcing federal laws prohibiting discrimination in programs that receive federal funds.

Our Public Benefit. The Department is committed to helping to ensure that all students throughout the nation develop skills to succeed in school, college, and the workforce. While recognizing the primary role of states and school districts in providing a high-quality education, the Department supports efforts to employ highly qualified teachers and administrators, establish challenging content and achievement standards, and monitor students' progress against those standards.

The Department's largest asset is a portfolio of student loans. Grants to states are the second largest item on the balance sheet, mostly for elementary and secondary education, awarded based on legislated formulas. The third biggest item is student aid to help pay for college through Pell Grants, Work Study, and other campus-based programs. The Department also carries out competitive grant programs to promote innovation, performs research, collects education statistics, and enforces civil rights statutes.

Offices by Function. [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#) administers need-based financial assistance programs for students pursuing postsecondary education and makes available federal grants, direct loans, and work-study funding to eligible undergraduate and graduate students.

The offices of [Elementary and Secondary Education \(OESE\)](#), [Special Education and Rehabilitative Services \(OSERS\)](#), [Innovation and Improvement \(OII\)](#), [English Language Acquisition \(OELA\)](#), [Postsecondary Education \(OPE\)](#), and [Career, Technical, and Adult Education \(OCTAE\)](#) provide leadership, technical assistance, and financial support to state and local educational agencies and institutions of higher education for reform, strategic investment, and innovation in education.

[Institute of Education Sciences \(IES\)](#) is the research and statistics arm of the Department. The Department's goal is to provide rigorous and relevant evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and share this information broadly. By identifying what works, what doesn't, and why, IES aims to improve educational outcomes for all students, particularly those at risk of failure. Its goal is to transform education into an evidence-based field in which decision makers

routinely seek out the best available research and data before adopting programs or practices that will affect significant numbers of students.

The [Office for Civil Rights \(OCR\)](#) works to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation through vigorous enforcement of civil rights. OCR serves student populations facing discrimination and the advocates and institutions promoting systemic solutions to civil rights issues.

The [Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development \(OPEPD\)](#) serves as the principal adviser to the Secretary on all matters relating to policy development, performance measurement and evaluation, and budget processes and proposals. Two major components, the Budget Service and the Policy and Program Studies Service (PPSS), are housed within OPEPD.

Support Service Offices. The Department's support services offices are major partners with the grant-making and other principal offices as they provide services to external customers. These offices include: Office of the Secretary; Office of the Deputy Secretary; Office of the Under Secretary; Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs; Office of the Chief Financial Officer; Office of the Chief Information Officer; Risk Management Services; and Office of Communications and Outreach.

Regional Offices. The [Department has 10 regional offices](#) that provide points of contact and assistance for schools, parents, and citizens. Regional offices offer support through communications, civil rights enforcement, and federal student aid services to promote efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity in the programs and operations of the Department.

Descriptions of the [principal offices](#) and [overviews of the activities of the Department](#) and its programs can be found on the Department's website.

Overview

About This Report

The United States Department of Education's (the Department's) *FY 2014 Annual Performance Report* (APR) and *FY 2016 Annual Performance Plan* (APP) provide information relative to the *FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan*.

Again this year, the Department has consolidated its APR and APP in an effort to provide a more complete and meaningful picture of the Department's past performance and plans for the 2016 fiscal year. Because the Department has a delay of at least one year in the collection of data for many of the performance metrics, trend data are not available for all metrics.

About the Agency Financial Report

The [FY 2014 Agency Financial Report \(AFR\)](#), released in November 2014, provides detailed information on the Department's financial performance and stewardship over its financial resources.

[The Secretary](#) has outlined accomplishments, ongoing initiatives, and management challenges for the Department in FY 2014 and certified that the Department's performance data are fundamentally complete and reliable in his letter published in the AFR.

FY 2014 Financial Highlights and Information

The Department significantly expanded information in the Financial Highlights section of the AFR to provide a more comprehensive depiction of its key financial activities for FY 2014 and to identify and explain significant trends.

As a 10-time recipient of the Association of Government Accountants Certificate of Excellence in Accountability Reporting and having earned unmodified¹ (or "clean") audit opinions for 13 consecutive years, the Department has demonstrated its commitment to continuous improvement in its financial management, operations, and reporting.

For an overview and analysis of the Department's sources of funds and financial position, including a section on trend analysis, please go to <http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/2014report/2014-afr-2e-mda-financial-highlights.pdf>.

To review the Department's financial summary and complete financial statements—including required supplementary stewardship information and notes to the principal financial statements for the fiscal years ended September 30, 2014, and September 30, 2013—please go to <http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/2014report/2014-afr-3-financial.pdf>.

Analysis of Controls, Systems, and Legal Compliance

The balance sheet of the Department now exceeds \$1.0 trillion in assets. These are primarily from Credit Program Receivables (loans) and the Fund Balance with the Department of the Treasury (Treasury). The Department had \$924 billion in loans outstanding at the end of the year. This included new loans made in 2014 and the balances of old loans less collections of interest and principal. The Department is the smallest of 15 cabinet-level agencies in terms of

¹ "Unmodified" has the same meaning as the previous terminology, "unqualified."

government staff, with approximately 4,100 employees, yet it has the third-largest grant portfolio among the 26 federal grant-making organizations. In order to demonstrate effective stewardship of these resources, the Department has to implement effective controls over operations, systems, and financial reporting as described in the Analysis of Controls, Systems, and Legal Compliance section of the *Agency Financial Report*.

For more information on [management assurances](#) regarding compliance with the *Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982* (P.L. 97-255) (FMFIA) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-123, *Management's Responsibility for Internal Control*, as well as an analysis of the Department's controls, systems, and legal compliance, go to <http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/2014report/2014-afr-2f-mda-analysis.pdf>.

For information on improper payments reporting details, which includes a risk assessment of certain programs, please go to <http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/2014report/2014-afr-4a-otherinfo-improper-pymts.pdf>.

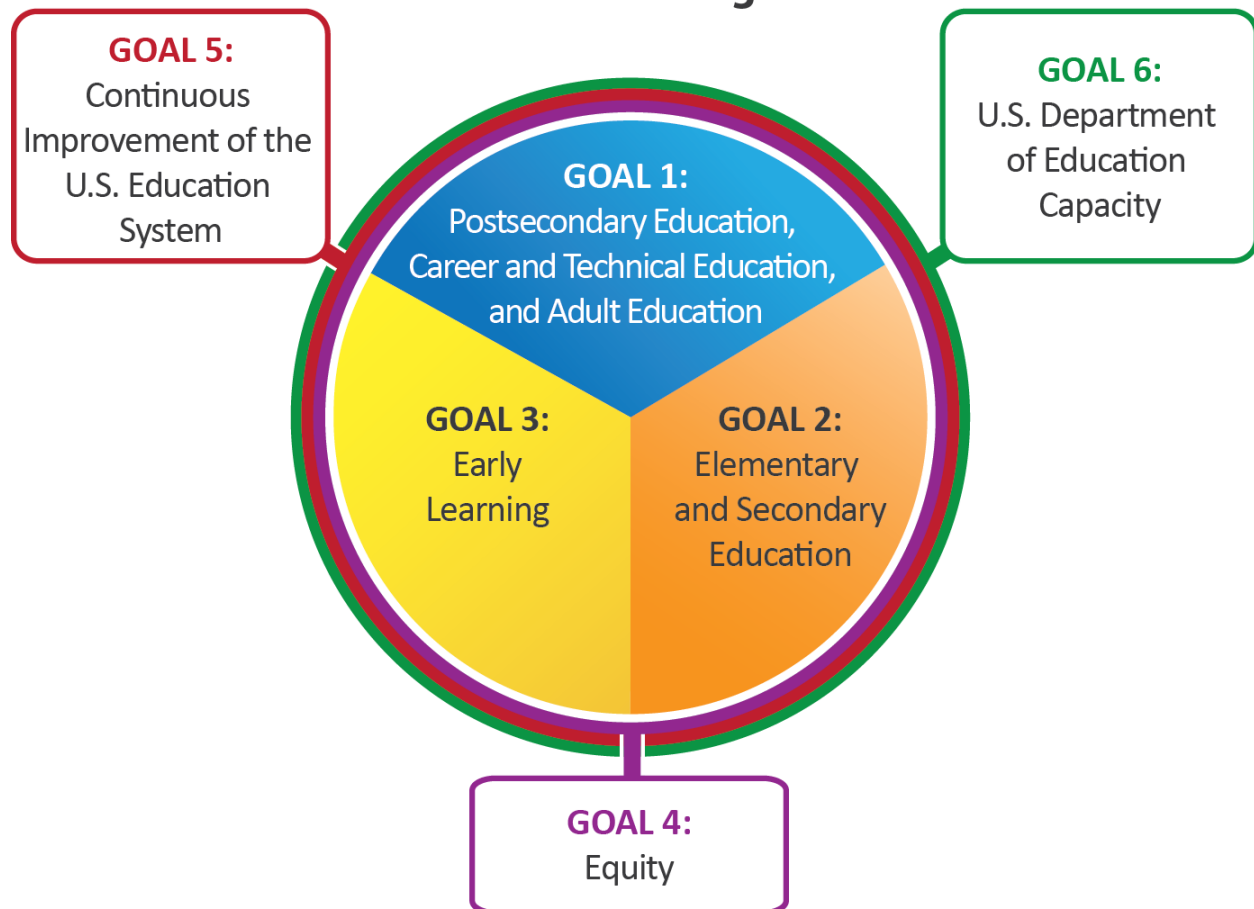
Performance Results Details

Performance Management Framework

In accordance with the [GPR Modernization Act of 2010](#), the Department's framework for performance management starts with the *Strategic Plan*, including its Agency Priority Goals (APGs), which serve as the foundation for establishing long-term priorities and developing performance goals, objectives, and metrics by which the Department can gauge achievement of its stated outcomes. Progress toward the Department's *Strategic Plan* is measured using data-driven review and analysis. This focus promotes active management engagement across the Department. Additional information is available in the [Department's Annual Performance Plans and Annual Performance Reports](#).

The [FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan](#) is comprised of six strategic goals that influence the day-to-day work of the Department's staff. The Department continues to welcome input from Congress, state and local partners, and other education stakeholders about the *Strategic Plan*. Questions or comments about the *Strategic Plan* should be e-mailed to APP_APRComments@ed.gov.

FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan



FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan

AGENCY MISSION		
<p>Mission: To promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access</p>		
FY 2014–18 STRATEGIC PLAN		
Strategic Goals	Strategic Objectives	Agency Priority Goals
<p>Goal 1: Postsecondary Education, Career and Technical Education, and Adult Education. Increase college access, affordability, quality, and completion by improving postsecondary education and lifelong learning opportunities for youths and adults.</p>	<p>Objective 1.1: Access and Affordability. Close the opportunity gap by improving the affordability of and access to college and/or workforce training, especially for underrepresented and/or underprepared populations (e.g., low-income and first-generation students, English learners, individuals with disabilities, adults without high school diplomas, etc.).</p> <p>Objective 1.2: Quality. Foster institutional value to ensure that postsecondary education credentials represent effective preparation for students to succeed in the workforce and participate in civic life.</p> <p>Objective 1.3: Completion. Increase degree and certificate completion and job placement in high-need and high-skill areas, particularly among underrepresented and/or underprepared populations.</p> <p>Objective 1.4: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Pathways. Increase STEM pathway opportunities that enable access to and completion of postsecondary programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase college degree attainment in America
<p>Goal 2: Elementary and Secondary Education. Improve the elementary and secondary education system's ability to consistently deliver excellent instruction aligned with rigorous academic standards while providing effective support services to close achievement and opportunity gaps, and ensure all students graduate high school college- and career-ready.</p>	<p>Objective 2.1: Standards and Assessments. Support implementation of internationally benchmarked college- and career-ready standards, with aligned, valid, and reliable assessments.</p> <p>Objective 2.2: Effective Teachers and Strong Leaders. Improve the preparation, recruitment, retention, development, support, evaluation, recognition, and equitable distribution of effective teachers and leaders.</p> <p>Objective 2.3: School Climate and Community. Increase the success, safety, and health of students, particularly in high-need schools, and deepen family and community engagement.</p> <p>Objective 2.4: Turn Around Schools and Close Achievement Gaps. Accelerate achievement by supporting states and districts in turning around low-performing schools and closing achievement gaps, and developing models of next-generation high schools.</p> <p>Objective 2.5: STEM Teaching and Learning. Increase the number and quality of STEM teachers and increase opportunities for students to access rich STEM learning experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support implementation of college- and career-ready standards and assessments • Improve learning by ensuring that more students have effective teachers and leaders

FY 2014–18 STRATEGIC PLAN		
Strategic Goals	Strategic Objectives	Agency Priority Goals
<p>Goal 3: Early Learning. Improve the health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for all children from birth through 3rd grade, so that all children, particularly those with high needs, are on track for graduating from high school college- and career-ready.</p>	<p>Objective 3.1: Access to High-Quality Programs and Services. Increase access to high-quality early learning programs and comprehensive services, especially for children with high needs.</p> <p>Objective 3.2: Effective Workforce. Improve the quality and effectiveness of the early learning workforce so that early childhood educators have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to improve young children’s health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes.</p> <p>Objective 3.3: Measuring Progress, Outcomes, and Readiness. Improve the capacity of states and early learning programs to develop and implement comprehensive early learning assessment systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support comprehensive early learning assessment systems
<p>Goal 4: Equity. Increase educational opportunities for underserved students and reduce discrimination so that all students are well-positioned to succeed.</p>	<p>Objective 4.1: Equitable Educational Opportunities. Increase all students’ access to educational opportunities with a focus on closing achievement gaps and remove barriers that students face based on their race, ethnicity, or national origin; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; disability; English language ability; religion; socioeconomic status; or geographical location.</p> <p>Objective 4.2: Civil Rights Compliance. Ensure educational institutions’ awareness of and compliance with federal civil rights obligations and enhance the public’s knowledge of their civil rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure equitable educational opportunities
<p>Goal 5: Continuous Improvement of the U.S. Education System. Enhance the education system’s ability to continuously improve through better and more widespread use of data, research and evaluation, evidence, transparency, innovation, and technology.</p>	<p>Objective 5.1: Data Systems and Transparency. Facilitate the development of interoperable longitudinal data systems for early learning through employment to enable data-driven, transparent decision-making by increasing access to timely, reliable, and high-value data.</p> <p>Objective 5.2: Privacy. Provide all education stakeholders, from early childhood to adult learning, with technical assistance and guidance to help them protect student privacy while effectively managing and using student information.</p> <p>Objective 5.3: Research, Evaluation, and Use of Evidence. Invest in research and evaluation that builds evidence for education improvement; communicate findings effectively; and drive the use of evidence in decision-making by internal and external stakeholders.</p> <p>Objective 5.4: Technology and Innovation. Accelerate the development and broad adoption of new, effective programs, processes, and strategies, including education technology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable evidence-based decision making
<p>Goal 6: U.S. Department of Education Capacity. Improve the organizational capacities of the Department to implement the Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>Objective 6.1: Effective Workforce. Continue to build a high-performing, skilled, diverse, and engaged workforce within the Department.</p> <p>Objective 6.2: Risk Management. Improve the Department’s program efficacy through comprehensive risk management, and grant and contract monitoring.</p> <p>Objective 6.3: Implementation and Support. Build Department capacity and systems to support states’ and other grantees’ implementation of reforms that result in improved outcomes, and keep the public informed of promising practices and new reform initiatives.</p> <p>Objective 6.4: Productivity and Performance Management. Improve workforce productivity through information technology enhancements, telework expansion efforts, more effective process performance management systems, and state-of-the-art leadership and knowledge management practices.</p>	

The Department's Agency Priority Goals

The Department identified six APGs for FY 2014–15 that serve to focus its activities, with a particular emphasis over the next two years. These goals are consistent with the Department's five-year strategic plan, which will be used to monitor and report regularly on progress, reflect the Department's cradle-to-career education strategy, and help concentrate efforts on the importance of teaching and learning at all levels of the education system. Quarterly updates for the APGs are available on performance.gov.

Progress on the Department's FY 2014–15 Agency Priority Goals

Agency Priority Goal: Increase college degree attainment in America

Goal for FY 2014–2015: By September 30, 2015, 45.6 percent of adults ages 25–34 will have an associate degree or higher, which will place the nation on track to reach the President's goal of 60 percent degree attainment by 2020.

Supports Strategic Goal 1.

Overview: In 2009, the President set a goal that the United States will have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. Meeting this goal will require millions of additional Americans to earn a postsecondary degree by the end of this decade. The President's focus on the educational attainment among adults ages 25–34 allows the Department to assess progress in preparing the next generation of workers and to benchmark for international comparisons.

In August 2013, the President outlined an ambitious new agenda to combat rising college costs and make college affordable for American families. The Department's strategy to implement the President's College Value and Affordability Agenda comprises three areas of focus: (1) promoting evidence-based innovation and competition so that colleges offer students a greater range of affordable, high-quality options; (2) fostering institutional and student accountability in tandem with better consumer awareness; and (3) helping borrowers who are struggling with their student loan debt. These strategies aim to support college attainment by reducing the cost and amount of time necessary to attain a degree; measuring college performance and providing consumer information about access, affordability, and outcomes; supporting the use of open educational low-cost textbooks; and incentivizing state, institutional, and student behavior to increase college access and success.

Progress: Starting from a baseline of 44.0 percent in 2012, the Department projected that the annual increase of educational attainment among ages 25–34 would grow progressively each year above the four-year historical average of 0.7 percentage points. Based on this projection, the Department established performance targets of 44.7 percent for 2014 and 45.6 percent for 2015. The Department is on pace to achieve this APG as 44.8 percent of adults ages 25–34 have an associate's degree or higher, exceeding the 2014 performance target (note that the rate reflects prior year data, in this case from 2013, but is reported in 2014 when data are available). Examples of the Department's activities that support this goal include collaborating with the White House to plan and host College Opportunity Summits that announced institutional commitments to expand college opportunity; updating and refining the College Scorecard; announcing regulations that will bring accountability to institutions offering career training programs; developing draft regulations to help ensure teacher training programs are preparing educators who are ready to succeed in the classroom; expanding the reach of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Completion Initiative; implementing a new

First in the World grant program to support college access and completion through innovation and evidence-based practices; and redesigning existing programs to encourage efforts to improve college fit, reduce the need for remediation, increase the availability of open educational resources, and implement evidence-based practices. These activities promote innovation, competition, and accountability in the postsecondary sector, which will boost completion rates and educational attainment.

Opportunities and Challenges: The administration’s landmark investments in Pell Grants, coupled with the creation of more generous tax credits and loan repayment options, have helped more Americans access a college education. However, the Department is concerned that federal student aid may not be able to keep pace with rising college costs indefinitely. Instead, systemic state and institutional reforms are necessary to address the root causes affecting college affordability, while also creating incentives to provide greater quality at a lower cost to students. This task is not one that the federal government can take on alone. As such, success will also depend largely on the extent to which states invest in higher education and whether institutions pursue practices and policies that will help improve affordability and student outcomes. Specifically, whether and to what extent states and institutions (a) implement policies and programs to increase college access and success; (b) reduce costs and time to completion; (c) support accelerated learning opportunities, including dual enrollment; (d) develop and adopt effective and innovative practices that improve student outcomes; and (e) promote seamless transitions from secondary to postsecondary education and among higher education institutions will influence the Department’s success in achieving this APG. While some of the Department’s budgetary proposals that would more fully address these areas have not received traction in Congress, the Department has some limited leverage to influence states’ policies and the practices of postsecondary institutions, and the Department will use its available resources, including grant programs and technical assistance, and the ability to convene stakeholders to encourage collaboration and best practices.

Agency Priority Goal: Support implementation of college- and career-ready standards and assessments

Goal for FY 2014–2015: By September 30, 2015, at least 50 states/territories will be implementing next-generation assessments, aligned with college- and career-ready standards.

Supports Strategic Goal 2.

Overview: The adoption of internationally benchmarked college- and career-ready standards is the foundation to improving educational outcomes for all students and a fundamental step toward increasing the number of college graduates in the United States. Moreover, these standards must be coupled with high-quality formative and summative assessments that will measure the extent to which students are mastering them.

Progress: Most states have adopted college- and career-ready standards and have developed assessments aligned with those standards. The Race to the Top - Assessment (RTTA) consortia and the consortia developing alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards completed the field testing of their assessments in preparation for operational administration in spring 2015. The Department supported states in addressing challenges in this area in their *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) Flexibility extension requests, through which an SEA can request renewal of its ESEA Flexibility request for an additional three or four years.

Opportunities and Challenges: State capacity to develop and implement college- and career-ready standards and assessments aligned with those standards varies. To provide support in this area, the Department is developing and targeting technical assistance activities that will, in part, increase state capacity to leverage resources effectively and continue to identify promising practices across multiple states. For example, the Department will build a “bank” of resources that support the implementation of college- and career-ready standards. Included in such a bank will be materials to assist in full and effective transition to college- and career-ready standards.

The Department will continue to leverage the ESEA Flexibility monitoring and renewal process to support implementation of college- and career-ready standards and aligned, valid, and reliable assessments. By using the ESEA Flexibility monitoring process, the Department can work with states to support implementation and identify areas where technical assistance is needed. This approach follows the different kind of relationship the Department has built internally across its offices and externally with states during the ESEA Flexibility approval process, including the use of cross-Departmental teams, which reduces burden and duplication between other Department programs and ESEA Flexibility.

Agency Priority Goal: Improve learning by ensuring that more students have effective teachers and leaders

Goal for FY 2014–2015: By September 30, 2015, at least 37 states will have fully implemented teacher and principal evaluation and support systems that consider multiple measures of effectiveness, with student growth as a significant factor.

Supports Strategic Goal 2.

Overview: Teacher and principal evaluation and support systems enable the development and identification of effective educators and provide information to improve the educator workforce. The nation needs to do more to ensure that every student has an effective teacher, every school has an effective leader, and every teacher and leader has access to the preparation, ongoing support, recognition, and collaboration opportunities he or she needs to succeed. The Department will help strengthen the profession by focusing on meaningful feedback, support, and incentives at every stage of a career, based on fair evaluation and support systems that look at multiple metrics, including, in significant part, student growth.

The Department will support the development and adoption of state requirements for comprehensive teacher and principal evaluations and support systems as well as the district development and implementation of comprehensive evaluation systems. This additional support is necessary, for example, in helping teachers and educator evaluators develop and use student learning objectives to measure student growth and to implement new classroom observation tools.

Progress: The performance targets for this APG are based on the implementation timelines that states were required to meet under their original ESEA Flexibility requests, which indicated that 37 states were expected to implement high-quality systems by September 30, 2015. However, as states and districts are moving forward, they are encountering challenges with implementation of these systems. As a result, they are making adjustments to timelines, sequencing, and implementation steps that may not align with their original plans but will ultimately result in the implementation of high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and

support systems. As of September 30, 2014, seven states have fully implemented teacher and principal evaluation and support systems.²

Opportunities and Challenges: Providing support to states to do this work well is resource-intensive. In a September 2013 letter, the Department outlined ways in which SEAs and LEAs can use Title I, Title II, and IDEA funds to conduct activities related to implementing teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, such as training evaluators, providing professional development to assist teachers in using evaluation data to improve instruction, and recruiting and retaining effective and highly qualified teachers using differential pay. Additionally, states have experienced a range of political challenges to their original plans for this work and with further changes in leadership, those challenges are likely to continue. However, as states continue work to implement teacher and leader evaluation systems, the Department will continue to provide robust technical assistance. In addition to monitoring, the Department designed and implemented a one-year ESEA Flexibility extension process for [Windows 1 and 2 states](#). Through that process, the Department committed to working with states that have requested changes to their timelines or sequencing of implementation to ensure that they are continuing to make progress toward full implementation of their evaluation systems.

Agency Priority Goal: Support comprehensive early learning assessment systems

Goal for FY 2014–2015: By September 30, 2015, at least nine states will be collecting and reporting disaggregated data on the status of children at kindergarten entry using a common measure.

Supports Strategic Goal 3.

Overview: Kindergarten Entry Assessments (KEAs) should be included in a state’s comprehensive early learning assessment system. When properly designed and implemented, KEAs may improve student outcomes, increase program effectiveness, and inform professional development and support to improve the early learning workforce. KEAs also can inform instruction and support students’ educational success by identifying the early learning needs of each child. Further, KEAs can provide an opportunity for teachers and families to understand the status of children when they enter kindergarten and an opportunity to provide policy makers with information needed to support high-quality early learning programs that ensure children enter school prepared for success.

Progress: The Department is on track to achieve this APG. As of June 30, 2014, the [Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance Center \(ELC TAC\) reported](#) that six states are collecting and reporting disaggregated data on the status of children at kindergarten entry using a common measure. Additionally, the Department’s Office of Early Learning conducted an analysis of the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grantees’ annual performance reports and found that four states are in the process of revising their current statewide KEAs, five other states are beginning a phased-in implementation of KEAs, and six

² “Fully implemented” is defined as the school year in which teachers and principals receive effectiveness ratings, which include data on student growth for all students as a significant factor for all teachers and principals, and other measures of professional practice. Note that the Department reported 10 states having fully implemented systems in the FY 2014 AFR based on data available as of Quarter 3 of FY 2014. However, subsequent to that reporting, the Department provided flexibility to states regarding the timing of their implementation and three states elected to delay full implementation until the 2015–16 school year. As such, the FY 2014 APR reports 7 states instead of 10 states.

others are pilot testing their KEAs. Although there are challenges with the implementation of KEAs, the Department is on track to achieve the APG.

Opportunities and Challenges: In December 2014, the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services (Departments) released an [annual report](#) about RTT-ELC grantees that includes information on how states are engaging stakeholders in KEA development, providing more professional development to teachers, and evaluating what is and is not working in order to improve the KEA process. The sharing of these lessons learned will advance progress toward this goal. Additionally, the Departments will reach out to external organizations that share our interest in advancing quality KEAs to develop strategies that may increase our collective impact.

Because assessment in early learning is evolving, many states are in the early stages of developing valid and reliable measures for KEAs. Constructing and testing these instruments and implementing them across every school in the state will be challenging and will take time. In addition, new measures and systems require significant investment, and state budget cuts could impact deployment. The Departments will continue to convene states and share resources that support states in their collecting and reporting of disaggregated data on the status of children at kindergarten entry using a common statewide measure, in an effort to continue the push for progress in this area.

Agency Priority Goal: Ensure equitable educational opportunities

Goal for FY 2014–2015: By September 30, 2015, the number of high schools with persistently low graduation rates will decrease by 5 percent annually. The national high school graduation rate will increase to 83 percent, as measured by the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate, and disparities in the national high school graduation rate among minority students, students with disabilities, English learners, and students in poverty will decrease.

Supports Strategic Goal 4.

Overview: Equality of opportunity is a core American value. All students in this country—regardless of their race, ethnicity, or national origin; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; disability; English language ability; religion; socioeconomic status; or geographical location—must have the chance to learn and achieve. Through Race to the Top (RTT), the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program, ESEA Flexibility, and other federal initiatives, the Department dedicates significant effort and resources to improve the nation’s lowest-achieving schools dramatically by using intensive turnaround models and targeted interventions, and also by identifying the low-achieving schools that are successfully turning around their performance. The Department continues to focus on supporting innovation and data-driven decision-making, not just compliance monitoring, and on spurring growth in achievement, not just absolute achievement measures, as was done in the past.

Increasing the national high school graduation rate and decreasing disparities in the graduation rate among minority students, students with disabilities, English learners, and students in poverty is critical not only to ensure greater attainment in secondary education but also a necessary step toward achieving the President’s college graduation goal. The nation has made significant progress in increasing high school graduation rates, but gaps between rates for different student groups continue to persist. This APG aims to reduce that gap.

Progress: Although the Department just missed the FY 2014 performance targets for the two metrics associated with this APG, the Department has taken a number of steps to ensure equitable educational opportunities and increase graduation rates for all students. For example, the Department announced the Excellent Educators for All initiative, a 50-state strategy to support state efforts to ensure that low-income students and students of color have equal access to qualified and effective teachers and leaders. This initiative includes a new technical assistance network, educator equity data profiles for every state, and guidance for states on developing plans to ensure equitable access to excellent educators. Recognizing that inequities in educational opportunities begin early, the Department also has dedicated significant resources to increase access to early childhood education through programs such as RTT-ELC and Preschool Development Grants. The Department also granted extensions of [ESEA Flexibility](#) for the 2014–15 school year for 34 states, ensuring that those states continue to hold districts and schools accountable for subgroup performance, including graduation rates. The Department has also issued policy guidance and enforced civil rights laws to encourage civil rights awareness and compliance and remove barriers to high school graduation, such as discriminatory discipline practices, sexual violence, or inequitable access to school resources. A more thorough description of programs contributing to student academic achievement and attainment appears in the Explanation and Analysis of Progress for objective 4.1.

Opportunities and Challenges: One key challenge in achieving this APG is providing differentiated support to states based on their current status and progress in increasing graduation rates. While all states have room for improvement, some states are farther behind than others, particularly for different subgroups of students. Recently, the Department addressed one major barrier, which was the incomparability of graduation rate data across states. All states are now required to use an adjusted cohort graduation rate, and the Department is releasing these data at the state, district, and school levels. However, differences in how states define a regular high school diploma, and other technical features of their calculations, continue to make comparisons challenging. The Department will continue to improve its data release processes to ensure that data on graduation rates are released to the public on a regular schedule, and on a timely basis, to help states and districts better use data to drive improvement. The Department will also use the upcoming ESEA Flexibility renewal process as an opportunity to support states in continuously improving their systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support to ensure that they are effectively supporting schools with low graduation rates for all students and for particular subgroups of students.

Another challenge for this APG is sustaining the reforms in schools after SIG and RTT funding ends. Insufficient focus or funding for comprehensive turnaround efforts at the state and local levels compounds this challenge. As such, the Department recently proposed new requirements for the SIG program that, among other things, proposed parameters for implementing recent legislative changes to the SIG program that extended the length of the SIG grants that a state educational agency (SEA) can award to its local educational agencies (LEAs). The proposed requirements gave SEAs the flexibility to use the additional time for planning and sustainability activities during the grant period. Once the Department issues final requirements, it will develop and disseminate guidance and technical assistance on the requirements, including sustainability strategies to help states and districts continue reforms after federal funding ends.

Agency Priority Goal: Enable evidence-based decision making

Goal for FY 2014–2015: By September 30, 2015, the percentage of select new (non-continuation) competitive grant dollars that reward evidence will increase by 70 percent.

Supports Strategic Goal 5.

Overview: There is an increasing emphasis from the Department and among stakeholders on the importance of using evidence to support government program funding decisions. In support of this APG, the Department is increasing its internal capacity to make competitive grant awards based on the existing strength of evidence. For example, with the inclusion of a common evidence framework in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), the Department may select from four tiers of evidence to use as priorities³ or selection criteria in competitive grant programs, as appropriate. Additionally, through its mix of grants, contracts, and internal analytic work, the Department aims to support the use of research methods and rigorous study designs of grants to contribute to the evidence base.

Progress: The Department surpassed the FY 2014 performance target for increasing the percentage of select new (non-continuation) discretionary grant dollars that reward evidence. In FY 2014, 15.92 percent of the Department's discretionary dollars was awarded to new projects with supporting evidence of effectiveness, with five competitions in OII, OESE, and OPE incentivizing evidence through eligibility requirements, competitive preference priorities, and selection criteria.

Opportunities and Challenges: The Department is exploring ways to support and build the capacity of program offices as they shift to evidence-based funding models. For example, the Department shares the Regional Educational Laboratories' (RELs) resources about logic models and evaluation design with applicants, grantees, and program offices. Although these resources support both internal and external stakeholders, the Department has limited resources for providing direct and targeted technical assistance to applicants and grantees, which vary in their comfort with and understanding of evaluation and use of evidence. To continue building the capacity of the education field to use and generate evidence, it is important that the Department is able to provide appropriate technical assistance to its grantees and applicants.

³ The Department may use a priority as an absolute priority, meaning applicants must propose projects that meet it to be eligible to receive funds, or as a competitive preference priority, meaning applicants may choose to address it and could receive additional points depending on how well the priority is addressed.

Cross-Agency Priority Goals

In accordance with the *GPRRA Modernization Act of 2010*, Cross-Agency Priority Goals (CAP Goals) were published on performance.gov in March 2014. The CAP Goals are divided into two categories:

Mission CAP Goals	Management CAP Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cybersecurity • Climate Change (federal actions) • Insider Threat and Security Clearance • Job-creating Investment • Infrastructure Permitting Modernization • STEM Education • Service Member and Veterans Mental Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service • IT Delivery • Strategic Sourcing • Shared Services • Benchmarking and Mission-support Operations • Open Data • Lab-to-Market • People and Culture

Each CAP Goal has a goal leader(s) and deputy goal leader(s) who will manage the processes by which goals are executed. Goal leaders are given flexibility when managing CAP Goals and are encouraged to leverage existing structures as much as practicable (e.g., existing working groups, interagency policy committees, councils). Every CAP Goal will have a governance team chaired by the goal leader, a deputy goal leader, and representatives from agencies contributing to the goal, OMB, and others as determined by the goal leader. Each governance team will develop an action plan explaining how the federal government will execute on the goal, including agencies' contributions, areas where cross-agency coordination is needed, and anticipated risks or obstacles. The action plan will be updated as experience is gained and new information is learned.⁴

The Department currently contributes to the following CAP Goals:

Customer Service: Deliver world-class customer services to citizens by making it faster and easier for individuals and businesses to complete transactions and have a positive experience with government.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Education: In support of the President's goal that the United States have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world, the federal government will work with education partners to improve the quality of STEM education at all levels to help increase the number of well-prepared graduates with STEM degrees, the number of STEM teachers with corresponding undergraduate degrees, and students' access to quality STEM learning experiences.

Real time information on [Cross-Agency Priority Goals](http://performance.gov) is available at performance.gov. The CAP Goal Leader, the Performance Improvement Council (PIC), and OMB coordinate quarterly updates to the website, which will reflect the overall action plan and will describe how the agency's goals and objectives contribute to the CAP Goal.⁵

⁴ OMB Circular A-11, *Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget*, Part 6, Section 220.9, 2014.

⁵ OMB Circular A-11, *Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget*, Part 6, Section 220.5, 2014.

The Department's Approach to Data Collection and Analysis

In FY 2014, the Department continued to support programs to help the education system by facilitating the development of the infrastructure necessary to collect and disseminate high-value education information for the improvement of student outcomes.

EDFacts. The [EDFacts](#) system enables the consolidation of separate data collections and reduces the reporting burden for states by eliminating redundant data requests.

Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems. The [Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems \(SLDS\) grant program](#), as authorized by the *Educational Technical Assistance Act of 2002*, is designed to aid SEAs in developing and implementing longitudinal data systems. Most SLDS funds are awarded as state grants, but a portion of the funds are used for activities to improve data quality, coordination, and use. Activities include the Education Data Technical Assistance program, the [Privacy Technical Assistance Center](#), and work on common education data standards.

Data Strategy Team. The Department's Data Strategy Team (DST) develops and promotes coordinated and consistent data strategies among the various principal offices within the Department. The mission of the DST is to coordinate the Department's public-facing data initiatives by building cohesiveness in internal processes and data policies and by improving transparency in matters related to the Department's collection of data.

Civil Rights Data Collection. The Department collects data on key education and civil rights issues in our nation's public schools for use by OCR in its enforcement and monitoring efforts, by other Department offices, and by policymakers and researchers outside of the Department.

Enhancing Education Systems and Supports. The Department strives to leverage its data, evaluation, performance, and financial systems to meet four important aspects of its mission:

- To contribute to the Department's ability to build customer relations by providing timely responses to customer inquiries.
- To empower employees to make informed decisions by increasing their access to data.
- To increase accountability through improved financial management.
- To keep Department employees informed of the project status and ensure that all users receive proper training on the new system.

The Department's Evaluation and Evidence Planning Initiatives

To determine the effectiveness of programs, policies, and strategies for improving education outcomes, funding is directed toward evaluations that will yield valid, reliable, and useful information for the field. For a list of evaluations completed in FY 2014 and of those planned through FY 2016, see appendix C.

Performance Plan Summary

Looking Ahead and Addressing Challenges

Quality education continues to be a vital component to the nation's long-term economic prosperity and recent economic gains. It is an investment that is valued highly by Americans, for both present needs and its future promise. The Department continues to support state and district formula grant programs while supporting the creation of exemplary education models through competitive programs, including [Race to the Top](#), [Promise Neighborhoods](#), [Investing in Innovation](#), [Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge](#), [Preschool Development Grants](#), and a redesigned [School Improvement Grants](#) program. Those commitments are bolstered by increasing the extent to which evidence is used in programs and strategic decision-making.

Going forward, the Department will build on what it has already established:

- state-driven accountability that demands progress for all children;
- high-quality early learning for more children from low- and moderate-income families;
- more flexibility for state decision-making;
- more support for principals and teachers to apply high standards to practice;
- reforming career education in high schools and community colleges; and
- reforming and simplifying the application process for student aid to help drive college affordability and completion.

Additionally, the Department will continue to strengthen the support systems necessary for all students to succeed. This includes promoting high-quality preschool access for all students, K-12 strategic reforms, and college affordability. Ultimately, the Department looks to create ladders of opportunity to help all students.

Data Verification and Validation

The *GPRA Modernization Act of 2010* requires agencies to prepare information on the reliability of data presented. OMB guidance indicates:

Agencies may develop a single data verification and validation appendix used to communicate the agency's approaches, and/or may also choose to provide information about data quality wherever the performance information is communicated (e.g., websites). Agencies should discuss their verification and validation techniques with their respective OMB Resource Management Office, if necessary. The transmittal letter included in Annual Performance Reports must contain an assessment by the agency head of the completeness and reliability of the performance data presented and a description of agency plans to improve completeness, reliability, and quality, where needed.⁶

The full data verification and validation summary and a high-level assessment of the completeness and reliability of the data presented are provided in appendix A of this report.

⁶ OMB Circular A-11, *Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget*, Part 6, Section 260.9, 2014.

Reporting on Progress

The Department continues to use tools and processes, such as quarterly performance reviews, to assess progress toward achieving strategic goals and outcomes. Additionally, the Organizational Performance Review (OPR) contributes to the Department's compliance with the *GPRRA Modernization Act of 2010* by conducting data-driven performance discussions, and serving as a tool for principal offices to improve their efficiency and effectiveness, by focusing on infrastructure and capacity-building, through operational priorities and initiatives at the principal office level.

To support the tracking and reporting of progress against the goals and objectives, the Department provides regular updates to its data profile on performance.gov. The effective implementation of the Department's *Strategic Plan* will depend, in part, on the effective use of high-quality and timely data, including evaluations and performance metrics, throughout the lifecycle of policies and programs.

In addition, the Department's success in achieving its strategic goals is closely tied to its capacity and funding. In addressing capacity, the Department will invest in the continuous improvement of its workforce and employ comprehensive risk management to ensure prudent use of public dollars by mitigating risk through increased oversight and support of grantees and contractors.

Continuous improvement rests on ongoing cycles of assessing performance, examining data, and employing lessons to improve practices. Creating a culture of continuous improvement is at the heart of the Department's efforts to partner with and support educators, administrators, and policy makers.

Legislative challenges and fiscal constraints may impact the Department's ability to provide the necessary incentives and resources to increase quality, transparency, and accountability. Accomplishing all of the goals of the *Strategic Plan* will require strong coordination and collaboration from Department staff working with Congress, partners at the state and local levels, and other stakeholders.

Goal 1. Postsecondary Education, Career and Technical Education, and Adult Education:

Increase college access, affordability, quality, and completion by improving postsecondary education and lifelong learning opportunities for youths and adults.

Goal Leader: Ted Mitchell

Objective 1.1: Access and Affordability. Close the opportunity gap by improving the affordability of and access to college and/or workforce training, especially for underrepresented and/or underprepared populations (e.g., low-income and first-generation students, English learners, individuals with disabilities, adults without high school diplomas, etc.). **Objective Leaders: Jon O’Bergh, Jim Runcie, and Michael Yudin**

Metric 1.1.A: Rate of increase in net price of public four-year institutions

Metric 1.1.B: Rate of increase in net price of public two-year institutions

Metric 1.1.C: Percentage of high school seniors filing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Metric 1.1.D: Index of national annual aggregate earnings of Vocation Rehabilitation (VR) consumers (based on the number of competitive employment outcomes, hours worked, and hourly wages of VR consumers)

Metric 1.1.E: Index of national annual aggregate earnings of Transition-Age Youth (based on the number of competitive employment outcomes, hours worked, and hourly wages of VR Transition-Age Youth)

Metric 1.1.F: Number of peer-reviewed publications resulting from National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)-supported grantee projects

Metric 1.1.G: Number of VR state directors and other state VR personnel who express knowledge of NIDRR grantee research

Objective 1.2: Quality. Foster institutional value to ensure that postsecondary education credentials represent effective preparation for students to succeed in the workforce and participate in civic life. **Objective Leader: Jon O’Bergh**

Metric 1.2.A: Number of low-performing institutions with high loan default rates and low graduation rates

Objective 1.3: Completion. Increase degree and certificate completion and job placement in high-need and high-skill areas, particularly among underrepresented and/or underprepared populations. **Objective Leader: Jon O’Bergh**

Metric 1.3.A: Degree attainment among 25–34-year-old age cohort

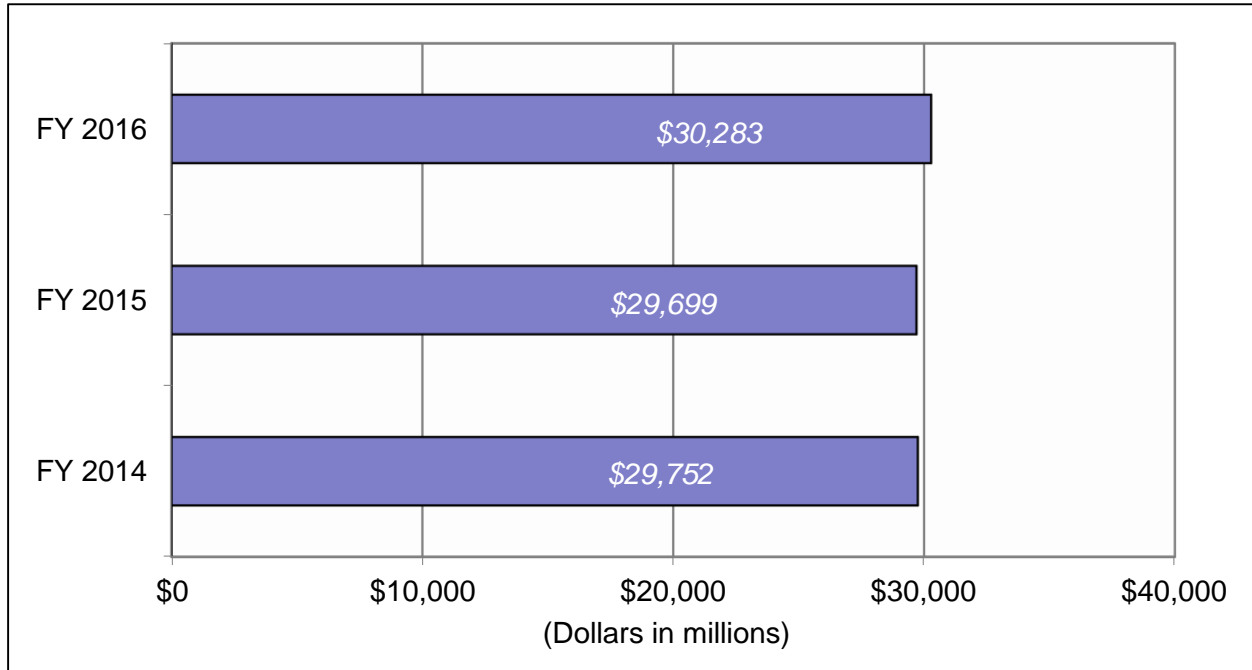
Metric 1.3.B: Retention rate of first-time degree-seeking undergraduates: Full-time

Metric 1.3.C: Retention rate of first-time degree-seeking undergraduates: Part-time

Objective 1.4: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Pathways. Increase STEM pathway opportunities that enable access to and completion of postsecondary programs. **Objective Leader: Russ Shilling**

Metric 1.4.A: Number of STEM postsecondary credentials awarded

Goal 1 Discretionary Resources



Major Discretionary Programs and Activities⁷ Supporting Goal 1 Performance Metrics [Dollars in Millions]

POC	Account	Obj.	Program	FY 2014 Appropriation	FY 2015 Appropriation	FY 2016 President's Budget
FSA	DM/SAA		Student Aid Administration: Salaries and expenses	663	675	727
FSA	DM/SAA		Student Aid Administration: Servicing Activities	503	772	855
FSA	SFA	1.1	Federal Pell grants: Discretionary	22,778	22,475	22,475
OCTAE	CTAE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Adult basic and literacy education state grants	564	569	569
OCTAE	CTAE	n/a	Career and technical education state grants	1,118	1,118	1,318
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.3	Federal TRIO programs	838	840	860
OSERS	REHAB	1.1	Supported employment state grants	28	28	31
Subtotal				26,492	26,426	26,834
Other Discretionary Programs/Activities				3,260	3,273	3,449
TOTAL, GOAL 1				29,752	29,699	30,283

n/a = Not available.

NOTES: Many programs may have sub-activities that relate to other goals. Detail may not add to total due to rounding.

⁷ All the programs listed are discretionary programs, as distinct from mandatory programs. These include both competitive and non-competitive programs.

Public Benefit

Increasing college access, affordability, quality, and completion by improving postsecondary education and lifelong learning opportunities for youths and adults are matters that require equal parts information, motivation, and opportunity to be successful.

Prior to entering postsecondary education, prospective students need easily accessible information on the cost of attendance and financial aid; rates for career placement, graduation, and college loan default; labor market outcomes and demand projections; loan repayment and management options; and other subjects crucial to understanding the affordability and value of the postsecondary institutions and programs of study they are considering. Students deserve to know that, whether they enter a college, university, career training program, or adult education program, the credential they earn will be affordable and its value will be recognized as an indication that they possess the necessary knowledge and skills for success in the workplace and in life.

Providing federal student aid in a simple, reliable, and efficient manner is the main way the Department supports college access, affordability, quality, and completion. In FY 2014, the Department delivered nearly \$134 billion in grants, work-study, and loan assistance to approximately 13 million postsecondary students and their families.⁸ These students attended more than 6,100 institutions of postsecondary education. In addition, the Department administers \$2 billion annually in grants to strengthen postsecondary institutions and promote college readiness, and nearly \$2 billion more in grant funds for Career and Technical Education (CTE), adult education (including literacy and civics education), and correctional education to help adults secure the skills that equip them for work, civic participation, and lifelong learning.

The Department has already taken significant steps to increase college access, affordability, quality, and completion. Through the SAFRA, passed as part of the *Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010* (HCERA), Congress ended student loan subsidies to banks, saving billions of dollars, which shifted more than \$60 billion in savings back to students. Resources developed by the Department, such as the College Affordability and Transparency Center, the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet, the College Scorecard, a consolidated student aid website (<https://studentaid.ed.gov>), and new loan counseling and financial literacy resources, now provide students and families with tools for informed decision-making. In addition, the Department has simplified the FAFSA so it is easier and faster for students to apply for aid and has created—in partnership with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)—the IRS Data Retrieval tool, which enables millions of students and families to access the IRS tax return information needed to complete the FAFSA and transfer the data directly into their FAFSA from the IRS website. The Department will build on these efforts to ensure that all Americans, regardless of background, will have the opportunity to access and complete an affordable postsecondary degree or other postsecondary credential.

⁸ [Federal Student Aid Annual Report FY 2014](#)

Goal 1: Details

Postsecondary Education, Career and Technical Education, and Adult Education Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Targets		
		2012	2013	2014	2014	2015	2016
Objective 1.1: Access and Affordability. Close the opportunity gap by improving the affordability of and access to college and/or workforce training, especially for underrepresented and/or underprepared populations (e.g., low-income and first-generation students, English learners, individuals with disabilities, adults without high school diplomas, etc.).							
1.1.A. Rate of increase in net price of public four-year institutions	Year: 2010–11 1.7%	Year: 2009–10 -1.2%	Year: 2010–11 1.7%	Year: 2011–12 3.1%	1.5% <i>NOT MET</i>	1.3%	1.1%
1.1.B. Rate of increase in net price of public two-year institutions	Year: 2010–11 1.7%	Year: 2009–10 -3.1%	Year: 2010–11 1.7%	Year: 2011–12 3.2%	1.5% <i>NOT MET</i>	1.3%	1.1%
1.1.C. Percentage of high school seniors filing a FAFSA ¹	Year: 2013 59.2%	58.4%	59.2%	Year: 2014 60.1%	58.8%– 60.8% <i>MET</i>	59.1%– 61.1%	Within 1 percentage point (+/-) of the previous year's calculation
1.1.D. Index of national aggregate annual earnings of VR consumers (based on the number of competitive employment outcomes, hours worked, and hourly wages of VR consumers) ²	Year: 2010 \$57,971,317	\$61,537,760	\$61,824,728	TBD Data from states due Nov 30	\$62,750,000 <i>TBD</i>	\$64,322,447	\$65,608,896
1.1.E. Index of national aggregate annual earnings of Transition-Age Youth (based on the number of competitive employment outcomes, hours worked, and hourly wages of VR Transition-Age Youth) ³	Year: 2010 \$15,971,665	\$17,731,129	\$18,353,441	TBD Data from states due Nov 30	\$18,700,000 <i>TBD</i>	\$19,094,920	\$19,476,818
1.1.F. Number of peer-reviewed publications resulting from NIDRR-supported grantee projects ⁴	Year: 2012 484	484	472	472	489 <i>NOT MET</i>	0	0
1.1.G. Number of VR state directors and other state VR personnel who express knowledge of NIDRR grantee research ⁵	Year: 2014 TBD	Not Collected	Not Collected	Not Collected	Baseline year (0 increase) <i>NA</i>	35%	47%
Objective 1.2: Quality. Foster institutional value to ensure that postsecondary education credentials represent effective preparation for students to succeed in the workforce and participate in civic life.							
1.2.A. Number of low-performing institutions with high loan default rates and low graduation rates ⁶	Year: 2010–11 205	Not Collected	Year: 2010–11 205	Year: 2011–12 91	178 <i>MET</i>	155	135
Objective 1.3: Completion. Increase degree and certificate completion and job placement in high-need and high-skill areas, particularly among underrepresented and/or underprepared populations.							
1.3.A. Degree attainment among 25–34-year-old age cohort ⁷	Year: 2012 44.0%	Year: 2011 43.1%	Year: 2012 44.0%	Year: 2013 44.8%	44.7% <i>MET</i>	45.6%	46.8%

Postsecondary Education, Career and Technical Education, and Adult Education Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Targets		
		2012	2013	2014	2014	2015	2016
1.3.B. Retention rate of first-time degree-seeking undergraduates: Full-time ⁸	Year: 2011 71.9%	Year: 2010 72.1%	Year: 2011 71.9%	Year: 2012 71.8%	71.9% <i>NOT MET</i>	72.1%	72.1%
1.3.C. Retention rate of first-time degree-seeking undergraduates: Part-time ⁹	Year: 2011 41.7%	Year: 2010 42.1%	Year: 2011 41.7%	Year: 2012 42.2%	41.9% <i>MET</i>	42.6%	42.9%
Objective 1.4: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Pathways. Increase STEM pathway opportunities that enable access to and completion of postsecondary programs.							
1.4.A. Number of STEM postsecondary credentials awarded ¹⁰	Year: 2010–11 531,018	Year: 2009–10 500,783	Year: 2010–11 531,018	Year: 2011–12 556,696	560,000 <i>NOT MET</i>	595,000	638,000

NA = Not applicable.

TBD = To be determined.

NOTE: Unless otherwise noted, data correspond to the heading year in the Actuals column.

¹ The baseline and actuals have been revised due to an update in the National Center for Education Statistics' projection for the number of high school seniors, which is used in the calculation of this metric.

² The baseline, actuals, and targets have been revised due to a recalculation that is more accurately calculated by: outcomes times hours/week times hourly wage. Targets are set at an increase of 2% annually.

³ The baseline, actuals, and targets have been revised due to a recalculation that is more accurately calculated by: outcomes times hours/week times hourly wage. Targets are set at an increase of 2% annually.

⁴ The Department is removing this metric because NIDRR and all of its functions are moving to the Administration for Community Living in the Department of Health and Human Services.

⁵ The Department planned to collect baseline data in FY 2014, to be reported in FY 2015, but is considering removing this metric because the data may not be available.

⁶ Low-performing institutions are defined as Title IV participating institutions—public, private nonprofit, and private for-profit—having a 3-year Cohort Default Rate (CDR) of 30% or greater and a 150% of normal time completion rate (graduation rate plus transfer out rate) that is less than the average rate for its type (four-year, two-year, and less-than-two-year). The Department was unable to precisely recalculate the baseline. One small but contributing factor is that institutions of higher education (IHEs) are able to appeal their published cohort default rates and, if the appeal is successful, the new rate will be reflected in subsequent reports. The Department will revisit the possibility of revising the baseline and targets when there is an additional year's worth of data and a clearer understanding of how the data are trending.

⁷ This metric is aligned with an Agency Priority Goal. Note that there is a year lag in the data (i.e., the baseline data are from 2012 but are reported in 2013).

⁸ The baseline and targets for this performance metric were recalculated from what was reported in the *FY 2013 Annual Performance Report* and *FY 2015 Annual Performance Plan* because the original numbers could not be reproduced using a uniform methodology. The targets for 2015 and 2016 appear to be identical because of rounding and the fact that the 2016 target is calculated based on a reference year when the retention rate decreased.

⁹ The baseline and targets for this performance metric were recalculated from what was reported in the *FY 2013 Annual Performance Report* and *FY 2015 Annual Performance Plan* because the original numbers could not be reproduced using a uniform methodology.

¹⁰ The baseline has been recalculated from what was reported in the *FY 2013 Annual Performance Report* and *FY 2015 Annual Performance Plan* because of revised IPEDS data. Additionally, last year's data included Military technologies and applied sciences, which is no longer included in the calculation.

Data Sources and Frequency of Collection:

1.1.A. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS); annually

1.1.B. IPEDS; annually

1.1.C. The denominator is the number of graduating seniors according to the most recent projection by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The numerator is from FSA's Central Processing System and is based on the number of applications during the first nine months of the application cycle that are—as of September 30 of the first year of the application cycle—complete (not rejected); first-time filers; incoming freshmen, with or without previous college attendance; age 18 or less as of June 30 of the

first year of the application cycle; reporting high school diploma attainment; and attended a high school in the fifty states and Washington, DC; annually

1.1.D. Rehabilitation Services Administration-911 (RSA-911); annually

1.1.E. RSA-911; annually

1.1.F. NIDRR Annual Performance Report (APR) Accomplishments Database; annually

1.1.G. New VR state director survey; biennially

1.2.A. FSA Cohort Default Rate (CDR) Report, September 2014, and IPEDS Data Center; annually

1.3.A. NCES Digest of Education Statistics, Table 104.30 (http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_104.30.asp), Number of persons age 18 and over, by highest level of educational attainment, sex, race/ethnicity, and age: 2013. Tabulated from Current Population Survey data, U.S. Census; annually

1.3.B. IPEDS Data Center; annually

1.3.C. IPEDS Data Center; annually

1.4.A. IPEDS Data Center; annually

Note on performance metrics and targets: These metrics were established as a part of the *FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan*. Metrics may be updated or revised to reflect awareness of more accurate data or clarifications. Such updates or revisions are identified in footnotes.

Analysis and Next Steps by Objective

Objective 1.1: Access and Affordability

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

The Department supported or initiated a number of efforts and made progress toward this objective, despite limited ability to impact college costs or control price. The maximum Pell Grant award was increased from \$5,645 for 2013–14 to \$5,730 for 2014–15. In collaboration with Treasury, the Department produced a fact sheet in June 2014 clarifying how Pell Grant recipients may claim the American Opportunity Tax Credit. The number of institutions of higher education agreeing to utilize the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet grew from around 600 in 2012–13 to more than 2,000 in 2013–14 following the release of a “Dear Colleague” letter in November 2013. The Department is also developing a college rating system as a step toward greater transparency and accountability. In addition, the Department continues to seek ways to simplify the FAFSA so it is easier and faster for students and families to apply for financial aid.

Recognizing that FAFSA completion significantly increases chances that students will actually enroll in college, in FY 2014 the Department issued guidance clarifying that state entities may share FAFSA completion data with local education authorities, TRIO and GEAR-UP grantees, tribal education authorities, and Indian organizations so those entities can maximize the number of their students that complete the FAFSA.

The Department has already taken a number of actions to help struggling federal student loan borrowers manage their debt. In order to mitigate delinquency and default risk, FSA conducted an email campaign during which more than 3 million borrowers were contacted (borrowers whose grace periods were ending, who had fallen behind on their student loan payments, who had higher-than-average debts, and who were in deferment or forbearance because of financial hardship or unemployment). Utilization of income-driven repayment plans has increased 40 percent since the Department and Treasury expanded awareness campaigns and outreach efforts. Additionally, the Department renegotiated performance-based contracts with its loan servicing contractors to ensure high-quality service and incentivize repayment of loans, and the Under Secretary is overseeing a process to collect feedback from student borrowers and loan servicers in order to strengthen such contracts when they are renegotiated in the future.

Another aspect of affordability is access to open educational resources (OER). According to figures compiled by the Association of Research Libraries Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition, OER have saved postsecondary students in excess of \$100 million during the last few years. The accelerating adoption of these resources puts college students on track to pocket \$1 billion in savings in the coming years. The Department has championed the development and use of OER, particularly by citing OER development as an example of improving productivity in one of the Secretary's Supplemental Priorities for discretionary grant programs, as a possible activity under a competitive priority in the TRIO Training grant competition, and in the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant competition conducted by the Department of Labor with the Department of Education's assistance. The Departments of Education and Labor are jointly working to develop an Online Skills Academy in FY 2015 to leverage the OER products that have been developed through the TAACCCT grants.

Although results for metrics 1.1.A, 1.1.B, 1.1.C, 1.1.D, and 1.1.E are influenced by actions taken by the Department, they are most influenced by factors that are beyond the control of the Department. For example, results for metrics 1.1.A and 1.1.B are most influenced by actions taken by postsecondary institutions, state and local agencies regarding funding decisions, and market forces and job creation trends. Nonetheless, the Department initiated a number of activities to address these metric subject areas, as explained below.

Regarding metrics 1.1.A and 1.1.B, the Department did not achieve its FY 2014 performance target to slow the increase in average net price at public institutions. States continue to fund higher education at the lowest levels per full-time equivalent student in 25 years, which places pressure on institutions to raise costs in order to maintain quality and levels of service. Without specific programs such as the proposed State Higher Education Performance Fund discussed in objective 1.3, the Department has little influence over state funding decisions and is limited in its ability to ensure progress against these metrics. Despite these challenges, the Department will continue to highlight institutions that are taking steps to ensure affordability for families and will support practices that reduce cost by reducing the time taken to earn a degree, such as competency-based education, dual enrollment, remedial education reforms, and improved articulation between institutions.

Regarding metric 1.1.C, the Department achieved its FY 2014 performance target to increase the number of high school students completing the FAFSA. Efforts such as the FAFSA completion project, increased outreach activities by FSA and other offices, and the Department's participation since 2011 in the American Council on Education's National College Application Week initiative, likely contributed to success with this target.

States are required to submit data for metrics 1.1.D and 1.1.E by November 30 for the previous fiscal year. As such, the Department will make the FY 2014 data available to the public in spring 2015. The *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA), signed by the President in July 2014, reforms the public workforce system by strengthening alignment and access to employment, training, education, and support services needed to succeed in the labor market. In particular, the WIOA includes many changes that are designed to strengthen and improve employment for individuals with disabilities, many served by the State VR Services and Supported Employment programs. WIOA places significant emphasis on obtaining competitive integrated employment, especially in the amendments to the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*. Program services are designed to maximize the ability of individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, to achieve competitive integrated employment through customized employment, supported employment, and other individualized services. The Department will continue to track national aggregate annual earnings of VR consumers and

transition-aged youth. Future annual earnings are expected to improve by the regulatory actions that the Department will undertake.

Data for metric 1.1.F indicates no change in the number of peer-reviewed publications resulting from NIDRR-supported grantee projects in FY 2014 from FY 2013. However, WIOA transfers NIDRR and all of its functions from the Department of Education to the Administration for Community Living in the Department of Health and Human Services. For that reason, the Department is removing metric 1.1.F as initially established in the *FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan*. Similarly, the Department is considering removing metric 1.1.G for which the collection of baseline data was initially planned for FY 2015 because the data may not be available.

Challenges and Next Steps:

The Department plans to take additional actions to help struggling federal student loan borrowers manage their debt. To expand the Pay As You Earn repayment program to all student borrowers with Direct Loans, as instructed in the President's June 2014 Executive Order, the Department held two public hearings on October 23 and November 4, 2014, and will begin negotiated rulemaking in February 2015 with a goal of making the new plan available to borrowers by December 2015. Specifically, this new repayment option, which will include new features to target the plan to struggling borrowers, will be made available to students with older loans (those who borrowed before October 2007 or who have not borrowed since October 2011), who are currently ineligible for Pay As You Earn. This executive action is expected to help up to 5 million struggling borrowers.

Furthermore, the Department will develop, evaluate, and implement new targeted communication strategies to reach struggling borrowers. The Department also plans to renegotiate performance-based contracts with loan servicing companies in 2016 to ensure high-quality service and incentivize repayment of loans.

President Obama's America's College Promise proposal, announced in January 2015, would allow students to attend community colleges tuition-free if they attend half-time, are making satisfactory academic progress to a degree, and maintain a 2.5 GPA. If all states participate and provide quality programs, the plan could benefit nearly 9 million students by making a higher education more affordable.

Additionally, the President has proposed reducing the burden of student loan debt and expanding a middle-class tax cut for college. The Department continues to seek ways to simplify the FAFSA so it is easier and faster for students and families to apply for financial aid.

Finally, in response to the Presidential Memorandum to federal agencies directing them to take action to address job-driven training for the nation's workers, the Department funded, at \$9 million over the next three years, the Job-Driven Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance (TA) Center at the University of Massachusetts-Boston, which will assist state vocational rehabilitation agencies in developing training and employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities that meet the needs of today's employers and the demands of the local economy.

Objective 1.2: Quality

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

The Department supported or initiated a number of efforts related to this objective in FY 2014. For example, the Department conducted a series of negotiated rulemaking sessions on several

program integrity issues such as Gainful Employment, Adverse Credit standards for PLUS loans, Cash Management and College Debit Cards, and State Authorization. The release of final rules on Gainful Employment is a particularly significant development for institutional quality.

The Department continues to encourage the higher education community to focus on innovative, transparent, and validated approaches to student learning. Through the Experimental Sites initiative, the Department published a notice in July 2014 soliciting proposals for experiments in the areas of competency-based learning, Federal Work Study, and prior learning assessments. The results of these experiments will guide future policy decisions. The Department also hosted an Education Datapalooza event in January 2014 to encourage innovations that increase quality while reducing costs. More than 650 participants attended, showcasing tools and services that were developed for the event and that highlighted innovative practices in the field.

Twenty-four grants were awarded under the new First in the World Program, which focuses on low-income students and promotes evidence-based strategies and practices for college access and completion. Funded projects include redesigning courses to incorporate more project-based learning and technology tools that improve student learning and engagement; redesigning large-lecture STEM courses to engage students through active learning interventions; and strengthening curriculum through an integrated set of tools to increase student engagement, especially for high-risk students. The Department will evaluate these projects at their conclusion, and those showing evidence of success will serve as models for possible dissemination or could be eligible for future validation and scale-up grants.

The Department surpassed its FY 2014 target for reducing the number of low-performing institutions—i.e., those with high cohort default rates and below average completion rates. With the publication of the annual cohort default rates in September 2014, sanctions became effective against institutions with high cohort default rates under a revised methodology that includes tracking borrowers for three years after graduation rather than two. (Sanctions apply to institutions based on the cohort default rate, not on completion rate data.) The Department accommodated institutions with reasonable flexibility during the multiyear phase-in of the new methodology for calculating the rate.

Challenges and Next Steps:

During FY 2014, the Department planned for several rulemaking actions that were subsequently accomplished during the first two months of FY 2015. These include updating regulations regarding Adverse Credit in the PLUS Loan Program (published October 22, 2014) and regulations on Gainful Employment (published October 29, 2014), and issuing a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Teacher Preparation (published November 25, 2014). The Department postponed implementation of State Authorization regulations to provide additional time to finalize processes for institutions to be able to comply with certain state provisions. The Department will likely propose a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in FY 2015 for Cash Management.

The Department continues to seek input from the field regarding the development of a college rating system and planned the announcement of a proposed framework for public comment (subsequently published on December 19, 2014), with implementation slated for 2015. The Department is also developing specifications for the FY 2015 First in the World grant competition.

Objective 1.3: Completion

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

In addition to the actions described below, the Department incorporated a competitive priority in the GEAR-UP State and Partnership grant competitions to encourage applicants to propose postsecondary success strategies, including those that support attention to remedial education needs prior to enrollment in college.

The Department developed a new project for FY 2015 that will involve more states in the development and implementation of career pathways, and a new project on employability skills by (1) upgrading the Department's interactive employability skills model and (2) aligning the Department's employability skill standards with "demand side standards" set by the National Association of Business and Industry Associations. The Department also published a Career Pathways Request for Information to inform the Department about models that are improving the college and career readiness of youths and adults.

The Department coordinated with the Department of Veterans Affairs to increase the number of institutions of higher education from 400 to over 1,000 that have committed to implementing the [8 Keys to Veterans Success](#), which provides specific strategies to support veterans and their successful program completion.

The Department achieved its FY 2014 target for metric 1.3.A with an attainment rate of 44.8 percent. However, the targets in future years are set to grow at increasingly accelerated rates in order to reach the President's goal of 60 percent degree attainment. While increases in high school graduation rates (one of the factors that feed into the attainment rate) are growing, recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that fewer high school graduates are opting for college—65.9 percent in 2013 compared to a high point of 70.1 percent in 2009.⁹ These data may be attributable to the natural cycle of higher enrollment rates during economic downturns followed by lower rates as the economy improves, but the declining enrollment rate may impact the ability to achieve the targeted growth in the attainment rate. Equity gaps in the attainment rate based on race, ethnicity, and disability status have not improved.

With regard to metrics 1.3.B and 1.3.C, the Department did not achieve the retention target for full-time students, but did achieve the retention target for part-time students. These rates tend to fluctuate slightly each year, with the overall trend showing incremental growth over the past five years, so the Department does not consider whether or not this year's targets were met to be indicative of overall performance. Although the Department funds a number of grant programs that support activities which influence retention, the number of students directly served by these programs is not large enough to significantly affect retention across the board. Nonetheless, the Department is hopeful that efforts through programs such as First in the World, Minority-Serving Institution grants under Titles III and V, and TRIO Student Support Services, along with initiatives to improve remedial education in community colleges, will have an impact in future years.

Challenges and Next Steps:

The White House and the Department jointly held a second College Opportunity Summit on December 4, 2014, which focused on completion and affordability, as well as partnerships

⁹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, College Enrollment and Work Activity of High School Graduates News Release, April 22, 2014: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/hsgec.htm>.

between K-12 and higher education, to promote educational quality and seamless transitions from high school to college. The Department is also planning to convene minority-serving community colleges in FY 2015 in an effort to scale up successful practices in remedial education that lead to completion.

The WIOA aligns federal investments to support job seekers and employers and promotes transitions from adult education to postsecondary education and training through career pathways. The act includes many changes that are designed to strengthen and improve employment for individuals with disabilities. In early 2015, the Department will collaborate with the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services to publish a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to implement WIOA, with the intent to publish final rules in early 2016.

The administration proposed a State Higher Education Performance Fund that would incentivize states to base institutional funding on performance and reward states that have a strong record of investment in, and show a commitment to, increasing funding support for higher education. The Department included this new grant program in the FY 2015 budget.

Subpopulation Breakout for Metric 1.3.A: Degree attainment among 25–34-year-old age cohort, by race/ethnicity and disability status,* 2014 (data from 2012 and 2013)

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Pacific Islander	American Indian	Two or More Races	Disability
Percentage, 2012	51.6%	32.6%	22.6%	68.7%	37.2%**	29.3%**	45.7%	20.9%
Percentage, 2013	52.4%	33.2%	22.7%	70.9%	41.4%**	25.1%**	46.7%	19.1%

Note: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity.

* Disability is defined as: deaf; blind; difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions; difficulty walking or climbing stairs; difficulty dressing or bathing; difficulty doing errands alone.

** Interpret with caution; small sample sizes reduce the reliability of these estimates.

Data Source and Frequency of Collection: NCES tabulations of data from the Current Population Survey, Census; annually

Objective 1.4: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Pathways

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

The Department of Education, in consultation with OMB, has highlighted this objective as a focus area of improvement. Despite the fact that many external factors impact this objective, the Department continues to assert its influence and levers to get results in the area of STEM education. Actions taken by postsecondary institutions, by state and local agencies regarding funding decisions, and by market forces and jobs creation trends all contribute to the number of STEM postsecondary credentials awarded. The total number of STEM postsecondary credentials awarded illustrates a mixed response to the President’s call to graduate an additional 1 million STEM majors. The target set for FY 2014 was 560,000 total credentials, with an actual of 556,696. While STEM educational certificates declined, from 66,649 in 2010–11 to 60,304 in 2011–12, STEM two- and four-year degrees increased. STEM two-year degrees increased from 86,031 in 2010–11 to 92,464 in 2011–12, and four-year degrees increased from 267,480 to 286,788 in the same timeframe. STEM post-bachelor’s degrees only slightly increased from 110,858 in 2010–11 to 117,140 in 2011–12.

Across the administration, all of the members of the Committee on STEM Education (CoSTEM) are working to enhance the undergraduate experience of STEM majors through a formally

chartered interagency working group led by the National Science Foundation (NSF). The group is focused on four major objectives:

- Evidence-based practices to improve undergraduate learning and retention in STEM;
- Community college efforts to both support two-year students and create bridges between two- and four-year postsecondary institutions;
- Research experiences that involve both university-industry and university-federal entity partnerships, particularly for students in the first two years; and
- Promoting mathematics success to help combat excessively high failure rates in introductory math courses at the undergraduate level.

In particular, representatives from the Department have been instrumental in bringing new focus on the role of community colleges in the overall spectrum of support for undergraduate STEM education. This focus may help to address the decline seen in STEM certificates awarded.

Trends for females and minority students point to continued struggles in broadening participation in STEM. More Hispanics attained STEM credentials, but fewer Black and slightly fewer American Indian/Alaska Native students completed STEM degrees or certificates. Along with the Committee on STEM Education interagency working group focused on broadening participation in STEM, the work of the My Brother’s Keeper and Reach Higher initiatives, as well as other targeted efforts from the White House-led initiatives, can be used to help expand participation of underrepresented groups in postsecondary STEM programs.

Challenges and Next Steps:

As the Department’s Office of STEM is newly formed, one of the first tasks is to better identify programs both within the Department and across the federal government in which to emphasize STEM priorities. The investments at the Department that address STEM degree and credential completion in particular are limited to select programs that target minority-serving institutions. As the next grant cycle commences, the Department is engaging in planning meetings to identify areas for strategic leverage—technical assistance to grantees, preaward support to potential applicants, etc. The Department will continue to promote STEM pathway opportunities within the CoSTEM structure that include community colleges.

Subpopulation Breakout for Metric 1.4.A: STEM* postsecondary credentials awarded by degree-granting institutions**, by gender and race/ethnicity, 2010–11 and 2011–12

Year	Total	Gender		Race/Ethnicity								
		Male	Female	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander			American Indian/Alaska Native	Two or More Races	Non-resident Alien
							Total	Asian	Pacific Islander			
2010–11	531,018	370,922	160,096	319,327	47,014	45,794	51,461	50,250	1,211	3,601	5,551	58,270
2011–12	556,696	387,705	168,991	333,652	47,004	49,262	53,670	52,336	1,334	3,600	7,388	62,120

* STEM includes the following fields: Biological and biomedical sciences, Computer and information sciences, Engineering, Engineering technologies and engineering-related fields, Mathematics and statistics, and Physical sciences and science technologies. Engineering technologies and engineering-related fields excludes “Construction trades” and “Mechanic and repair technologies/technicians,” which are listed separately. The baseline has been recalculated from what was reported in the FY 2013

Annual Performance Report and FY 2015 Annual Performance Plan because of revised IPEDS data. Additionally, last year's data included Military technologies and applied sciences, which is no longer included in the calculation.

** Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Reported racial/ethnic distributions of students by level of degree, field of degree, and sex were used to estimate race/ethnicity for students whose race/ethnicity was not reported. To facilitate trend comparisons, certain aggregations have been made of the degree fields as reported in the IPEDS Fall survey: "Agriculture and natural resources" includes Agriculture, agriculture operations, and related sciences and Natural resources and conservation; and "Business" includes Business management, marketing, and related support services and Personal and culinary services.

Data Source and Frequency of Collection: IPEDS Data Center; annually

Selected Strategies to Achieve Goal 1

The Department must ensure that all students—recent high school graduates and adult learners alike—are well prepared for college and careers by helping more of them enroll in postsecondary education and helping to increase the number of those who complete programs of study with a degree or certificate.

To spur reforms at the state level and most effectively impact attainment rates, the Department will implement the President's College Value and Affordability Agenda. One central strategy promotes innovation and competition (such as in course redesign and student services, accelerating time to degree by fostering dual enrollment, pilot projects, and competency-based education), facilitated by a reduction in federal regulatory requirements that may constrain innovation. To support innovation and competition, the Department has implemented the First in the World grant program, launched a series of Experimental Sites pilots through Federal Student Aid, incorporated dual enrollment in the program of study definition in the GEAR-UP grant competition, hosted an Education Datapalooza event in January 2014 to encourage innovations that increase quality while reducing costs, and released a Request for Information seeking feedback on potential uses for Application Program Interfaces (API) for the purpose of making data and processes in higher education and student aid more open and accessible to students and families. A second major strategy fosters better investment in college education and holds institutions and students accountable for completion and postsecondary outcomes through a college rating system that will help students compare value (e.g., access, affordability, and student outcomes) and eventually tie financial aid to performance and improvement. The Department has collected extensive public input through hearings, forums, meetings, and electronically submitted feedback over the past year to guide the development of this college rating system.

The Department will continue to spotlight model state programs and draw on them to shape federal strategies. Furthermore, the Department is shifting to an evidence-based approach for institutional grants, with, for example, the use of competitive priorities in the Strengthening Institutions Program and the tiered-evidence structure of the First in the World grant competition. The net effect of these strategies will be to boost completion rates and, by extension, educational attainment.

Goal 2. Elementary and Secondary Education:

Improve the elementary and secondary education system’s ability to consistently deliver excellent instruction aligned with rigorous academic standards while providing effective support services to close achievement and opportunity gaps, and ensure all students graduate high school college- and career-ready.

Goal Leader: Deb Delisle

Objective 2.1: Standards and Assessments. Support implementation of internationally benchmarked college- and career-ready standards, with aligned, valid, and reliable assessments. **Objective Leader: Scott Sargrad**

Metric 2.1.A: Number of states that have adopted college- and career-ready standards

Metric 2.1.B: Number of states that are implementing next-generation reading and mathematics assessments, aligned with college- and career-ready standards

Objective 2.2: Effective Teachers and Strong Leaders. Improve the preparation, recruitment, retention, development, support, evaluation, recognition, and equitable distribution of effective teachers and leaders.¹⁰ **Objective Leader: Scott Sargrad**

Metric 2.2.A: Number of states that have fully implemented teacher and principal evaluation and support systems that consider multiple measures of effectiveness, with student growth as a significant factor

Objective 2.3: School Climate and Community. Increase the success, safety, and health of students, particularly in high-need schools, and deepen family and community engagement. **Objective Leader: Heather Rieman**

Metric 2.3.A: Disparity in the rates of out-of-school suspensions for students with disabilities and youth of color (youth of color metric)

Metric 2.3.B: Disparity in the rates of out-of-school suspensions for students with disabilities and youth of color (students with disabilities (SWD), IDEA only metric)

Objective 2.4: Turn Around Schools and Close Achievement Gaps. Accelerate achievement by supporting states and districts in turning around low-performing schools and closing achievement gaps, and developing models of next-generation high schools. **Objective Leader: Scott Sargrad**

Metric 2.4.A: Number of persistently low graduation rate high schools

Metric 2.4.B: Percentage of Cohort 1 priority schools that have met the state exit criteria and exited priority school status

¹⁰ States with approved ESEA Flexibility requests are required to implement teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by 2014–15 or 2015–16, depending on the school year of initial approval. Under previously announced additional flexibility, personnel decisions based on those systems are not required until the 2016–17 school year. Additionally, the Department committed to working with states that need to make adjustments to implementation timelines or sequencing through the ESEA Flexibility renewal process in early 2015.

Metric 2.4.C: Percentage of Cohort 1 focus schools that have met the state exit criteria and exited focus school status

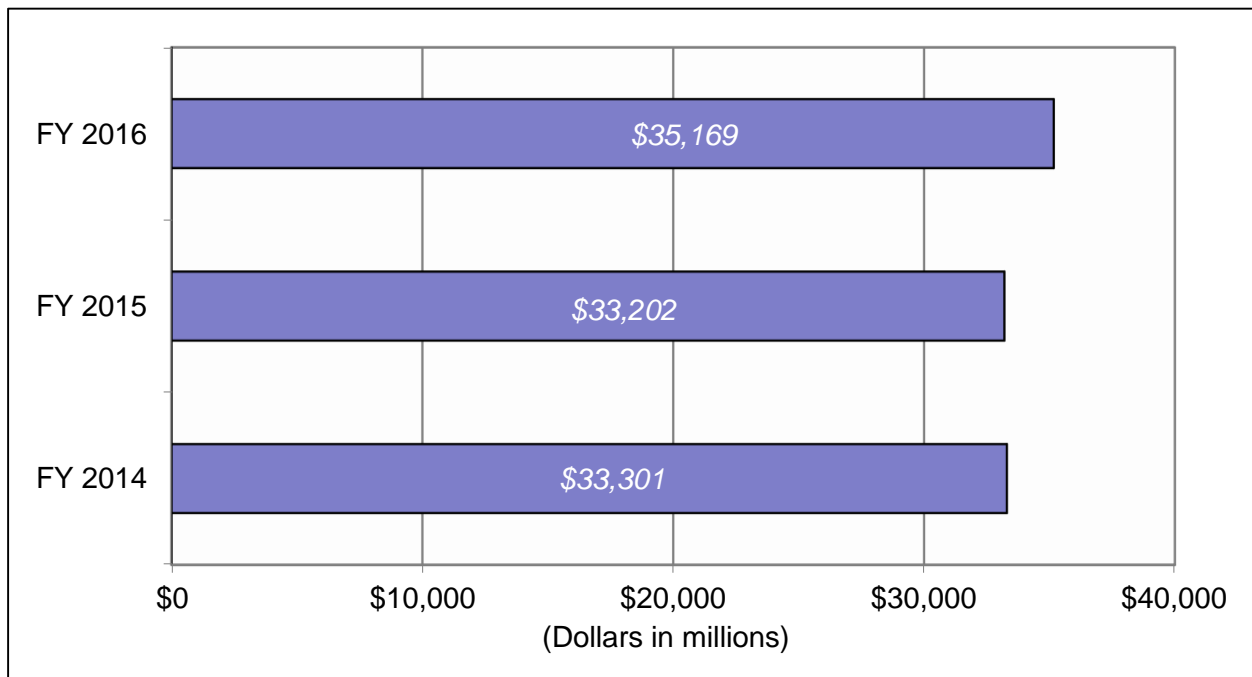
Objective 2.5: STEM Teaching and Learning. Increase the number and quality of STEM teachers and increase opportunities for students to access rich STEM learning experiences.

Objective Leader: Russ Shilling

Metric 2.5.A: Percentage of high school and middle school teachers who teach STEM as their main assignment who hold a corresponding undergraduate degree

Metric 2.5.B: Number of public high school graduates who have taken at least one STEM AP exam

Goal 2 Discretionary Resources



Major Discretionary Programs and Activities¹¹ Supporting Goal 2 Performance Metrics [Dollars in Millions]

POC	Account	Obj.	Program	FY 2014 Appropriation	FY 2015 Appropriation	FY 2016 President's Budget
OESE	ED	2.4	School improvement grants	506	506	556
OESE	ED	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4	Title I Grants to local educational agencies	14,385	14,410	15,410
OESE	I&I	2.1	State assessments	378	378	403
OESE	SIP	2.2	Improving teacher quality state grants	2,350	2,350	2,350
OESE	SSS	n/a	21st century community learning centers	1,149	1,152	1,152

¹¹ All the programs listed are discretionary programs, as distinct from mandatory programs. These include both competitive and non-competitive programs.

POC	Account	Obj.	Program	FY 2014 Appropriation	FY 2015 Appropriation	FY 2016 President's Budget
OII	SSS	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4	Promise Neighborhoods	57	57	150
OSERS	SE	2.1, 2.2, 2.3	Special Education grants to states	11,473	11,498	11,673
Subtotal				30,297	30,350	31,693
Other Discretionary Programs/Activities				3,004	2,852	3,476
TOTAL, GOAL 2				33,301	33,202	35,169

n/a = Not available.

NOTES: Many programs may have sub-activities that relate to other goals.
Detail may not add to total due to rounding.

Public Benefit

The goal for America's educational system is clear: every student should graduate from high school ready for college and a career. Every student should have meaningful opportunities from which to choose upon graduation from high school. Over the past few years, states, districts, and schools have initiated groundbreaking reforms and innovations to try to meet this goal. For the first time, almost every state is supporting higher standards that will demonstrate that students who meet those standards are truly college- and career-ready. States are implementing the next generation of assessments that are not only aligned with these new standards, but also gauge essential skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and the application of knowledge. At the same time, states, districts, and schools are working to meet the challenges of ensuring that every classroom has an excellent teacher and every school has a strong and effective leader; building local capacity to support successful school turnarounds; redesigning high school education by building stronger connections among secondary education, postsecondary education, and the workplace; and improving teacher preparation and classroom instruction in STEM education.

However, while many schools are increasing the quality of instruction and improving academic achievement, there is also broad agreement that the United States education system fails to consistently provide all students with the excellent education necessary to achieve college- and career-readiness. The result is that too many of our students are failing to reach their full potential. According to the 2009 McKinsey report, [The Economic Impact of the Achievement Gap in American Schools](#), recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores show that low-income students are "roughly two years of learning behind the average better-off student of the same age" and, on average, "black and Latino students are roughly two to three years of learning behind white students of the same age."

Many children, particularly children from low-income families, students with disabilities, English learners, and children of color, confront not only an achievement gap, but also an opportunity gap. Today, a student attending a high school with high minority enrollment is much less likely to be offered calculus and physics than a student in a high school with low minority enrollment. Closing the opportunity gap will require that school resources, talent, and spending be targeted toward kids who need help the most.

The Department's elementary and secondary education reforms focus on the building blocks needed for schools, school districts, and states to more consistently deliver excellent classroom instruction for all students. The foundation of these reforms is a system for improving learning and teaching that aligns with internationally benchmarked college- and career-ready standards, high-quality formative and summative assessments, and engaging and effective instructional content. Ensuring that U.S. students have the critical thinking skills and other tools they need to

be effective in the 21st-century economy means improving teaching and learning in all content areas—from literacy, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to history, civics and government, geography, foreign languages, the arts, economics and financial literacy, environmental education, computer science, health education, and other subjects.

Goal 2: Details

Elementary and Secondary Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Targets		
		2012	2013	2014	2014	2015	2016
Objective 2.1: Standards and Assessments. Support implementation of internationally benchmarked college- and career-ready standards, with aligned, valid, and reliable assessments.							
2.1.A. Number of states that have adopted college- and career-ready standards ¹	Year: 2013 49, plus DC	Not Collected	49, plus DC	49, plus DC and Puerto Rico	50 <i>NOT MET</i>	50	50
2.1.B. Number of states that are implementing next-generation reading and mathematics assessments, aligned with college- and career-ready standards ¹	Year: 2013 0	Not Collected	0	0	0 <i>NA</i>	50	50
Objective 2.2: Effective Teachers and Strong Leaders. Improve the preparation, recruitment, retention, development, support, evaluation, recognition, and equitable distribution of effective teachers and leaders.							
2.2.A. Number of states that have fully implemented teacher and principal evaluation and support systems that consider multiple measures of effectiveness, with student growth as a significant factor ^{1,2}	Year: 2013 6	Not Collected	6	7	18 <i>NOT MET</i>	37	43
Objective 2.3: School Climate and Community. Increase the success, safety, and health of students, particularly in high-need schools, and deepen family and community engagement.							
2.3.A. Disparity in the rates of out-of-school suspensions for students with disabilities and youth of color (youth of color metric) ³	Year: 2012 10.7% point disparity	10.7% point disparity	Not Collected	TBD 2014 data collected in 2015	8.7% point disparity <i>TBD</i>	NA	6.7% point disparity
2.3.B. Disparity in the rates of out-of-school suspensions for students with disabilities and youth of color (SWD, IDEA only metric) ³	Year: 2012 5.7% point disparity	5.7% point disparity	Not Collected	TBD 2014 data collected in 2015	4.2% point disparity <i>TBD</i>	NA	2.7% point disparity
Objective 2.4: Turn Around Schools and Close Achievement Gaps. Accelerate achievement by supporting states and districts in turning around low-performing schools and closing achievement gaps, and developing models of next-generation high schools.							
2.4.A. Number of persistently low graduation rate high schools ^{1,4,5}	Year: 2011–12 775 ⁴	NA	Year: 2011–12 775	Year: 2012–13 737	736 <i>NOT MET</i>	699	5% annual reduction
2.4.B. Percentage of Cohort 1 priority schools that have met the state exit criteria and exited priority school status ³	Year: 2013 NA	NA	NA	TBD 2014 data will be available in 2015	10% <i>TBD</i>	15%	20%
2.4.C. Percentage of Cohort 1 focus schools that have met the state exit criteria and exited focus school status ³	Year: 2013 NA	NA	NA	TBD 2014 data will be available in 2015	10% <i>TBD</i>	15%	20%

Elementary and Secondary Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Targets		
		2012	2013	2014	2014	2015	2016
Objective 2.5: STEM Teaching and Learning. Increase the number and quality of STEM teachers and increase opportunities for students to access rich STEM learning experiences.							
2.5.A. Percentage of high school and middle school teachers who teach STEM as their main assignment who hold a corresponding undergraduate degree ^{3,6}	Year: 2011–12 62.2%	62.2%	Not Collected	Not Collected	NA	NA	65.3%
2.5.B. Number of public high school graduates who have taken at least one STEM AP exam ⁷	Year: 2012 497,922	Not Collected	Year: 2012 497,922	Year: 2013 527,001	536,810 <i>NOT MET</i>	581,419	632,642

NA = Not applicable.

TBD = To be determined.

¹ This metric is aligned with an Agency Priority Goal.

² In the FY 2013 APR and FY 2015 APP, the Department reported a baseline of seven states, initially including DE, FL, IN, LA, MI, RI, and TN. In Quarter 2 of FY 2014, the Department recalculated the baseline and determined it to be 6 states (DE, FL, IN, LA, TN, and DC—removing MI and RI, adding DC).

³ Targets for this metric are based on what the Department expects will occur in a given fiscal year.

⁴ Persistently low graduation rate high schools are defined as regular and vocational high schools with an average minimum cohort size of 65 or more, and an average adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR) of 60% or less over three years. The 2011–12 baseline and actual only included two years of data because the Department did not collect ACGR data until 2010–11.

⁵ The baseline data for this performance metric were recalculated from what was reported in the *FY 2013 Annual Performance Report and FY 2015 Annual Performance Plan*. The targets remain at a 5% reduction each year.

⁶ Data are produced every four years; thus the Department will only receive one set of data (collected in 2015–16) during this *Strategic Plan* cycle.

⁷ STEM Advanced Placement (AP) fields include Biology, Calculus, Chemistry, Computer Science, Environmental Science, Physics, and Statistics.

Data Sources and Frequency of Collection:

- 2.1.A. Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Monitoring; annually
- 2.1.B. ESEA Flexibility Monitoring; annually
- 2.2.A. ESEA Flexibility Applications and Monitoring; annually
- 2.3.A. Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC); biennially
- 2.3.B. Civil Rights Data Collection; biennially
- 2.4.A. ED*Facts*; annually
- 2.4.B. ED*Facts*; annually
- 2.4.C. ED*Facts*; annually
- 2.5.A. Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), NCES; quadrennially
- 2.5.B. College Board/AP administrative records; annually

Note on performance metrics and targets: These metrics were established as a part of the *FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan*. Metrics may be updated or revised to reflect awareness of more accurate data or clarifications. Such updates or revisions are identified in footnotes.

Analysis and Next Steps by Objective

Objective 2.1: Standards and Assessments

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

States have recognized the need to improve the rigor and quality of their standards and assessments. Since 2009, 43 states and the District of Columbia have adopted common, internationally benchmarked college- and career-ready standards in English, language arts, and

mathematics that were developed through a state-led effort. Six states and Puerto Rico are implementing their own college- and career-ready standards that have been approved by their state's network of institutions of higher education. With such standards in place, educators are designing instructional strategies to engage students and implementing support systems to strengthen college- and career-ready skills for all students, including those with disabilities and English learners. The Department will continue to leverage federal investments, including Titles I, II, and III of ESEA, as well as the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), and provide guidance and technical assistance to states to ensure that teachers and principals are well prepared and students have the resources and support needed to graduate from high school ready for college and careers. For those states whose ESEA Flexibility expired at the end of the 2013–2014 school year, the Department worked to extend those waivers through the 2014–2015 school year. As part of this process, the Department determined that each of those states was on track to implementing college- and career-ready standards and that a plan was in place to implement an assessment aligned with those standards according to the timeline established.

Results for this metric are most influenced by actions taken by states and LEAs, but also are influenced by factors that are beyond the control of the LEAs, the states, or the Department. Developing appropriate assessment instruments and approaches for young students poses significant challenges, especially for children from low-income families, children who are English learners, and children with disabilities. Developing and administering the next generation of assessments and supporting teachers through training related to the new standards will require continuing financial support.

Challenges and Next Steps:

A challenge facing the Department over the next two years is effectively supporting states in their plans to implement these college- and career-ready standards and aligned assessments for all students, including English learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students.

The Department is taking steps to develop and target technical assistance activities that will help increase state capacity to identify and implement best and promising practices. For example, the Department will build a publicly accessible library of resources that support the implementation of college- and career-ready standards. This library will draw on resources across the Department to develop and identify materials to assist in a full and effective transition to college- and career-ready standards. Resources developed by the technical assistance arm of the former Implementation and Support Unit (ISU) (now part of the Office of State Support (OSS)) and by IDEA-funded technical assistance centers will be added to the library. The Department is also working internally to coordinate the provision of technical assistance across OESE, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), and other related offices and programs. In the most recent Comprehensive Centers competition, the Department created a Center on Standards and Assessments Implementation and a Center on College and Career Readiness and Success, which will help build the capacity of state educational agencies to implement college- and career-ready standards. The Department also recently funded the Center on Improving Transition to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students with Disabilities.

Objective 2.2: Effective Teachers and Strong Leaders

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

Over the past several years, states and school districts have made educator effectiveness a key priority in their reform efforts. States and districts are working on the development and implementation of high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, as well as broader human capital management systems that use the results of evaluation systems to inform targeted educator development and support opportunities, placement, retention, promotion, differential performance-based compensation, and other personnel decisions. The Department is supporting the work of states and districts in this area through key programs and initiatives such as Title I, Title II, RTT, Teacher Incentive Fund, ESEA Flexibility, Excellent Educators for All, and the Comprehensive Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, and using these programs and initiatives to provide resources and technical assistance to states and districts so that they can move forward with high-quality implementation. In 2014, more states and districts are implementing teacher and principal evaluation and support systems that are based on multiple measures, including student growth as a significant factor, and nearly all states are continuing to work toward implementation of these systems over the next two to three years.

Similar to objective 2.1, the results of this metric are greatly influenced by state and district actions, as well as other factors not in the Department's control. As teacher and school leader evaluation systems and compensation decisions are governed by state and local policies, without revisions in state policies and new partnerships with teacher and education leaders' organizations, reforms of existing evaluation and compensation systems are unlikely to be successful.

Challenges and Next Steps:

Implementation of teacher and leader evaluation and support systems has proven to be very challenging work for states and districts, particularly during the time of transition to new standards and assessments, and has caused states to need to adjust timelines and sequencing of implementation steps. In order to mitigate these risks, the Department is providing flexibility to states regarding the use of student growth based on statewide assessments during the transition to new assessments, as well as other changes that are outside their original implementation timelines and plans. The Department is working to connect all states to experts who can provide technical assistance in this area. There are also challenges associated with teacher and principal support for the new systems, as well as the challenge that these systems may not work as intended. The Department is continuing to work with states to help them engage with educators and develop plans focused on continuous improvement so that they can make adjustments as needed.

Objective 2.3: School Climate and Community

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

As states and local districts across the country move to increase rigor in schools and improve the college and career readiness of all students, there is a growing recognition in the field that safe and supportive school climates are a necessary precondition of large-scale improvements in student achievement. Central to ensuring safe and supportive school climates for all students is the reform of school discipline policy and practice. Research has repeatedly found, and the Department's Civil Rights Data Collection confirms, that school discipline as applied in many

public schools often negatively and disproportionately impacts minority students and students with disabilities without resulting in any appreciable improvements in school safety or student achievement. Such practices contribute greatly to the loss of instructional time and opportunities for affected students and to a school-to-prison pipeline that involves tens of thousands of young people in the juvenile justice system each year. Since 2011, the Department, in collaboration with the Department of Justice (DOJ), has focused states and local districts on understanding the elements of safe and supportive school climates and the deleterious effects of zero tolerance discipline policies. In the summer of 2011, the Department and DOJ launched the Supportive School Discipline Initiative (SSDI) with a central goal of reducing disproportionalities in the application of school discipline, especially as it pertains to minority students (metric 2.3.A) and students with disabilities (metric 2.3.B). Through the SSDI, the Department released a “Dear Colleague” letter signed by Secretary Duncan and Attorney General Holder, which provides extensive guidance on reforming school discipline policies; convened a national summit, which included more than 20 states that are working to reform state law and policy related to student discipline and youth involvement in the juvenile justice system; and continued to facilitate the Supportive School Discipline Community of Practice to support states implementing student discipline reforms. The Department is also supporting improvements in school climate through \$43 million in FY 2014 School Climate Transformation Grants to states and local districts.

Challenges and Next Steps:

School discipline reform is challenging on multiple levels, as it often necessitates changes in state law and local district policy that practitioners on the ground must then understand and implement. Building awareness among local practitioners of research on the effects of zero tolerance discipline policies and the disproportionalities that often result is particularly challenging for states because they oversee hundreds, if not thousands, of autonomous local districts, each with their own unique cultures, policies, and practices as they relate to school discipline. To meet the informational and organizational challenges of reforming school discipline policies, the Department and DOJ are working with 22 states through the SSDI to advance broad adoption of supportive school discipline policies and reduce disciplinary practice that results in disproportionalities among the students affected. The Department is developing a new school climate survey for schools to be released in September 2015 and is working with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and DOJ on the implementation of the School Climate Transformation Grants.

Objective 2.4: Turn Around Schools and Close Achievement Gaps:

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

Turning around the lowest-performing schools, closing achievement gaps, increasing high school graduation rates, and decreasing disparities in graduation rates are critical to achieving the President’s goal of once again having the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. States and districts have assumed the challenge of focusing on their lowest-performing schools, and directing significant resources and support in order to improve student outcomes dramatically. Since 2009, more than 1,700 schools have received up to \$2 million per year for three years through the SIG program to implement rigorous intervention models intended to turn these schools around. Nearly two-thirds of the schools in the first two cohorts have made progress in improving student achievement in reading, and a similar percentage have shown improvement in math. However, some of this population of schools has also shown decreases in performance, and more work is needed to ensure that the progress is sustained. In addition,

the nation has made significant progress in increasing overall graduation rates, but gaps between rates for different student groups continue to persist. See also the Explanation and Analysis of Progress for objective 4.1 for additional information on the Department's efforts to improve the national high school graduation rate and to close gaps between groups of students.

Challenges and Next Steps:

Turning around the lowest-performing schools is extremely challenging work and takes several years to show progress and success. As a result, there are challenges in communicating that this is a long-term process, not a short-term fix, and managing expectations of what success looks like along the way. Additionally, there is a significant need for effective turnaround leaders for the lowest-performing schools, which the Department is attempting to address through its [Turnaround School Leaders Program](#), a new program focused on helping districts, in partnership with states, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit or for-profit partners, develop pipelines of effective leaders. Additionally, as major grant programs are ending for specific states, districts, and schools, such as RTT and SIG, there may be fewer resources available in some states and districts to support school turnaround. Sustaining successful school turnaround is a major challenge for states, districts, and schools, and the Department is both providing technical assistance and making changes to the SIG program in order to better support sustainability.

Objective 2.5: STEM Teaching and Learning:

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

Efforts such as the [100kin10](#) organization's expansion and the recent awards made to prepare STEM teachers via the [Teacher Quality Partnerships program](#) (\$35 million in FY 2014) show continued attention and progress toward the Department's goal of increasing the number and quality of STEM teachers. Across the administration, there has been a significant emphasis on improving STEM instruction, most directly through the CoSTEM Education's interagency working groups. The Department leads the formally chartered group on P-12 STEM Instruction, which includes regular participation from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Energy (DOE), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Institutes of Health (NIH), NSF, Department of Defense (DoD), and White House (Office of Science and Technology Policy and OMB). All participating agencies have committed to align efforts to support the preparation of high-quality STEM teachers and to support authentic STEM experiences for P-12 educators. Not only do these agencies work together within the context of the CoSTEM Education, but the goals of the interagency working groups align to the CAP Goal for STEM Education across the administration. All activities that are being undertaken by the interagency working groups feed into the CAP process, and all milestones for that process align with the CoSTEM goals. Programs such as the Department's [Mathematics and Science Partnerships \(MSP\) program](#), along with numerous other programs aimed at the professional development of STEM teachers, also contribute to this goal but, because we do not have national activities money available within the MSP formula-based grant program, we do not have national program-level data available to help measure the effect on the overall STEM teaching population.

2013 data from the College Board shows an overall increase in the number of graduating high school students taking Advanced Placement (AP) STEM exams¹²—527,001 overall students compared to 497,922 in 2012. In all subgroups, total number of participants increased, ranging from an approximate 15 percent increase for Hispanic/Latino students to a 3 percent increase for Black/African American students. Females still outnumber males in terms of AP STEM exam participation (which has been the case since 2002).

Challenges and Next Steps:

While efforts continue to support P-12 STEM instruction, the dedicated federal efforts to prepare new STEM teachers are limited to just two programs—the Teacher Quality Partnerships program at the Department (which did utilize a STEM priority, but is not a STEM-dedicated program) and the Noyce Scholarship program at NSF. Requests for funding of a dedicated program to prepare STEM teachers have not been fulfilled, and the majority of teachers are prepared at colleges and universities that do not receive direct NSF or Department funding aimed specifically at STEM teacher preparation. The MSP program does not currently have a national activities set-aside to provide technical assistance or perform program-wide evaluation (each project within MSP must complete an evaluation for the state, but these evaluations are not submitted to the Department). While the overall numbers of students taking STEM AP exams have increased—including through Department-supported programs such as i3—AP courses are only one way to provide students with rich STEM learning experiences. Additional support should be given to both formal and informal STEM opportunities for students within the entire P-12 spectrum. The Office of STEM, within OII, will continue to explore opportunities to blend these environments, made possible in part by the appointment of a two-year Robert Noyce Foundation-funded Informal STEM Fellow.

Subpopulation Breakout for Metric 2.5.B: Number of Graduates Taking an AP STEM Exam during High School: U.S. Public Schools, 2012 and 2013

	Race/Ethnicity							Gender		Socioeconomic Status		Total
	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian, Asian American, Pacific Islander	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	White	Other	No Response	Female	Male	Low Income	Not Low Income	
Number of Graduates, 2012	2,363	73,503	36,689	64,237	298,859	15,001	7,270	256,705	241,217	114,658	383,264	497,922
Number of Graduates, 2013	2,918	78,886	37,816	74,015	312,917	16,785	3,664	271,217	255,784	128,782	398,219	527,001

Data Source and Frequency of Collection: College Board/AP administrative records; annually

Selected Strategies to Achieve Goal 2

The Department is currently implementing a reorganization in OESE that incorporates a new (and aforementioned) [Office of State Support](#), which replaces and enhances services previously provided by the Office of Student Achievement and School Accountability (SASA), Office of

¹² STEM exams include: Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Computer Science A, Computer Science AB*, and Statistics; Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, Physics B, Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism, and Physics C: Mechanics.

School Turnaround, and ISU. This reorganization integrates key state-administered programs in a new office that will provide improved state-centered support across programs. The Department is using this reorganization to rethink, redesign, and rebuild core grant administration functions in order to provide more transparent, higher quality, and better differentiated support to states. This new structure, which builds on the collaboration that has occurred between OESE, the ISU, and OSEP, will better support states in implementing the key reform programs and initiatives that support Goal 2, and will improve the Department's ability to execute its core priorities. The Department will continue to provide technical assistance to states in the areas of college- and career-ready standards and assessments, teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, and turning around the lowest-performing schools. The Department will finalize and implement a revised process for peer reviewing state assessments to ensure that they are high-quality and will work with states to develop and implement their plans for ensuring equitable access to effective teachers and leaders for all students. The Department will also implement changes to the SIG program in order to better support states and districts in turning around their lowest-performing schools.

A strong reauthorization of the ESEA that reinforces and extends the progress already being made to strengthen the quality of elementary and secondary education would further this goal.

Goal 3. Early Learning:

Improve the health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for all children from birth through 3rd grade, so that all children, particularly those with high needs, are on track for graduating from high school college- and career-ready.

Goal Leader: Deb Delisle

Objective 3.1: Access to High-Quality Programs and Services. Increase access to high-quality early learning programs and comprehensive services, especially for children with high needs. **Objective Leader: Libby Doggett**

Metric 3.1.A: Number of states with Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) that meet high-quality benchmarks for child care and other early childhood programs

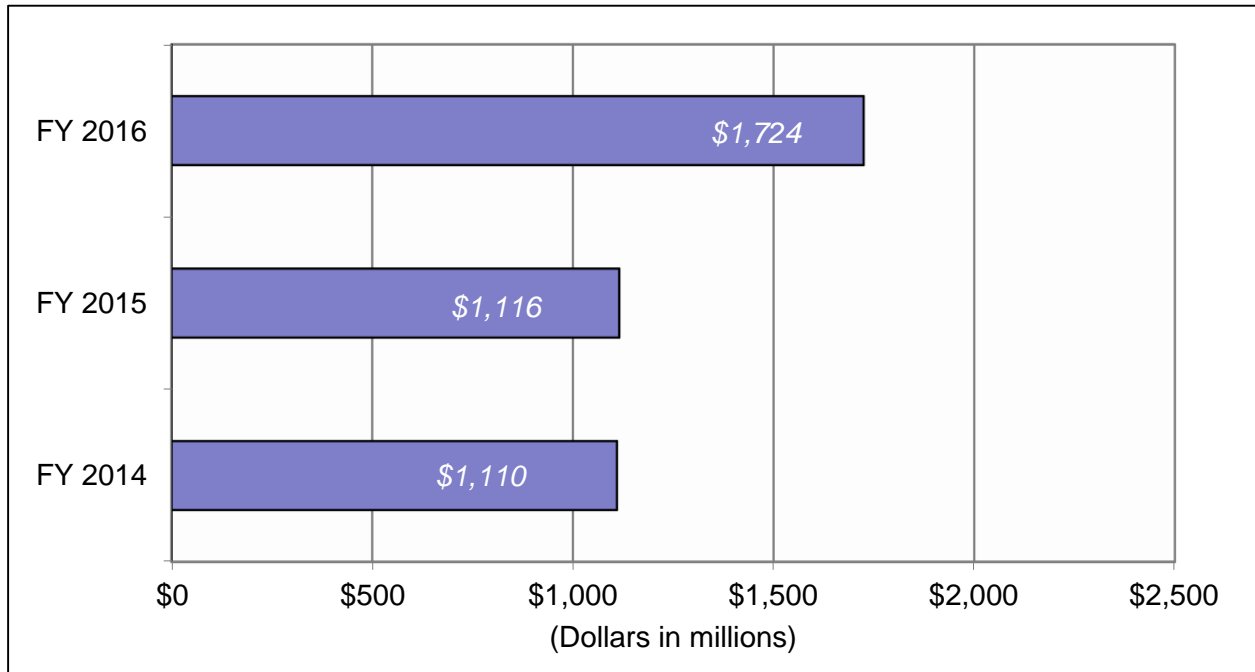
Objective 3.2: Effective Workforce. Improve the quality and effectiveness of the early learning workforce so that early childhood educators have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to improve young children's health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes. **Objective Leader: Libby Doggett**

Metric 3.2.A: Number of states and territories with professional development systems that include core knowledge and competencies, career pathways, professional development capacity assessments, accessible professional development opportunities, and financial supports for child care providers

Objective 3.3: Measuring Progress, Outcomes, and Readiness. Improve the capacity of states and early learning programs to develop and implement comprehensive early learning assessment systems. **Objective Leader: Libby Doggett**

Metric 3.3.A: Number of states collecting and reporting disaggregated data on the status of children at kindergarten entry using a common measure

Goal 3 Discretionary Resources



Major Discretionary Programs and Activities¹³ Supporting Goal 3 Performance Metrics [Dollars in Millions]

POC	Account	Obj.	Program	FY 2014 Appropriation	FY 2015 Appropriation	FY 2016 President's Budget
OESE	SR	3.1	School Readiness: Preschool development grants	250	250	750
OSERS	SE	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	Grants for infants and families	438	439	504
OSERS	SE	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	Preschool grants	353	353	403
Subtotal				1,042	1,042	1,657
Other Discretionary Programs/Activities				68	74	68
TOTAL, GOAL 3				1,110	1,116	1,724

NOTES: Many programs may have sub-activities that relate to other goals. Detail may not add to total due to rounding.

Public Benefit

An extensive body of research in education, developmental psychology, neuroscience, medicine, and economics shows that high-quality early learning programs produce better education, health, economic, and social outcomes for children, families, and the nation. Too many of our children start school inadequately prepared to succeed. Gaps in cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional skills due to unequal opportunities become evident well before children enter kindergarten. The resulting achievement gap widens as children progress through school, despite strong efforts at remediation. The long-term consequences include high rates of

¹³ All the programs listed are discretionary programs, as distinct from mandatory programs. These include both competitive and non-competitive programs.

school failure, grade repetition, inappropriate special education placements, and dropout; involvement in risky behaviors and crime; and even higher risk for adult chronic disease.¹⁴

Children from low-income families, on average, start kindergarten 12–14 months behind their peers in pre-reading and language skills. Early findings from the Kindergarten Round of the “Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010–11,” suggest that scores on reading and math were lowest for kindergartners in households with incomes below the federal poverty level and for children coming from homes with a primary home language other than English.¹⁵ By increasing access to high-quality early learning programs and services, the country can provide children the foundation they need for success in school and address educational gaps before children enter kindergarten.

The administration began efforts to increase investments in early learning in the first term and has continued to request more funding. RTT-ELC, a program jointly administered by the Department and HHS, funds 20 states to raise the bar on the quality of their early learning programs; establish higher standards; and provide critical links with health, nutrition, mental health, and family support. RTT-ELC states serve as model early learning and development systems, and national technical assistance is available to help all states build coordinated early learning systems.

Part of the President’s overarching vision for early learning is his Preschool for All initiative, a new partnership investment with states to fund preschool for all 4-year-olds from low- and moderate-income families. The program would create incentives for states to expand publicly funded preschool to middle-class families above 200 percent of the federal poverty level and promote access to high-quality, full-day kindergarten and early learning programs for children under the age of 4. The vision also includes continued support for high-quality services for infants, toddlers, and preschool children with disabilities and their families through IDEA Parts B and C services.

A down payment toward that vision was provided through the [Preschool Development Grants](#), which will support state efforts to both establish the infrastructure for high-quality preschool and build more programs for 4-year-olds from low- and moderate-income families in high-need communities. This new program builds on RTT-ELC achievements and further defines quality programs to include 12 nationally recognized standards such as: high staff qualifications; professional development for teachers and staff; low staff-child ratios and small class sizes; full-day programs; developmentally appropriate, evidence-based curricula and learning environments that are aligned with states’ early learning standards; inclusive programs; employee salaries that are comparable to those for K–12 teaching staff; ongoing program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement; strong family engagement; and onsite comprehensive services for children.

To enhance the quality of all early learning programs and services and improve outcomes for all children, including children with disabilities and those who are English learners, the Department will promote initiatives that increase access to high-quality, effective programs; improve the quality of the early childhood workforce; and support comprehensive assessment systems.

¹⁴ “Early Childhood Investments Substantially Boost Adult Health,” *Science*, March 28, 2014:

<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/343/6178/1478>.

¹⁵ Mulligan, G.M., McCarroll, J.C., Flanagan, K.D., and Potter, D. (2014). Findings From the First-Grade Rounds of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010–11 (ECLS-K:2011) (NCES 2015-109). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC. Retrieved January 14, 2015, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.

Goal 3: Details

Early Learning Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Targets		
		2012	2013	2014	2014	2015	2016
Objective 3.1: Access to High-Quality Programs and Services. Increase access to high-quality early learning programs and comprehensive services, especially for children with high needs.							
3.1.A. Number of states with Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) that meet high quality benchmarks for child care and other early childhood programs ^{1,2}	Year: 2010 17	19	27	2014 data to be available in 2015	29 TBD	32	NA
Objective 3.2: Effective Workforce. Improve the quality and effectiveness of the early learning workforce so that early childhood educators have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to improve young children's health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes.							
3.2.A. Number of states and territories with professional development systems that include core knowledge and competencies, career pathways, professional development capacity assessments, accessible professional development opportunities, and financial supports for child care providers ¹	Year: 2011 30	Not Collected	30	Not Collected	NA	38	NA
Objective 3.3: Measuring Progress, Outcomes, and Readiness. Improve the capacity of states and early learning programs to develop and implement comprehensive early learning assessment systems.							
3.3.A. Number of states collecting and reporting disaggregated data on the status of children at kindergarten entry using a common measure ^{3,4}	Year: 2010 2	0	3	6	2 MET	9	14

NA = Not applicable.

TBD = To be determined.

¹ This metric, including baseline and targets, is part of the Department of Health and Human Services' *FY 2015 Annual Performance Report and Performance Plan*. The 2014 data will not be available until 2015.

² The FY 2015 performance target is changed to reflect information from the Department of Health and Human Services' *FY 2015 Annual Performance Report and Performance Plan*. For more information about this metric, see http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/olab/sec2c_ccdf_2015cj_complete.pdf.

³ This metric is aligned with an Agency Priority Goal.

⁴ Targets for this metric are based on what the Department expects will occur in a given fiscal year.

Data Sources and Frequency of Collection:

3.1.A. Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Report of State Plans with annual updates from states and territories (HHS/Office of Childcare); annually

3.2.A. Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Report of State Plans (HHS/Office of Childcare); biennially

3.3.A. Race to the Top (RTT)-Early Learning Challenge (ELC) Technical Assistance Center; annually

Note on performance metrics and targets: These metrics were established as a part of the *FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan*. Metrics may be updated or revised to reflect awareness of more accurate data or clarifications. Such updates or revisions are identified in footnotes.

Analysis and Next Steps by Objective

Objective 3.1: Access to High-Quality Programs and Services

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

No state has sufficient high-quality programs to meet the demand for high-quality early learning programs and services, but all states, especially the 20 states receiving RTT-ELC grants, are working to address the issue using a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (TQRIS).

This reform metric helps states set progressively higher program standards and provides supports to programs so they can meet those higher standards. Once programs are enrolled in a state's TQRIS, the state helps them improve their quality and their ranking. States provide technical assistance, professional development opportunities, and program improvement grants that allow programs to make the necessary quality improvements. RTT-ELC states have increased the number of early learning and development programs participating in their TQRIS and are implementing strategies to improve the quality of those programs. The 14 RTT-ELC states that reported data this year (six other states had only received their funding a few months prior to the reporting deadline and were not required to submit reports this year) increased the number of programs enrolled in their TQRIS from 31,321 to 54,157, showing a 73 percent increase from the baseline year.

The 14 RTT-ELC states also showed a substantial increase in the number of children with high needs enrolled in state-funded preschool programs (175 percent increase), in programs that receive funding from the Child Development Fund (43 percent increase), and in Head Start's Early Head Start programs (83 percent increase) that are in the top tiers of the respective states' TQRIS.

Some states are also identifying specific high-need communities or "zones" where they will implement a set of initiatives aimed at building local capacity to support the workforce, engage families, and serve more children with high needs. OSEP has three national centers that specifically focus on supporting states in enhancing their Part C and Part B, section 619 programs, as well as other early learning programs, to increase the quality of services provided to children with disabilities and their families. These centers are working with Part C and Part B, section 619 programs to develop effective and efficient infrastructures to deliver high-quality services to infants, toddlers, and preschool age children with disabilities and their families. The centers have developed a systems framework that states can use to assess their infrastructure. Additionally, OSEP recently began implementing a [Results Driven Accountability \(RDA\)](#) system for states. As part of this system, states are being asked to develop a State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) to focus and drive their efforts to improve results for children with disabilities. Within these plans, Part C and Part B, section 619 programs will be working to ensure that children with disabilities have access to high-quality services to support them in meeting their developmental and learning outcomes.

Metrics in Goal 3 are influenced most by actions taken by states or grantees in response to state and federal policy initiatives, but they are also influenced by factors that are beyond the control of states, LEAs, or the Department.

Challenges and Next Steps:

States face many challenges in developing a rating and monitoring process for their TQRIS. Providers must be informed about the process, so as to make them more likely to participate. The observation and rating tool must be a true measure of different levels of quality; it must give the same rating results in many different settings, and it has to be easy to use. Validating the effectiveness of a TQRIS ensures that it is measuring and assessing program quality in ways that make sense to state policy makers, early learning and education programs, and families with young children.

The Department is providing support so states have the knowledge and best research for improving their TQRIS. This technical assistance is provided directly to the states in addition to peer learning groups on various topics of interest such as best ways to validate a TQRIS system or to ensure families understand the difference in the quality tiers. The Department is helping

RTT-ELC states to validate their systems, ensure consistency in the reporting of TQRIS ratings, and develop data system linkages between their TQRIS and other systems with data on young children and the early childhood workforce. OSEP-funded technical assistance also supports states in thinking about how to include children with disabilities within the TQRIS system. Additionally, IES is also doing a study of the TQRIS systems and plans to make results available in 2016.

It is anticipated that states will continue to examine the quality of the services supported by funding made available under Parts B and C of the IDEA to meet the needs of young children with disabilities. OSEP TA centers will continue to work with states to enhance the quality of services that they provide.

Objective 3.2: Effective Workforce

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

Securing a well-trained and properly supported early learning workforce is an essential element of high-quality early learning programs. The quality of teacher-child interactions is the mechanism responsible for learning. Significant headway has been made in describing and conceptualizing what teachers do in the classroom that results in learning, which is a critical first step in getting teachers into those positions. Children benefit most when teachers engage in interactions that stimulate learning while being emotionally nurturing.¹⁶ These interactions foster engagement in and enjoyment of learning. Critical to assuring quality are continuous improvement systems that support teachers in the implementation of evidence-based curricula focused on specific areas of learning and socio-emotional development. In-classroom coaching and mentoring is a successful approach to providing this support. In addition, salaries commensurate with comparably prepared K-12 colleagues could stem the flight of teachers away from early learning.

States are addressing the challenge of an effective workforce through legislation regarding staff qualifications, developing workforce frameworks, and funding better support for teachers in classrooms. Only 23 states have passed legislation requiring that all teachers in preschool programs meet certain qualifications. Even these states are struggling to improve the quality of their broader workforce in child care and private settings with limited funding.

One way the Department is helping states address this challenge is through the development of a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, which outlines what early childhood educators should know and be able to teach young children. RTT-ELC provides funding for activities such as surveys of courses offered in higher education institutions and through ongoing in-service education, meetings to collect information and develop consensus to support change, and development of documents. The frameworks provide the foundation for a well-qualified and prepared early childhood education workforce and can guide postsecondary institutions in the development of curricula and professional development providers in the provision of training, mentoring, and coaching in the community. It can also support individual professional development efforts for early childhood educators. As teachers move from a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or state credential, to an associate degree, to a bachelor's degree and beyond, early childhood educators should be building on commonly defined, previously learned information and skills.

¹⁶ Barnett, W. Steven. "Better Teachers, Better Preschools: Student Achievement Linked to Teacher Qualifications." *NIEER Preschool Policy Matters*, Issue 2. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED480818>

Eleven RTT-ELC states are specifically working to provide and expand access to professional development opportunities that are aligned with their Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and that tightly link training with professional development approaches, such as coaching and mentoring. These states are also using incentives, such as scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, and other strategies. These other strategies include management opportunities, and they promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is based on the state's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

States that require all programs receiving some sort of federal or state subsidy to enroll in the TQRIS system are leading this work. States that have not linked the TQRIS system to licensing are experiencing more challenges with enrolling programs.

Four states (Delaware, Iowa, Kansas, and Oregon) are specifically working with the OSEP-funded [Early Childhood Personnel Center \(ECPC\)](#) to develop and enhance the personnel system within their states to ensure that personnel have the knowledge and skills to provide services to young children with disabilities and their families. States are making progress in aligning their personnel standards with national professional organization personnel standards; developing partnerships with universities and community colleges to ensure that their curriculum is aligned to state personnel standards and to support better alignment between pre-service preparation and in-service professional development; and implementing evidence-based practices within in-service professional development.

Challenges and Next Steps:

Challenges abound in developing an effective early learning workforce. States have hiring challenges, due in part to a lack of available well-trained and effective personnel. Some states have experienced high turnover of early childhood educators and consultants due to low wages, attractive offers in other states, challenging financial times, and program management. States that have had programs in place for longer periods are having less difficulty recruiting and retaining strong early educators.

The Department and its technical assistance providers are working to address some of these challenges through webinars, peer learning, and pointing out promising practices, such as mentoring and coaching. For example, a study examining career pathways will provide states with an overview of how these systems are working in a handful of leading states. Reducing duplication of efforts and promoting promising practices is necessary for creating an early learning workforce that can deliver on the promise of these programs. ECPC is currently working with Part C and Part B, Section 619 coordinators to identify additional states with which to work to improve their personnel systems.

Objective 3.3: Measuring Progress, Outcomes, and Readiness

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

The Department, in consultation with OMB, has determined that there has been noteworthy progress toward this objective. KEAs are important tools for determining what children know and are able to do by the time they reach kindergarten. Results of the KEAs provide information to help close the school readiness gap at kindergarten entry and to inform instruction in the early elementary school grades. They also inform parents about their children's learning and development and involve them in decisions about their children's education.

Nineteen RTT-ELC states¹⁷ are working to have in place a KEA that covers multiple developmental domains, including language and literacy, cognition and general knowledge, approaches toward learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development. Even though the 19 RTT-ELC states that selected to implement statewide KEAs are at different stages in implementing new or revised assessments, all are making progress.

States are collaborating with and learning from one another as they tackle the complexities and challenges of developing and implementing their KEAs. For example, Illinois and California are using the same tool and collaborating to enhance and improve it. Maryland and Ohio have partnered to develop formative and summative assessments that are based on their individual state standards. According to [The Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Year Two Progress Report](#), states are also realizing the importance of first working with kindergarten teachers and administrators when planning to implement a KEA and then providing training and support as teachers begin implementing the KEAs and interpreting and sharing the results. One state, Oregon, fully implemented a statewide KEA in the first quarter of FY 2014 (i.e., fall of 2013). It is using the lessons learned from that KEA to improve the next round of assessments and strengthen data interpretation and reporting. Some areas identified for improvement are the provision for additional guidance on successful kindergarten assessment practices for Spanish-speaking English learners and streamlined mechanisms for data entry and reporting.

In FY 2013, the Department awarded [Enhanced Assessment Grants \(EAG\)](#) to support the development and enhancement of KEAs. Texas and two state consortia, one led by Maryland and the other led by North Carolina, were awarded EAG grants. KEAs under this program should be aligned with state early learning standards and cover all essential domains of school readiness. Three additional RTT-ELC grantees are participating in the Maryland consortium (Massachusetts, Michigan, and Ohio) as well as a number of non-RTT-ELC states. Eight states are partnering with North Carolina: Delaware, Iowa, Maine, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Washington, DC.

On an annual basis through their annual performance reports, OSEP continues to require state Part C and Part B, section 619 programs to report on child outcomes for children that received at least 6 months of IDEA services. OSEP funds a technical assistance center to support states in collecting high-quality data within their outcomes measurement system and in using that data for program improvement.

Challenges and Next Steps:

The field of early learning is increasingly embracing the importance of measuring and monitoring children's progress due to historical lack of good metrics and the variability of young children's development. That is changing with the introduction of KEAs through RTT-ELC and state policies. The Department and its early childhood technical assistance center are supporting both RTT-ELC grantee states and non-grantee states by establishing learning communities and providing technical assistance webinars, briefs, and a recent report on progress states are making in implementing KEAs.

In order to better understand the challenges states are facing and progress they are making, the Department has funded a study which will report on how leading states are implementing KEAs as a learning tool. Results will be available late in 2015.

¹⁷ One state, Wisconsin, did not choose to implement a KEA as a part of its RTT-ELC work.

OSEP is investigating ways to use the Part C child outcomes data in FY 2015 when making annual determinations of performance based on state performance plans and annual performance reports.

Selected Strategies to Achieve Goal 3

The Department is using a multipronged approach to improve the health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for all children from birth through 3rd grade, so that all children, particularly those with high needs, are on track for graduating from high school college- and career-ready. Through technical assistance by Department staff and contractors, technical assistance centers, monitoring, research reports, an annual grantee meeting, and use of the bully pulpit, the Department expects to reach its goal. One tool that supports the Department in its management of this goal is an electronic monitoring and reporting tool that it uses to assess the progress in all RTT-ELC states and deploy specialized technical assistance as quickly as possible to ensure progress continues. Further, the Department works with the ELC TA Center and the [Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes \(CEELO\)](#) to provide targeted technical assistance, establishing learning communities and providing webinars, briefs, and reports on key topics. The Department's annual grantee meeting allows us to highlight key promising practices, discuss major challenges, and better understand state and local challenges. OSEP will be reviewing states' SSIPs for Part C in April 2015 and will be supporting them through technical assistance to their infrastructure, data quality, and services and interventions to enhance results for young children with disabilities and their families.

All our efforts are aimed at increasing access to high-quality, effective programs—served by an effective early learning workforce—for children from birth to school entry and beyond (including children with disabilities and those who are English learners). Comprehensive assessment systems will measure our success, helping us to enhance the quality of all early learning programs, and reach the ultimate goal of improving children's outcomes.

Goal 4. Equity:

Increase educational opportunities for underserved students and reduce discrimination so that all students are well-positioned to succeed.

Goal Leader: Catherine Lhamon

Objective 4.1: Equitable Educational Opportunities. Increase all students’ access to educational opportunities with a focus on closing achievement gaps, and remove barriers that students face based on their race, ethnicity, or national origin; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; disability; English language ability; religion; socioeconomic status; or geographical location. **Objective Leader: Bob Kim**

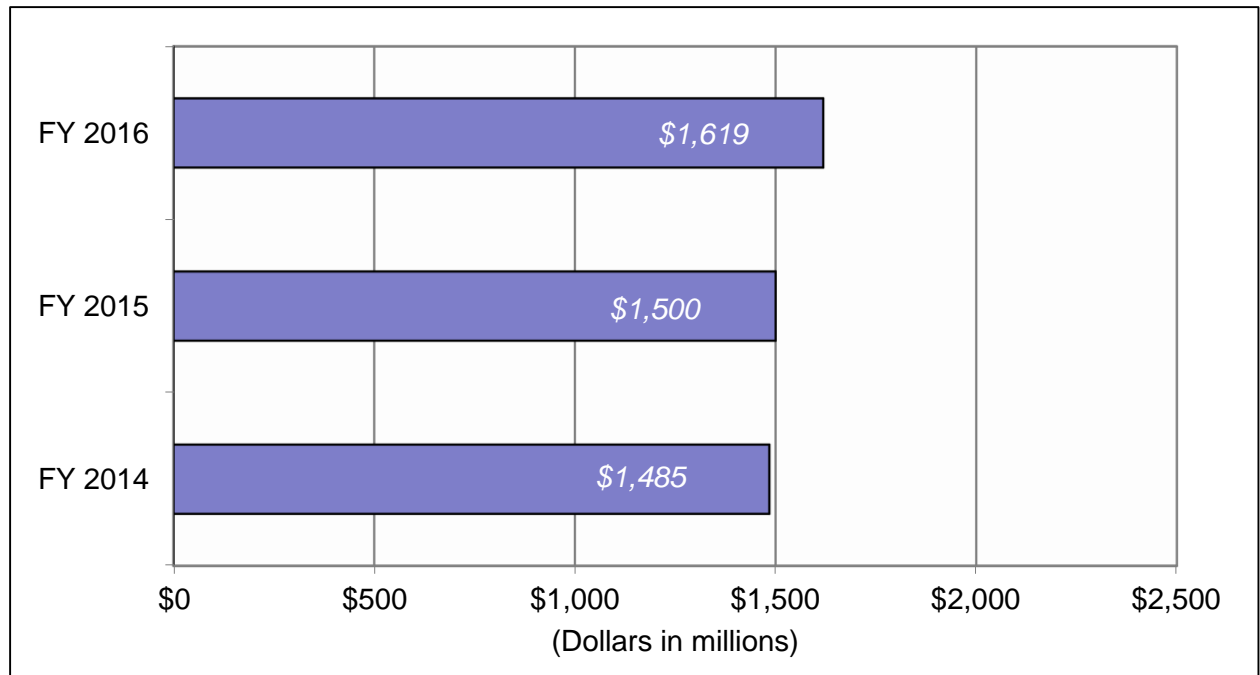
Metric 4.1.A: National high school graduation rate

Objective 4.2: Civil Rights Compliance. Ensure educational institutions’ awareness of and compliance with federal civil rights obligations and enhance the public’s knowledge of their civil rights. **Objective Leader: Bob Kim**

Metric 4.2.A: Percentage of proactive civil rights investigations launched annually that address areas of concentration in civil rights enforcement

Metric 4.2.B: Percentage of proactive civil rights investigations resolved annually that address areas of concentration in civil rights enforcement

Goal 4 Discretionary Resources



Major Discretionary Programs and Activities¹⁸ Supporting Goal 4 Performance Metrics [Dollars in Millions]

POC	Account	Obj.	Program	FY 2014 Appropriation	FY 2015 Appropriation	FY 2016 President's Budget
OCR	OCR	4.2	Office for Civil Rights	98	100	131
OESE	ED	4.1	State agency programs: Migrant	375	375	375
OESE	IE	4.1	Indian Education: Grants to local educational agencies	100	100	100
OESE	IE	4.1	Indian Education: Special programs for Indian children	18	18	68
OESE	SIP	4.1	Alaska Native education equity	31	31	32
OESE	SIP	4.1	Education for Native Hawaiians	32	32	33
OESE	SIP	4.1, 4.2	Training and advisory services	7	7	7
OESE/OELA	ELA	4.1, 4.2	English Language Acquisition	723	737	773
OII	I&I	4.1	Magnet schools assistance	92	92	92
OSERS	SE	n/a	Special Olympics education programs	8	8	8
TOTAL, GOAL 4				1,485	1,500	1,619

n/a = Not available.

NOTES: Many programs may have sub-activities that relate to other goals.
Detail may not add to total due to rounding.

Public Benefit

The Department is committed to pursuing equity at all stages of education, from birth through adulthood, in institutions of early learning, K–12 schools, career and technical and postsecondary education, adult education, workforce development, and independent living programs. The Department's goal is to ensure that all—not just a subset—of the nation's children, youths, and adults graduate from high school and obtain the skills necessary to succeed in college, in the pursuit of a meaningful career, and in their lives.

The Department also recognizes the need to increase educational opportunities systemically for underserved populations, including by exploring ways to increase equitable access to resources and effective teachers within states and districts. Studies show that having a strong teacher is the single most important in-school contributor to a student's success. Because of this, and regardless of how teacher effectiveness is defined, it is critical that the nation eliminate disparities in the access to effective teachers between high-need students—including low-income students, English learners, and students with disabilities—and all other students. By fostering improved teacher evaluation and support systems and talent pipelines from recruitment to retention, the Department aims to elevate the teaching profession as a whole while also working to ensure that all students—no matter their geographic locations—have equitable access to effective teachers.

Finally, civil rights enforcement is pivotal to ensuring that recipients of federal funding at the preschool, K–12, and postsecondary levels eliminate acts of discrimination that, left unchecked, would otherwise negatively impact students' achievement and access to educational opportunities. The Department's OCR uses a variety of tools to ensure compliance with federal civil rights laws, including issuing detailed policy guidance; conducting vigorous complaint investigations; procuring strong systemic remedies; pursuing aggressive monitoring of resolution agreements; launching targeted and proactive compliance reviews and technical assistance activities; collecting and publicizing school-level data on important civil rights

¹⁸ All the programs listed are discretionary programs, as distinct from mandatory programs. These include both competitive and non-competitive programs.

compliance indicators; and participating in intra- and inter-agency work groups to share expertise and best practices. OCR also engages students, parents, recipients of federal funding, and other stakeholders to inform them about applicable federal civil rights laws and policies so that they are equipped to identify and address civil rights issues at the earliest stages.

OCR has increased the transparency of its work to the public by posting nearly all resolution letters and agreements reached in FY 2014 and beyond on its website. In addition, OCR has released the results of the [2011–12 Civil Rights Data Collection](#), which it has expanded to include a wealth of new data to assist the Department, states, districts, teachers, administrators, researchers, students, and parents in identifying civil rights trends and issues at the local, state, and national levels.

Goal 4: Details

Equity Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Targets		
		2012	2013	2014	2014	2015	2016
Objective 4.1: Equitable Educational Opportunities. Increase all students' access to educational opportunities with a focus on closing achievement gaps, and remove barriers that students face based on their race, ethnicity, or national origin; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; disability; English language ability; religion; socioeconomic status; or geographical location.							
4.1.A. National high school graduation rate ^{1,2}	Year: 2011–12 80.0%	Year: 2010–11 79%	Year: 2011–12 80.0%	81%	81.5% <i>NOT MET</i>	83.0%	84.5%
Objective 4.2: Civil Rights Compliance. Ensure educational institutions' awareness of and compliance with federal civil rights obligations and enhance the public's knowledge of their civil rights.							
4.2.A. Percentage of proactive civil rights investigations launched annually that address areas of concentration in civil rights enforcement	Year: 2013 7%	Not Collected	7%	21%	7% <i>MET</i>	10%	12%
4.2.B. Percentage of proactive civil rights investigations resolved annually that address areas of concentration in civil rights enforcement	Year: 2013 8%	Not Collected	8%	15%	8% <i>MET</i>	10%	12%

¹ This metric is aligned with an Agency Priority Goal. Data for the 2012–13 school year will be available during the second quarter of FY 2015. Data for the 2013–14 school year will be available during the second quarter of FY 2016.

² The data for the 2012–13 Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) are available at http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR_2010-11_to_2012-13.asp. Note that the current disclosure protection methodology limits reporting to whole number percentages.

Data Sources and Frequency of Collection:

4.1.A. ED Facts; annually

4.2.A. Office for Civil Rights' (OCR) Case Management System (CMS) and Document Management (DM) systems; quarterly

4.2.B. Office for Civil Rights' (OCR) Case Management System (CMS) and Document Management (DM) systems; quarterly

Note on performance metrics and targets: These metrics were established as a part of the *FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan*. Metrics may be updated or revised to reflect awareness of more accurate data or clarifications. Such updates or revisions are identified in footnotes.

Analysis and Next Steps by Objective

Objective 4.1: Equitable Educational Opportunities

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

The Department made progress toward expanding equitable educational opportunities. As explained below, the Department took aggressive steps in FY 2014 through policy development, grant-making, program management, and legal enforcement to close achievement and

opportunity gaps that present barriers to learning or achievement at all levels of the educational system, from early education to K–12 to postsecondary. Such barriers include the lack of access to challenging courses, effective teachers and school leaders, sufficient resources and other supports, and safe and healthy learning environments.

Budget

The Department developed an FY 2015 budget that included a new proposed \$300 million RTT-Equity and Opportunity competition. While Congress did not provide funding for this program, the Department is working through other programs and actions to further its goals related to ensuring equitable access to rigorous courses, effective educators, and support services in high-need communities into future grant competitions, programs, and initiatives.

Preschool–Grade 12 (P-12) Education

Much of the Department’s P-12 work aims to improve opportunities for students. Along with HHS, the Department has significantly increased funding for early learning. More than \$1 billion in RTT-ELC funding is improving the quality of early learning settings in 20 states, and the Department and HHS designed and awarded \$250 million in new [Preschool Development Grants](#) to states to expand access to high-quality preschool programs for children from low- to moderate-income families in high-need communities in order to close educational gaps between disadvantaged children and their peers and ensure that all children have an equal opportunity to succeed when they enter kindergarten. The Preschool Development Grants will serve more than 33,000 4-year-olds in 18 states in 2015–16 alone. The administration has requested \$500 million in FY 2015 to continue high-quality preschool programs in current grantee states and expand to new communities.

The Department granted extensions of [ESEA Flexibility](#) for the 2014–15 school year for 34 states, ensuring that those states continue to implement college- and career-ready standards for all students, hold districts and schools accountable for subgroup performance, and implement evaluation and support systems for teachers and principals that, ultimately, can be used to monitor and improve equitable access to effective educators.

The Department also developed and launched the [Excellent Educators for All](#) initiative. This initiative is specifically designed to ensure that students of color and students from low-income families have equitable access to excellent educators. The Department will work with states to implement the initiative in the coming year (see next steps section below).

The Department helped to advance the President’s [ConnectED](#) initiative, which aims to enrich K-12 education for every student in America through technology (see also the Explanation and Analysis of Progress for objective 5.4). The initiative seeks to provide high-speed broadband and Wi-Fi to schools covering 99 percent of our nation’s students by 2018, provide every student with access to a device suitable for digital learning, enable creation of more high-quality and accessible digital content, and provide resources and support for school leaders and educators to learn to use technology effectively. Since ConnectED’s launch, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has worked to modernize the E-rate program to improve broadband and Wi-Fi access in schools across the country. In addition, we have provided guidance to the field to clarify the ability to use federal funds to support the transition to digital learning and share models for effective use of technology to transform learning. In 2015, the Department will release an updated National Educational Technology Plan to set the national vision for how technology can support learning and close equity gaps.

The Department continued to implement the [National Professional Development \(NPD\) program](#) to prepare teachers to work with English learners and the [Native American and Alaska Native children in Schools \(NAM\) program](#) to provide support to Native American English learners, in addition to the formula grants to SEAs for English learners (ELs) under Title III of the ESEA. The Department also commissioned a study by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) on the development of young ELs and Dual Language Learners (DLLs) and on best practices to support education success across diverse settings and institutions from birth through the end of high school.

The Department published a Request for Information seeking public comment and guidance on state obligations under IDEA to address significant disproportion by race or ethnicity within districts in the identification, placement, or discipline of students with disabilities. The Department also announced a new framework known as [Results-Driven Accountability](#), under which the Department will consider multiple educational results and outcomes for students with disabilities—including their participation in state assessments, their proficiency levels as compared to all students, and their performance in reading and math on the [National Assessment of Educational Progress](#)—to produce a more comprehensive and thorough picture of the performance of children with disabilities in each state and to inform its annual determinations with respect to each state under IDEA.

In order to help keep students safe and improve their learning environments, the Department awarded more than \$70 million in grants to 130 grantees in 38 states, including [School Climate Transformation Grants](#) to help create positive school climates that support effective education for all students and [Project Prevent grants](#) to help LEAs break the cycle of violence through expanded access to school-based strategies that prevent future violence.

The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) working group, convened jointly by Education Secretary Duncan and Interior Secretary Jewell, issued a Blueprint for Reform to improve outcomes in BIE schools. The Department provided technical assistance and continued grant awards under the Indian Education Demonstration Grants program, the Professional Development program, and the State Tribal Education Partnership program, in addition to ESEA Title VII formula grants to LEAs for services to American Indian/Alaska Native students. In addition, the Department has been working to identify policies and programs that will support achievement for all Native youth. In conjunction with OCR, the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education conducted a listening tour to address concerns about school climate and Indian mascots in public schools. The Department also joined with HHS and DOI to convene a Languages Summit to discuss best practices in preserving and revitalizing Native languages for children and youth.

The Department incorporated a competitive priority in the [GEAR-UP](#) State and Partnership grant competitions to encourage applicants to propose postsecondary success strategies, including those that support early attention to remedial education needs prior to enrollment in college. GEAR-UP provides services at high-poverty middle and high schools to help low-income students prepare for and succeed in postsecondary education. Addressing remedial education prior to college increases the likelihood that students will persist.

The Department released the results of the [2011–12 Civil Rights Data Collection \(CRDC\)](#), which was expanded to include a wealth of new data to assist the Department, states, districts, teachers, administrators, researchers, students, and parents in identifying civil rights trends and issues at the local, state, and national levels. The CRDC disaggregates data by race, sex, disability, and English proficiency status (as well as by grade level for certain items). The

2015–16 collection will include new data to help measure incidents of bullying or harassment based on religion or sexual orientation in public schools.

Higher Education

The Department distributed \$31.6 billion in [Pell Grant awards](#) to approximately 9 million students in FY 2014. The maximum Pell award was increased from \$5,645 for the 2013–14 award year (July 1, 2013–June 30, 2014) to \$5,730 for the 2014–15 award year (July 1, 2014–June 30, 2015), which helped cover a greater portion of college costs for low-income students to support college access goals. The Department also awarded 24 [First in the World](#) grants totaling \$75 million to institutions of higher education, including \$20 million to six Minority Serving Institutions, to spur the development of innovations that improve educational outcomes and make college more affordable for students and families and to develop an evidence base of effective practices. The Department continued to support the [White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault](#) to improve coordination, transparency, and effectiveness in responding to sexual violence in colleges and universities.

The Department's [Migrant Education State Program \(MEP\)](#), the [High School Equivalency Program \(HEP\)](#) projects, and the [College Assistance Migrant Program \(CAMP\)](#) continue to address the educational needs of students from migrant and seasonal farmworker families as a part of investments in equity and opportunity. HEP and CAMP projects helped 3,292 migrant students obtain high school equivalency and 1,410 migrant students successfully complete their first year of college.

As noted earlier in this report, President Obama's America's College Promise proposal, announced in January 2015, would allow students to attend community colleges tuition-free if they attend half-time, are making satisfactory academic progress to a degree, and maintain a 2.5 GPA. If enacted by Congress, this plan would benefit nearly 9 million students by making a higher education more affordable and would particularly impact students of color as community colleges enroll larger percentages of students of color.

Challenges and Next Steps:

The following items delineate future challenges and next steps as the Department works to enhance educational opportunities for underserved populations:

New and continuing proposals related to equity described above are dependent on final appropriations. The Department will work to ensure that programs with high equity focus receive priority attention to the extent possible.

The Department continues to see gaps for students of color and low-income students in important equity metrics such as postsecondary attainment, involvement in STEM, teacher equity, and access to educational resources. The Department will work with the CoSTEM Education interagency working group, the [My Brother's Keeper](#) and Reach Higher initiatives, and other targeted efforts from the White House Initiatives to help expand participation of underrepresented groups in postsecondary STEM.

The Department is working to improve equity of access to excellent educators through a number of efforts. The Department published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on teacher preparation in November 2014. Also in fall 2014, the Department released [guidance](#) on new State Plans to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators and launched a support network designed to help states develop and implement comprehensive plans.

The Department continues to seek to use [Title I and the ESEA Flexibility Framework](#) to close achievement gaps. In its FY 2016 budget, the Department is requesting a major increase in Title I funding to improve access to standards, aligned assessments, and excellent educators in Title I schools. The Department has developed ESEA Flexibility renewal [guidance](#) and [FAQs](#) that focus on ensuring that underrepresented students have access to standards and assessments and that states maintain accountability and teacher evaluation systems that will help measure progress in schools serving the most high-need students. The Department will finalize new regulations for the [School Improvement Grants](#) program to incorporate changes from the FY 2014 appropriations act and lessons learned from four years of SIG implementation, as well as provide three new models, including an early learning model, so that SIG will better support turnaround efforts in the lowest-performing schools.

To support its efforts to improve outcomes for our most vulnerable students, the Department, as part of the My Brother's Keeper initiative, will launch targeted technical assistance initiatives to assist high-need districts struggling with high student dropout rates, particularly among students of color, and with overuse of and disparities in school discipline practices. A complementary White House initiative, Bridging the Word Gap, will support families and caregivers to help ameliorate the language disparities that exist for children from low-income families.

The Department, through OCTAE, will continue to work with Congress on the reauthorization of the [Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006](#) (Perkins). As described in *Investing in America's Future: A Blueprint for Transforming Career and Technical Education*, equity is a cross-cutting theme in the Department's plan for the Perkins reauthorization. The proposal would require states to improve their data collection systems for Perkins by using commonly defined participation and performance indicators, which would lead to increased transparency and accountability for equity gaps. In addition, states would be required to track data at the local level to ensure that CTE programs are serving diverse student populations and communities statewide. The proposal also encourages the use of technology-enabled learning solutions that are accessible to, and usable by, students with disabilities and English learners to create access to high-quality learning opportunities, including to technical courses and virtual work experiences.

The Department will propose a new [Statewide Longitudinal Data System](#) competition in FY 2015 that focuses on requiring states to justify their need for SLDS funds to address a small number of high-priority policy issues, including financial and resource equity, teacher preparation, early learning, and college and career readiness.

While overall graduation rates have increased, graduation rates for students of color continue to lag behind white students. For the graduating class of 2012, the National Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate was 69 percent for black students and 73 percent for Latino students compared to 86 percent for white students.

The Department—in collaboration with the Departments of Labor and HHS, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences—will establish up to 10 Performance Partnership agreements with states, localities, or tribes that provide additional flexibility in using non-mandatory funds that support programs that serve disconnected youth (i.e., individuals between the ages of 14 and 24 who are homeless, in foster care, involved in the juvenile justice system, unemployed, or not enrolled in or at risk of dropping out of an educational institution). States and localities that seek to participate in these pilots will commit to achieve significant improvements for disconnected youth in educational, employment, and other key outcomes in exchange for this new flexibility.

In December 2014, through a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, the Department announced a new priority for Indian Education Demonstration Grants, entitled Native Youth Community Projects. This program will fund projects in a select number of Native communities to support culturally relevant strategies designed to improve the college- and career-readiness of Native children and youth. These projects would support a coordinated intervention strategy chosen by the local community, recognizing that tribal communities are best-positioned to improve outcomes for American Indian/Alaska Native students.

The Department will continue to support postsecondary institutions receiving First in the World grants. For example, funding was provided to a Historically Black University to redesign courses to entail more project-based learning and technology tools that improve student learning and engagement. At a Hispanic-Serving Institution, funds will be used to strengthen curriculum through an integrated set of tools to increase student engagement, especially for high-risk students. Projects will be evaluated at their conclusion, and those showing evidence of success will serve as models for wider dissemination.

Subpopulation Breakout for Metric 4.1.A: National high school graduation rate by race/ethnicity, other characteristics*: School year 2011–12¹

	Total	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black	White	Economically Disadvantaged	Limited English Proficiency	Students with Disabilities
Percentage	80	67	88	73	69	86	72	59	61

* Data are reported based on the requirements for individual states in the Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR).

¹ School year 2012–13 data will be available by Quarter 2 of FY 2015.

Data Source and Frequency of Collection: ED*Facts* universe collection, annual reports; annually

Objective 4.2: Civil Rights Compliance

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

The Department, in consultation with OMB, has determined that performance toward this objective is making noteworthy progress. The Department increased the breadth, depth, and transparency of its civil rights enforcement work while maintaining the quality and pace of resolutions. In FY 2014, OCR received a record high number of complaints (9,989) and resolved more than 9,400 complaints. (By comparison, in 1985 OCR received just 2,199 complaints—80 percent fewer than what OCR now receives in a typical year.) OCR resolved 94 percent of complaints within 180 days of receiving them. It accomplished this with fewer staff than ever before in OCR history. OCR launched 38 proactive investigations (i.e., compliance reviews and directed inquiries) in FY 2014, an increase of 27 percent from FY 2013. OCR resolved 27 proactive investigations—an increase of 59 percent from FY 2013. As OCR achieved this, it expanded the scope of investigations in some of the most pressing civil rights areas—including discipline, sexual violence, and access to college- and career-preparatory courses and opportunities—to ensure it protected all impacted students in its investigations.

The Department released [six comprehensive policy guidance documents](#) addressing urgent and complex questions related to sexual assault on campuses; schools’ obligation not to discriminate in discipline policies or practices based on race, color, or national origin; equitable access to resources, including strong educators, textbooks, college-preparatory courses, extracurricular activities, technology, and facilities; the duty of schools to enroll and remove barriers to enrollment for immigrant and undocumented students; the continuing ability and

discretion of schools to consider race in their programs, outreach, and admissions following the Supreme Court's *Schuetz* decision; and the obligation of charter schools to adhere to the federal civil rights laws.

Challenges and Next Steps:

The Department is experiencing record-high civil rights complaint volume while its OCR staffing level continues to reach new historic lows. These trends will likely continue in FY 2015. The Department expects continued or increased activity and record volumes in resource equity, sexual violence, and discipline cases following the recent release of related guidance on these topics.

The Department will take steps in FY 2015 to ensure that, within budget limitations, its OCR staff are as well supported as possible through training, support, and increased communications and that engagement around how work is conducted enables staff to maximize the pace and efficiency of their work. The Department has requested a significant increase in appropriations in its FY 2016 budget request to address the challenges described above to ensure and maintain robust civil rights compliance and awareness pursuant to this objective.

Selected Strategies to Achieve Goal 4

The Department will implement a number of strategies in FY 2015 intended to reach the goal of closing achievement gaps, ensuring equitable access to the educational resources students need to be prepared for college and career, and ensuring all students have the opportunity to attain a high-quality education provided in a supportive and non-discriminatory environment. The Department's strategies span the P-20 spectrum.

With regard to early education, the Department will support a robust early learning agenda aimed at supporting universal access to high-quality preschool and building state capacity to implement high-quality preschool programs.

The Department will advance its goal of greater access to effective teachers through the review and monitoring of state plans and providing technical assistance pursuant to the Excellent Educators for All initiative. The Department will also issue final regulations related to the performance of teacher preparation programs.

The Department stands ready to work with Congress on strong ESEA reauthorization that ensures opportunity for every child in this country; strengthens our nation economically; and expands support for schools, teachers, and principals, as well as accountability for the progress of all students. The Department's ESEA Flexibility renewal strategy will enable the Department to continue to push for rapid closing of achievement gaps even in the absence of a reauthorized ESEA. The Department's ESEA Flexibility renewal guidance continues to emphasize high-need students in priority, focus, and other Title I schools and ensuring that underserved or disadvantaged students have access to standards and assessments. In addition, the Department will seek to advance new proposals for the SLDS and SIG programs to improve student outcomes and attainment.

The Department will also pursue specific initiatives aimed at supporting historically underserved students, such as low-income students, English learner students, and students with disabilities. The Department will support the My Brother's Keeper initiative by launching targeted technical assistance initiatives to assist high-need districts. The Department will support new initiatives designed to improve teaching and learning in STEM subjects for teachers and students in our

nation's schools. The Department will seek to maximize the potential impact of increased access to broadband and Wi-Fi for high-needs students through the ConnectED initiative. The Department will explore ways to increase school safety, improve the conduciveness of school environments to learning, and reduce racial and socioeconomic isolation in schools. The Department will continue to pursue additional research, teacher preparation, and support for English learners. The Department will pursue equity and support for students with disabilities through IDEA and civil rights enforcement. The Department will advance programs that serve homeless, foster, disconnected, incarcerated, and migrant youth.

In an effort to protect students from discrimination, the Department will increase the number of civil rights policy guidance documents it issues, continue its vigorous investigation of civil rights complaints, launch targeted and proactive civil rights compliance reviews and technical assistance activities, provide more transparency about civil rights processes and resolutions on its website, and expand the Civil Rights Data Collection while providing greater assistance to participating institutions to improve the quality of data submissions.

The Department will foster more equity in career, technical, and adult education programs and support college innovation, affordability, outcomes, and completion, including through issuing new regulations, Pell Grants, and the First in the World program.

Goal 5. Continuous Improvement of the U.S. Education System:

Enhance the education system’s ability to continuously improve through better and more widespread use of data, research and evaluation, evidence, transparency, innovation, and technology.

Goal Leader: Jim Shelton

Objective 5.1: Data Systems and Transparency. Facilitate the development of interoperable longitudinal data systems for early learning through employment to enable data-driven, transparent decision-making by increasing access to timely, reliable, and high-value data.

Objective Leader: Ross Santy

Metric 5.1.A: Number of public data sets included in ED Data Inventory and thus linked to Data.gov or ED.gov websites

Metric 5.1.B: Number of states linking K–12 and postsecondary data with workforce data

Metric 5.1.C: Number of states linking K–12 with early childhood data

Objective 5.2: Privacy. Provide all education stakeholders, from early childhood to adult learning, with technical assistance and guidance to help them protect student privacy while effectively managing and using student information. **Objective Leader: Kathleen Styles**

Metric 5.2.A: Average time to close “cases” (PTAC + FPCO)¹⁹

Objective 5.3: Research, Evaluation, and Use of Evidence. Invest in research and evaluation that builds evidence for education improvement; communicate findings effectively; and drive the use of evidence in decision-making by internal and external stakeholders. **Objective Leaders: Ruth Neild, Melanie Muenzer, and Margo Anderson**

Metric 5.3.A: Percentage of select new²⁰ (non-continuation) competitive grant dollars that reward evidence

Metric 5.3.B: Number of peer-reviewed, full-text resources in the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC)

Metric 5.3.C: Number of reviewed studies in the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) database

Objective 5.4: Technology and Innovation. Accelerate the development and broad adoption of new, effective programs, processes, and strategies, including education technology.

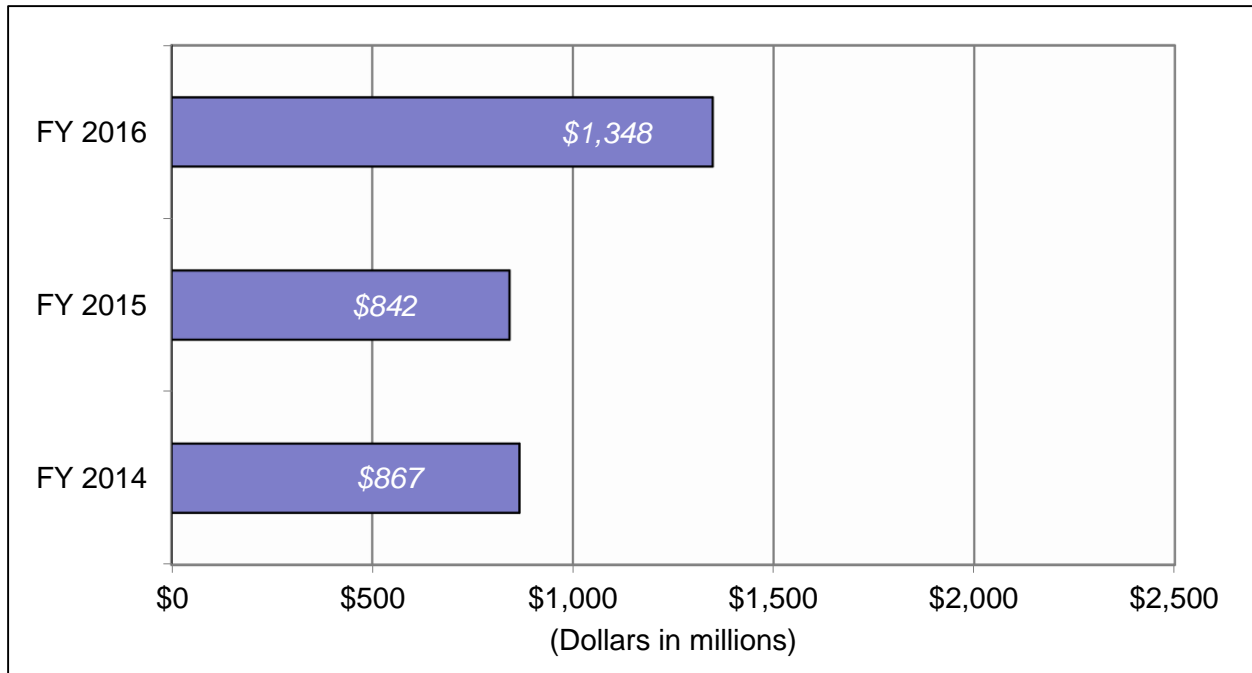
Objective Leader: Richard Culatta

¹⁹ Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) and Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO).

²⁰ “New competitive grant dollars that reward evidence” includes all dollars awarded based on the existence of at least “evidence of promise” in support of a project, per the framework in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (34 CFR Part 75). Consideration of such evidence appears through: eligibility threshold (e.g., in the Investing in Innovation program); absolute priority; competitive priority (earning at least one point for it); or selection criteria (earning at least one point for it). The percentage is calculated compared to the total new grant dollars awarded, excluding awards made by the Institute of Education Sciences, the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, and technical assistance centers, with some exceptions.

Metric 5.4.A: Percentage of schools in the country that have actual Internet bandwidth speeds of at least 100 Mbps

Goal 5 Discretionary Resources



Major Discretionary Programs and Activities²¹ Supporting Goal 5 Performance Metrics [Dollars in Millions]

POC	Account	Obj.	Program	FY 2014 Appropriation	FY 2015 Appropriation	FY 2016 President's Budget
IES	IES	5.3	National assessment	132	129	150
IES	IES	5.3	Regional educational laboratories	54	54	54
IES	IES	5.3	Research in special education	54	54	54
IES	IES	5.3	Research, development, and dissemination	180	180	202
IES	IES	5.1, 5.2	Statewide longitudinal data systems	35	35	70
IES	IES	5.3	Statistics	103	103	125
OII	I&I	5.3	Investing in innovation (proposed legislation)	142	120	300
Subtotal				699	675	955
Other Discretionary Programs/Activities				167	167	393
TOTAL, GOAL 5				867	842	1,348

NOTES: Many programs may have sub-activities that relate to other goals. Detail may not add to total due to rounding.

Public Benefit

The foundation for improving systemic capacity is an infrastructure that supports data-driven decision-making. Stakeholders must have access to relevant, useful data in a timely fashion, and they need the skills to better understand and make use of the data. With relevant and actionable data and the ability to use it, policymakers and educators will be able to appraise

²¹ All the programs listed are discretionary programs, as distinct from mandatory programs. These include both competitive and non-competitive programs.

how states, districts, schools, and students are currently performing; measure progress; pinpoint gaps; improve practice; better address student needs; and make sound decisions. States are developing systems that will yield the valid, reliable data that are essential to achieving these purposes, but there is much more work to do. The Department will continue ongoing efforts to develop effective statewide longitudinal data systems, design voluntary common data standards to increase interoperability, and develop the capacity of institutions and staff to utilize data to improve teaching and learning. These activities will help to ensure that education agencies across the nation have timely access to the data necessary in order to generate an accurate picture of student performance and other critical elements, from early learning programs through postsecondary institutions and the workforce.

The collection, storage, maintenance, and use of data must be responsible and must appropriately protect student privacy. The necessity of achieving responsible data management is highlighted by the passage in the past year of student privacy legislation in 35 different states. Stewards and users of data must remember that these data describe real people and ensure that systems protect the rights of those people. The Department will help practitioners in the field ensure they are properly protecting privacy and communicating with parents and students about the proper use and management of student data.

Systemic improvement also requires research and evaluation so that decision makers at the national, state, and local levels have reliable evidence to inform their actions. The Department aims to support evidence-building so that states, districts, and schools have the information they need to identify effective practices and so they can build evidence about emerging practices and issues. Using evidence to direct funds will ensure scarce dollars are more likely to have the intended impact and empowers states and districts to become more dynamic learning organizations.

The Department’s vision for 21st-century learning also requires that schools have a 21st-century technology infrastructure anchored around high-speed Internet to allow for innovation and personalization in the classroom. States, districts, and schools must have such infrastructure to incorporate cutting-edge methods for strengthening curriculum quality and delivery to meet more rigorous college- and career-ready standards; improving student access and engagement; developing comprehensive, formative, and summative assessment systems; and enhancing data management systems.

Goal 5: Details

Continuous Improvement of the U.S. Education System Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Targets		
		2012	2013	2014	2014	2015	2016
Objective 5.1: Data Systems and Transparency. Facilitate the development of interoperable longitudinal data systems for early learning through employment to enable data-driven, transparent decision-making by increasing access to timely, reliable, and high-value data.							
5.1.A. Number of public data sets included in ED Data Inventory and thus linked to Data.gov or ED.gov websites ¹	Year: 2013 55	NA	55	66	66 MET	79	94
5.1.B. Number of states linking K–12 and postsecondary data with workforce data ²	Year: 2013 12	5	12	20	14 MET	22	25
5.1.C. Number of states linking K–12 with early childhood data ²	Year: 2013 19	8	19	26	23 MET	27	29
Objective 5.2: Privacy. Provide all education stakeholders, from early childhood to adult learning, with technical assistance and guidance to help them protect student privacy while effectively managing and using student information.							
5.2.A. Average time to close “cases” (PTAC + FPCO) ³	Year: 2013 10 days	Not Collected	10	9	9 days MET	8 days	8 days

Continuous Improvement of the U.S. Education System Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Targets		
		2012	2013	2014	2014	2015	2016
Objective 5.3: Research, Evaluation, and Use of Evidence. Invest in research and evaluation that builds evidence for education improvement; communicate findings effectively; and drive the use of evidence in decision-making by internal and external stakeholders.							
5.3.A. Percentage of select new ³ (non-continuation) competitive grant dollars that reward evidence ^{4,5}	Year: 2012 6.5%	6.5%	9.35%	15.9%	9.0% MET	11.0%	14.0%
5.3.B. Number of peer-reviewed, full-text resources in the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) ²	Year: 2013 23,512	NA	23,512	27,292	24,712 MET	31,192	35,692
5.3.C. Number of reviewed studies in the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) database	Year: 2013 9,535	NA	9,535	10,310	9,885 MET	10,235	10,585
Objective 5.4: Technology and Innovation. Accelerate the development and broad adoption of new, effective programs, processes, and strategies, including education technology.							
5.4.A. Percentage of schools in the country that have actual Internet bandwidth speeds of at least 100 Mbps ⁶	Year: 2013 20%	NA	20%	41%	30% MET	50%	70%

NA = Not applicable.

¹ The data sets are available on Data.gov, www.ed.gov, NCES.ed.gov, studentaid.ed.gov, or other ed.gov subdomain websites.

² The Department is revising the performance targets established in the *FY 2013 Annual Performance Report and FY 2015 Annual Performance Plan* for later years to be more ambitious.

³ Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) and Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO).

⁴ “New competitive grant dollars that reward evidence” includes all dollars awarded based on the existence of at least “evidence of promise” in support of a project, per the framework in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (34 CFR Part 75). Consideration of such evidence appears through: eligibility threshold (e.g., in the i3 program); absolute priority; competitive priority (earning at least one point for it); or selection criteria (earning at least one point for it). The percentage is calculated compared to the total new grant dollars awarded, excluding awards made by the Institute of Education Sciences, the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, and technical assistance centers, with some exceptions.

⁵ This metric is aligned with an Agency Priority Goal.

⁶ The data source is changed from what was reported for the *FY 2013 Annual Performance Report and FY 15 Annual Performance Plan*. This change was made because the Department anticipates the Consortium for School Networking E-rate and Infrastructure Survey will be conducted annually and the results are publicly released. The reason this data source was not used last year is because the survey collected data on this metric for the first time this year.

Data Sources and Frequency of Collection:

- 5.1.A.** Data Strategy Team Data Inventory and the public ED Data Inventory at <http://datainventory.ed.gov>; quarterly
- 5.1.B.** State Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) grant monitoring (monthly updates from states, annual performance reports, final performance reports, and site visits); quarterly
- 5.1.C.** SLDS grant monitoring (monthly updates from states, annual performance reports, final performance reports, and site visits); quarterly
- 5.2.A.** Case Tracking System (CTS); quarterly
- 5.3.A.** Department calculations based upon multiple Department-controlled data sources, including G5; annually
- 5.3.B.** Education Resources Information Center (ERIC); quarterly
- 5.3.C.** What Works Clearinghouse (WWC); quarterly
- 5.4.A.** Education Superhighway (for baseline), Consortium for School Networking (CoSN)/AASA E-rate Infrastructure Survey (for FY 2014 actual data); annually

Note on performance metrics and targets: These metrics were established as a part of the *FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan*. Metrics may be updated or revised to reflect awareness of more accurate data or clarifications. Such updates or revisions are identified in footnotes.

Analysis and Next Steps by Objective

Objective 5.1: Data Systems and Transparency

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

The implementation strategy for this objective is focused on providing technical assistance to states to help them successfully implement data systems that will serve their education needs. The [Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems program](#) works with a State Support Team (SST) of experienced government and industry experts in the area of data systems development. Much of the work needed for this objective is dependent upon state actions to implement SLDS grant plans. SLDS program staff assist by reviewing state plans and reports, deploying targeted technical assistance, and monitoring states' progress. Weekly status report meetings are used to keep all Program Officers and Program Analysts aware of developments, and to focus needed resources on the states with the greatest need at that point in time.

Collaboration is key to the success of this objective. SLDS staff work frequently with other Department programs, including the RTT-ELC, as well as coordinate with Department of Labor's Wage Data Quality Information (WDQI) Program.

A secondary implementation strategy is for the Department to model good data practices. For this reason, several performance metrics for objective 5.1 are designed around the Department rather than the states. The Department sets an example by highlighting its efforts to make data more accessible, as well as measuring the amount of web traffic on a specific data-centric web page.

The Department's DST also supports this objective through its sponsorship of the ED Data Inventory and Common Education Data Standards (CEDS). As noted previously, the DST is an intra-agency group of volunteers who coordinate Department data activities. The Department received favorable publicity in FY 2014 for publishing an enhanced data inventory. While the inventory is a work in progress, the public may consult it to explore data that the Department holds.

CEDS successes in FY 2014 included staff work in conjunction with SLDS' SST staff to assist state efforts to map data models to CEDS. The Department awarded a task order to continue technical support for CEDS later than initially planned, resulting in a gap in support services during the fiscal year. Despite this support interruption, the activities of CEDS related to this objective were successfully completed.

The Department is modeling transparency by publishing the ED Data Inventory. The system provides a new interface for public users to understand data collected and released by the Department. After the initial launch in November 2013 (i.e., the first quarter of FY 2014), work on the inventory has focused upon increasing the links between items in the inventory and publicly available Department data sets and upon improving functionality that will enable program offices to more directly interact with the inventory to ensure accurate representation of their data.

Challenges and Next Steps:

State support for longitudinal data system development remains the largest dependency and area of risk for progress in this area. The SLDS grant program was not designed to provide complete support for state system development and operations. Rather, SLDS program objectives depend upon additional state commitments. In FY 2014 several states spent time and

resources addressing internal forces threatening their continued support of the developing systems. Key barriers and challenges include districts' and states' limited resources; state procurement practices; lack of engagement with needed district and state stakeholders; difficulties with cross-agency governance and data sharing; ongoing leadership changes at SEAs, partner agencies, and at the state level; misconceptions about data collection and the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), state laws, and other regulations related to privacy and confidentiality; lack of training on how to use data to make policy and instructional decisions; and concerns from stakeholders about the long-term sustainability of data systems without long-term federal funding.

Cross-sector linkages between K-12, early childhood, postsecondary, and workforce typically require a champion outside the SEA (e.g., a governor's office), but political support for widespread data collection and linkage varies. Additionally, state education and labor agencies are relatively new partners so they are in the process of figuring out how to work together.

SLDS progress in FY 2014 included steps by many *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* (ARRA) and FY 2009 grantees to complete their grants. FY 2012 grantees still maintain active grants, and a new competition will be held in FY 2015. That competition will focus on the actual use of SLDS data within the state, built around policy "use cases" to meet state needs in topics ranging from the need to connect early childhood data to understanding return-on-investment for K-12 investments. Additional infrastructure and development costs will be included in the grant only when those "build" activities are essential to support or enable the state's proposed use(s) of the system.

This year the Department made great strides with the ED Data Inventory and secured contractor resources for FY 2015 to support the development of a system to "feed" future data collections. Future plans also include a process for integrating all existing data collections.

The DST should continue connecting program officers from multiple offices across the Department that would benefit from state development or use of SLDS systems. Building such collaborations, possibly coordinated by the DST, could be beneficial to the Department for ensuring that progress continues to be made on objective 5.1.

Finally, the good practice that the Department wants to model to the states would be enhanced were the Department to take the DST to the next level in governance. Currently the DST is a volunteer organization that only coordinates data, rather than a true governance body.

Objective 5.2: Privacy

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

The Department has focused on ramping up technical assistance around privacy to schools, districts, states, and third-party online educational services providers. Over the past year, the Department issued guidance regarding educational technology and transparency and provided technical assistance to states. Data collection on the completion of inquiries began in a structured fashion in 2013, creating a baseline of 10 days to respond to "cases," which refers to requests for quick, informal responses to routine questions related to student privacy. While complex questions relating to FERPA, data security, and data management may necessitate internal discussion and research, less complex inquiries can now be addressed more quickly with recently released guidance. During the first half of FY 2014, a review of existing workflow processes specific to providing both formal and informal responses to requests for guidance and technical assistance led to process improvements in workflow efficiency. These new processes

included establishing a new preliminary triage step to better match inquiries and complaints to the appropriate staff and contractor resources, improving the case tracking and reporting metrics, and better collaboration and workflow management. The Department made selective use of contractor resources in support of federal efforts. As a result, the average time to respond to cases decreased from 10 to 9 days, meeting the Department's FY 2014 performance target.

Additionally, the Department has multiple offices and TA centers providing assistance around privacy to the field. The Privacy, Information, and Records Management Services (PIRMS) office assisted in coordinating work among offices and TA centers. For example, the Department implemented biweekly meetings with partners such as the Office of Education Technology to present a coherent public position about privacy protections in personalized learning and with OSERS to provide TA around IDEA confidentiality provisions.

Challenges and Next Steps:

Resource constraints present a number of challenges in providing TA to approximately 14,000 school districts and several thousand institutions of higher education. While the primary target audience for TA is schools and school districts, the Department also provides support on a limited basis to the third-party vendor community. By working directly with vendors, schools and districts are afforded a greater assortment of privacy-friendly resources.

An additional challenge remains in updating systems and redesigning processes, both for technical assistance and complaints. FY 2014 was the first year the Department had significant metrics for evaluating service delivery, and the Department will continue to use these metrics to improve assistance provided to education stakeholders.

While the Department met the FY 2014 performance target in this area, continued progress is limited by resources and by the slowness of resolution for major policy issues relating to FERPA. Activity in the field on student privacy issues, from new state statutes, to policy statements, to pledges, to coordinating with other enforcement agencies presents a challenge in mobilizing proactive efforts.

Objective 5.3: Research, Evaluation, and Use of Evidence

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

The Department, in consultation with OMB, has determined that performance toward this objective is making noteworthy progress. Systemic improvement requires research and evaluation so that decision makers at the national, state, and local levels have reliable evidence to identify the effective practices and to inform their actions. Supporting more discretionary grants with evidence will ensure scarce dollars are more likely to have the intended impact and will empower states and districts to become more dynamic learning organizations.

The Department's Evidence Planning Group (EPG) continues to identify opportunities for discretionary grant programs to use evidence-related priorities or selection criteria in competitions. In FY 2014, a total of five competitions in OII, OESE, and OPE incentivized evidence in competitions through eligibility requirements, competitive preference priorities, and selection criteria. In addition, four competitions asked that applicants design evaluations of their proposed projects that will produce evidence. The Department surpassed the FY 2014 performance target for programs rewarding evidence in grant competitions. In addition, the EPG has met with each of the Department's grant-making offices to discuss appropriate uses of

evidence in FY 2015 competitions. Projections include, at a minimum, the following discretionary grant programs that will reward evidence in their FY 2015 competitions:

- Supporting Effective Educator Development
- First in the World
- Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools
- i3
- TRIO—Student Support Services

The metric above tracks the Department’s progress in incentivizing applicants to build on evidence of “what works” and to generate new evidence in the course of their grants. Two other metrics—one related to the WWC and one to the ERIC—track the Department’s progress in providing unbiased, rigorous assessments of “what works” and in making education research widely available and easily accessible. The Department believes that progress in these metrics will contribute to the information flow that is essential to pushing forward in promising areas of education research and development.

The WWC reviews and summarizes studies of the effectiveness of education interventions and, during FY 2014, surpassed by 4.3 percent the Department’s target for the number of studies reviewed. Reviews of studies submitted by applicants to Department grant competitions contributed to the larger-than-anticipated number of studies reviewed.

Likewise, in FY 2014, the Department updated its ERIC selection policy to prioritize acquisition of peer-reviewed, full-text education research and began renegotiating agreements with content providers to enable ERIC to acquire the full text of peer-reviewed articles from research supported with FY 2012 or later funding from the Department’s IES. This work contributed to surpassing the FY 2014 annual performance target by 3.9 percent for the number of full-text, peer-reviewed resources in ERIC.

Challenges and Next Steps:

The process to collect data and track progress against the goal is still under development, and using evidence to award competitive grants entails a shift in culture and capacity building across the Department to do it well. Building evidence into competitions is also resource intensive in terms of program staff capacity, grantee capacity, and the review process. Additionally, goal targets are based on reasonable projections about which competitive grant programs may make new awards in this fiscal year, but the actual dollar amount awarded will depend on final appropriation amounts and other funding decisions and trade-offs. Grantees vary in their comfort with and understanding of evaluation and use of evidence, yet the Department has limited resources to support grantees in conducting rigorous evaluations that would produce evidence of effectiveness.

The Department’s leadership will continue explaining to internal stakeholders how the new evidence framework in EDGAR can be used in upcoming discretionary grant competitions to reward evidence. For example:

- EPG is meeting with program offices throughout the Department to identify ways to incorporate evidence into discretionary grant competitions and in formula programs, particularly SIG.

- EPG is also exploring ways to support program offices that choose to incorporate evidence and build capacity departmentwide. For example, EPG is exploring the establishment of a departmentwide contract that would provide for technical assistance to grantees on their evaluations, particularly impact evaluations that are intended to produce studies that meet WWC standards. Additionally, IES has collaborated with program offices to recruit peer reviewers familiar with the WWC standards, which will increase scrutiny of applicants' proposed plans for rigorous evaluations. Finally, OII and IES are providing training to Department staff on logic models and other elements of the evidence framework to better inform our work at the Department and to provide better assistance to our grantees.
- The Department's RELs continue to develop resources and conduct webinars on the creation of logic models to support program design and evaluation.
- EPG has compiled several evidence and evaluation resources and is in the process of identifying a central location in which to house them so that all Department staff can access them.

As the pace of evidence generation quickens, a key challenge for the WWC is to quickly update Intervention Reports—that is, summaries of *all* of the research on a given intervention (not just a summary of one study)—with new findings as they become available. With this in mind, the Department has begun a major effort to improve the WWC databases in order to support dynamically generated reports that can auto-update when a new study of an intervention is reviewed. The Department also intends for the WWC to use this database to create simpler, more graphic summaries of evidence for practitioner and policymaker audiences.

Next steps for the Department's ERIC investment include incorporating a search function that allows users to identify studies in the ERIC database that were reviewed by the WWC and that met standards. In this way, the greater integration of the Department's WWC and ERIC investments will contribute to the "virtuous cycle" of using and producing research evidence that also is supported by grant programs that incentivize use of research.

Objective 5.4: Technology and Innovation

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

The Department of Education, in consultation with OMB, has determined that performance toward this objective is making noteworthy progress. The Department had many successes during FY 2014, including a call to the country's 16,000 superintendents who lead district, charter, and private schools to join the Department in taking the Future Ready District Pledge. By taking this pledge, superintendents commit to develop, implement, and share technology plans with other districts so they can learn from successes and challenges along the way. The Future Ready District Pledge offers a roadmap to achieve successful personalized digital learning for every student and affirms a commitment by districts to move as quickly as possible toward the shared vision of preparing students for success in college, careers, and citizenship. Based on input from the superintendents, the White House hosted a "ConnectED to the Future" superintendent summit that recognized superintendents from across the country for their leadership and provided opportunities for leaders to share lessons learned and help disseminate promising approaches for transforming learning through technology from across the nation.

To support the work of the superintendents, the Department collected a series of best practices for connecting schools, providing devices, and preparing teachers to use technology effectively. These practices were published in guides released at the "ConnectED to the Future"

superintendent summit: *Future Ready Schools: Empowering Educators through Professional Learning* and *Future Ready Schools: Building Technology Infrastructure for Learning*. The Department also issued guidance to state and local superintendents to clarify that technology and digital learning can be an allowable use of more than \$27 billion in federal funds under the ESEA and IDEA.

The Department provided direct support to the President's ConnectED Initiative, which sets four clear goals to transition to digital learning across the country in five years: Upgraded Connectivity, Access to Learning Devices, Supported Teachers, and Digital Learning Resources (see Explanation and Analysis of Progress for objective 4.1 for more information). As part of that effort, the FCC is investing \$2 billion over the next two years to expand high-speed Internet connectivity dramatically for America's schools and libraries and another \$2 billion for wireless connectivity within schools—connecting 20 million more students to next-generation broadband and wireless. In addition, private sector companies have also committed more than \$2 billion to deliver cutting-edge technologies to classrooms, including devices, free software, teacher professional development, and home wireless connectivity.

In November 2014, the Department co-hosted, with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, a convening at the White House on innovation in higher education, which focused on providing expert guidance in technology models and issues relevant to postsecondary education, competency-based education, and workforce development. This kicked off an intensive collaboration with the White House and other agencies to conceptualize an Online Skills Academy in anticipation of a Department of Labor grant solicitation.

Finally, in response to the President's call to action to create compelling educational software, in collaboration with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, the Department hosted the first-ever White House Education Game Jam, the culminating event of an education games week. Over the weekend of September 6–7, 2014, more than 100 game developers and dozens of teachers, learning researchers, and students gathered to develop fun, innovative ways to address content that teachers and students had previously identified as particularly difficult to teach and learn via traditional approaches. This will be followed by the creation of an app developer's toolkit—the first guidance from the Department specifically for developers of educational software. The Department's goal through the Game Jam and the development of the toolkit is to increase interest in the development of highly engaging tools and apps for education and show that college- and career-ready standards can be achieved in creative and engaging ways.

Challenges and Next Steps:

Several challenges remain in meeting the goals of this objective, including the fact that there is no ongoing funding for activities to support the development and adoption of new technologies. External barriers to success include educating the public about privacy and data security (leading to setbacks in the ability to use data to create personalized learning systems), difficulty measuring effectiveness without a robust evaluation program, and difficulty showing impact without data collection.

Risk mitigation strategies include requesting ongoing budget funding, seeking external foundation funding to support the work, and proposing rapid evaluation of effectiveness of technologies through the pooled evaluation fund authority. Concerns around privacy and data security are more difficult to predict, but continue to be addressed through outreach and communication efforts. Although external data sources indicate that the established FY 2014 performance target was met, more reliable and robust surveys of the state of the field in regards

to the appropriate and effective use of connectivity and technology will be key to accurately assessing the Department's contributions to this goal.

Selected Strategies to Achieve Goal 5

Several themes run across Goal 5 implementation strategies. Collaboration will be a key strategy needed to implement all objectives, including collaboration within the Department, collaboration within government, and collaboration with the education community as a whole. Sufficient resources are also key to all objectives in Goal 5, both federal resources and (in the case of the SLDS program) state resources as well. Privacy is both a stand-alone objective and a theme in other objectives. The Department must address valid privacy concerns and dispel privacy myths.

Another theme for success in Goal 5 is developing sustainable, scalable solutions for using data and evidence in decision-making, which will require the Department to be both efficient and effective. Carefully reviewing studies against WWC standards is painstaking work and challenging to carry out at scale and in a short time frame. The Department is taking deliberate steps to increase the number of reviewers who are certified to carry out WWC reviews and to procure contracts that allow the Department to act nimbly to obtain these reviews.

Goal 6. U.S. Department of Education Capacity:

Improve the organizational capacities of the Department to implement the *Strategic Plan*.

Goal Leader: Andrew Jackson

Objective 6.1: Effective Workforce. Continue to build a skilled, diverse, and engaged workforce within the Department. **Objective Leader: Cassandra Cuffee-Graves**

Metric 6.1.A: Staffing gaps percentage²²

Metric 6.1.B: EVS engagement index²³

Metric 6.1.C: Time to hire

Metric 6.1.D: Effective Communication Index²⁴

Objective 6.2: Risk Management. Improve the Department's program efficacy through comprehensive risk management, and grant and contract monitoring. **Objective Leaders: Phil Maestri and Jim Ropelewski**

Metric 6.2.A: Percentage of A-133 Single Audits Overdue for resolution

Metric 6.2.B: Compliance rate of contractor evaluation performance reports²⁵

Objective 6.3: Implementation and Support. Build Department capacity and systems to support states' and other grantees' implementation of reforms that result in improved outcomes, and keep the public informed of promising practices and new reform initiatives. **Objective Leader: Heather Rieman**

Metric 6.3.A: Percentage of states who annually rate the Department's technical assistance as helping build state capacity to implement education reforms

Objective 6.4: Productivity and Performance Management. Improve workforce productivity through information technology enhancements, telework expansion efforts, more effective process performance management systems, and state-of-the-art leadership and knowledge management practices. **Objective Leaders: Danny Harris, Cassandra Cuffee-Graves, and Denise Carter**

Metric 6.4.A: Number of ED information technology (IT) security incidents

²² Percent resulting from dividing number of all agency positions into unfilled agency vacancies.

²³ Based on positive Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS, also referred to as "EVS") responses.

²⁴ Based on positive FEVS responses.

²⁵ As reported in the Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS) reporting tool at www.ppirs.gov.

Government use of PPIRS is required by Federal Acquisition Regulation Subpart 42.15, and governmentwide annual reporting performance targets are set by the Office of Management and Budget in the March 6, 2013, memorandum titled, "[Improving the Collection and Use of Information about Contractor Performance and Integrity](#)." The PPIRS compliance metric "calculates the number of completed evaluations against the contract actions that should have had an evaluation completed. This number is displayed as a percentage" (https://www.cpars.gov/cparsfiles/pdfs/Improving_Compliance.pdf).

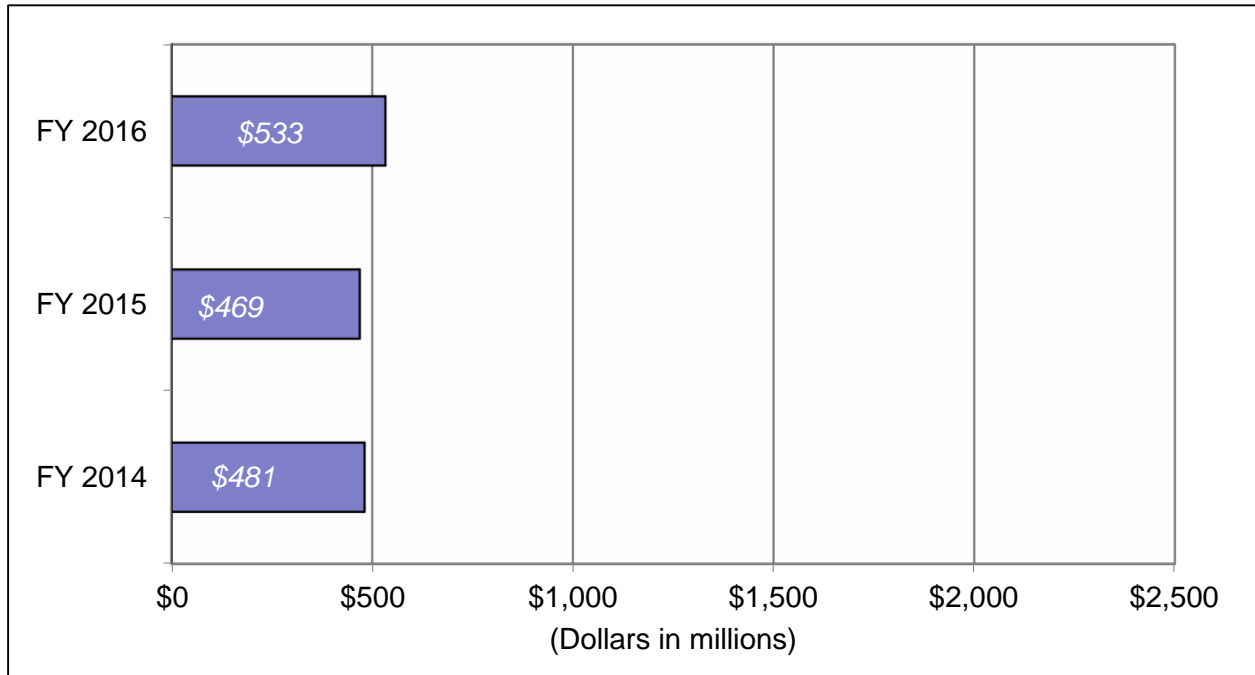
Metric 6.4.B: EVS Results-Based Performance Culture Index²⁶

Metric 6.4.C: EVS Leadership and Knowledge Management Index²⁷

Metric 6.4.D: Total usable square footage

Metric 6.4.E: Rent cost

Goal 6 Discretionary Resources



Major Discretionary Programs and Activities²⁸ Supporting Goal 6 Performance Metrics [Dollars in Millions]

POC	Account	Obj.	Program	FY 2014 Appropriation	FY 2015 Appropriation	FY 2016 President's Budget
OIG	OIG		Office of Inspector General	58	58	59
	DM/PA		Program Administration: Building modernization	-	-	14
	DM/PA		Program Administration: Salaries and expenses	423	411	460
TOTAL, GOAL 6				481	469	533

NOTES: Many programs may have sub-activities that relate to other goals. Detail may not add to total due to rounding.

Public Benefit

To ensure the achievement of the Department’s mission critical objectives, grants and contract management will remain a strategic focus for improvement in long- and short-term initiatives. Additionally, strengthening human capital strategies, competencies and resources, along with

²⁶ Based on positive FEVS (also referred to as “EVS”) responses.

²⁷ Based on positive FEVS responses.

²⁸ All the programs listed are discretionary programs, as distinct from mandatory programs. These include both competitive and non-competitive programs.

the continuous improvement of IT security and technologically enhanced work environments, continue to be priorities needed to support those objectives. The stated initiatives aim to support grantees, schools, students, families, and communities in achieving their educational and economic goals, while also continuing to hold recipients of the Department’s funding accountable to clear financial requirements and legal obligations.

The Department will also continue to focus on human capital management and acquire and build a skilled and knowledgeable workforce; rethink how it monitors and intervenes with high-risk grantees, as well as contractors; enhance workforce productivity through information technology and performance management; and transform the way the Department interacts with states, districts, institutions of higher education, and other grantees and stakeholders across the country. The expected transformation will result in improved performance results, increased stakeholder collaboration, and greater employee engagement.

In FY 2014, the Department developed a new approach to workforce and succession planning and used a strategic approach to identify organizational capabilities, establish areas of expertise and challenges, and to continue building a sustainable, skilled workforce.

Goal 6: Details

U.S. Department of Education Capacity Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Targets		
		2012	2013	2014	2014	2015	2016
Objective 6.1: Effective Workforce. Continue to build a skilled, diverse, and engaged workforce within the Department.							
6.1.A. Staffing gaps percentage	Year: 2013 15%	Not Collected	15%	4%	15% MET	15%	15%
6.1.B. EVS engagement index ¹	Year: 2012 64.7%	64.7%	66%	67%	66.0% MET	69%	71%
6.1.C. Time to hire ²	Year: 2013 65%	Not Collected	65%	85%	66% MET	68%	69%
6.1.D. Effective Communication Index ³	Year: 2012 48%	48%	49.6%	50%	49% MET	50%	51%
Objective 6.2: Risk Management. Improve the Department’s program efficacy through comprehensive risk management and grant and contract monitoring.							
6.2.A. Percentage of A-133 Single Audits Overdue for resolution	Year: 2012 57%	57%	52%	37%	50% MET	43%	37%
6.2.B. Compliance rate of contractor evaluation performance reports	Year: 2013 85%	Not Collected	85%	97%	95% MET	100%	100%
Objective 6.3: Implementation and Support. Build Department capacity and systems to support states’ and other grantees’ implementation of reforms that result in improved outcomes, and keep the public informed of promising practices and new reform initiatives.							
6.3.A. Percentage of states who annually rate the Department’s technical assistance as helping build state capacity to implement education reforms	Year: 2013 54%	Not Collected	54%	75%	58% MET	67%	77%
Objective 6.4: Productivity and Performance Management. Improve workforce productivity through information technology enhancements, telework expansion efforts, more effective process performance management systems, and state-of-the-art leadership and knowledge management practices.							
6.4.A. Number of ED IT security incidents ⁴	Year: 2012 756	756	755	445	718 MET	682	648
6.4.B. EVS Results-Based Performance Culture Index	Year: 2012 53%	53%	54%	56%	54% MET	56%	57%
6.4.C. EVS Leadership and Knowledge Management Index	Year: 2012 60%	60%	61%	61%	61% MET	62%	63%

U.S. Department of Education Capacity Indicators of Success	Baseline	Actuals			Targets		
		2012	2013	2014	2014	2015	2016
6.4.D. Total usable square footage ⁵	Year: 2012 1,563,641	1,563,641	1,573,317	1,533,239	1,525,937 NOT MET	1,525,937	1,459,937
6.4.E. Rent cost ⁶	Year: 2014 \$74.3M	\$64.6M	\$71.7M	\$74.1M	\$74.3M MET	\$80.3M	\$80.3M

NA = Not applicable.

¹ The Department is revising the performance targets established in the *FY 2013 Annual Performance Report and FY 2015 Annual Performance Plan* for later years to be more ambitious.

² Time from the date the hiring request is received in HCCS to the initial employment offer. 2013 data are based on OPM's 80-day model. During Quarter 3 of FY 2014, the Department began basing time-to-hire on 90 days, which factors in position classification at the beginning of the hiring cycle, to provide greater accuracy and improve reengineering effort to gain efficiencies. The baseline data are not being changed due to the nominal difference in the time-to-hire when reviewing the number of actions processed in each quarter.

³ Positive response rate to FEVS (also referred to as "EVS") questions 53, 58, and 64.

⁴ An incident, as defined under federal guidelines, is a violation of computer (cyber) policy or practices. Some incidents, by nature, are significant and require reporting to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT). The significant reportable incidents are associated with unauthorized access; successful denial of service attacks; successful installation and execution of malicious code; and improper usage—i.e., personally identifiable information (PII) breaches.

⁵ Baseline updated to reflect previous year's data.

⁶ The Department of Education currently leases 27 buildings, occupying 1,533,239 usable square feet of space, costing \$74.3M in FY 2014. By FY 2018, the Department will reduce its number of leases to 25 and its space footprint from 1,533,239 to 1,202,319 (21%). Without the above footprint reductions, the Department's FY 2018 rent costs would escalate to \$91M; however, the Space Modernization Initiative reduces the FY 2018 cost by \$23.5 million (25.7%) to \$67.8M. Rent savings in FY 2015–17 are offset by rent escalations in those fiscal years. Assumptions: 1) All leased buildings: 2% is applied for anticipation of CPI (Consumer Price Index) annual increases on the anniversary date of the active lease/occupancy agreement (OA); and 2.5% is applied for anticipation of annual tax increases; 2) All federal buildings: 2.5% is applied for operating cost escalations on the anniversary date of the active OA; 3) 20% is applied to all federal buildings after an OA has expired and a new OA is unavailable. (Projected increase on the appraisal); 4) 40% is applied to all leased buildings after an OA has expired and a new OA is unavailable. (Projected increase on the market rent); 5) If a new OA is unavailable, 3 months early rent is applied to all buildings that are relocating due to possible Department delays. Example: Changes made to the designs after space specifications are completed; and 6) 3 months late rent is applied to all buildings that are relocating due to possible Department delays. Example: Delays in returning space back to rentable condition. Actual for FY 2014 varies slightly from baseline to reflect 4th quarter data versus baseline established in 1st quarter.

Data Sources and Frequency of Collection:

- 6.1.A. Mission Critical Occupation (MCO) Staffing Gap Report; quarterly
- 6.1.B. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS); annually
- 6.1.C. Workforce Transformation Tracking System (WTTS) and Entrance on Duty System (EOS); quarterly
- 6.1.D. OPM Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS); annually
- 6.2.A. Office of the Chief Financial Officer's (OCFO) Audit Accountability & Resolution Tracking System (AARTS); annually
- 6.2.B. Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS) www.ppirs.gov "PPIRS Compliance Report"; annually
- 6.3.A. The Reform Support Network Annual State and CoP Leads Survey (administered Q3 2014); annually
- 6.4.A. Operational Vulnerability Management Solution (OVMS) System; quarterly
- 6.4.B. OPM FEVS; annually
- 6.4.C. OPM FEVS; annually
- 6.4.D. Department's Master Space Management Plan; annually
- 6.4.E. Department's Master Space Management Plan; annually

Note on performance metrics and targets: These metrics were established as a part of the *FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan*. Metrics may be updated or revised to reflect awareness of more accurate data or clarifications. Such updates or revisions are identified in footnotes.

Analysis and Next Steps by Objective

Objective 6.1: Effective Workforce

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

The Department's strategic goals support postsecondary education, career and technical education, adult education, elementary and secondary education, early learning, equity, and continuous improvement of the United States education system. To accomplish this, the Department's workforce must be in the right position, at the right time, and with the right skills, led by skilled and engaging supervisors and managers. The Department is revising supervisory training to expand core skills such as human capital management, budgeting, and information technology, and it will be published by the end of FY 2015. The Department is focusing on enhancing employee productivity by aligning priorities and goals at every level in the organization with the Department's strategic objectives. The Department has seen incremental progress in FEVS results. Since 2010, the Department has improved scores in the Employee Engagement Index of the FEVS from 62.6 percent to 66.6 percent in 2014. In FY 2015, the Department will implement a 12-month engagement strategy based on the FEVS results and monitor progress continuously.

The Department has an important role to play in providing differentiated support and technical assistance to those pursuing this challenging work—even while continuing to improve the quality and reduce the burden of its fundamental stewardship function. To do so, the Human Capital Office worked with all Departmental offices to use the Workforce Transformation and Tracking System (WTTTS). This system allows the Department to track the hiring of employees with the right skills. In conjunction with the Department's Talent Management System, career paths and developmental plans help retain and train Department employees.

Human capital management plays a critical role in the Department's ability to fulfill its mission. By effectively planning for workforce changes, addressing skill gaps, and providing options for recruitment, staffing, and retention, the Department is better poised to provide consistent oversight, execution, and support for its various programs.

Challenges and Next Steps:

The Department and its principal offices (POs) will evaluate offices' current and future competency needs and begin recruiting and hiring to meet those needs. Each PO must continue its efforts of evaluating each position prior to its becoming vacant to determine where there are opportunities to begin internal job sharing or training, while building pipelines for entry level personnel. The Department will continue working with POs to ensure current staff are receiving the right training to meet the mission needs and future hiring of staff is based on those needs. The Department realizes the challenge of budget constraints coupled with low attrition, which can limit the ability to hire under current employee ceilings.

Objective 6.2: Risk Management

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

Risk management plays a critical role in enhancing the capacity of grantees to implement needed reforms. It helps assess the ability of applicants to fulfill grant requirements, focus grant monitoring efforts, and identify performance challenges that can be addressed through measures such as enhanced technical assistance. Risk management is also an essential aspect of contract monitoring, which is achieved by actively assessing program and

performance risks inherent in contracts through oversight and support and issuance of policy and guidance to program and contract officials.

The Department significantly reduced the number of overdue audits by resolving more audits timely and reducing the backlog of existing overdue audits. Of all A-133 audits that were unresolved at the end of FY 2014, only 37 percent were overdue. The Department also greatly increased compliance with contractor evaluation performance reporting requirements, and has the best compliance rate in the federal government with 97 percent.

Challenges and Next Steps:

The Department will continue supporting offices with the greatest number of overdue audits to reduce the number of overdue audits. In addition, the Department will increase compliance with contractor evaluation performance reporting requirements. In FY 2014, the system for recording past performance changed to allow contractors a 60-day comment period instead of the previous 30-day period. Unless the contractor comments earlier, the agency receives credit for compliance only after this 60-day comment period. In FY 2015, every Government agency's compliance target is 100 percent, even though only two agencies met their FY 2014 performance targets (Departments of Education and Housing and Urban Development), and the Department of Education was the only agency to exceed 95 percent. Based on performance to date and the change to the contractor comment period, reaching the remaining 5 percent to achieve the 100 percent target will be a challenge and require significant Department resources. The Departmental management will work with Contracting Officers to ensure that Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS) compliance metrics reflect accurate information on outstanding contractor evaluation performance reports.

Objective 6.3: Implementation and Support

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

One of the primary challenges facing SEAs today is the shift from a compliance focus to one of building capabilities and capacity needed to lead education reform initiatives effectively and support school districts and schools with performance management. Over the past 12 years, SEAs have taken on stronger leadership and policy development roles, and key federal programs, such as programs under the ESEA as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB), including SIG, as well as programs under ARRA, such as RTT, have also helped to create a more robust role for SEAs and their increasing role of supporting districts and schools.

In response to this new environment, the Department recently implemented a reorganization of OESE to consolidate a number of offices into the new OSS. The OSS is designed to provide improved state-centered support across related Department programs. The Department is using this reorganization to rethink, redesign, and rebuild core grant administration functions in order to provide more transparent, higher quality, and better differentiated support to states. The reorganization was approved in the fourth quarter of FY 2014 and the OSS was created on October 5, 2014. The matrix organization model adopted by the OSS ensures that a state has a primary contact within the Department and this individual serves as the liaison across key state-administered grant programs and major federal funding streams that flow to each state and district. By consolidating processes and technical assistance, the Department will be able to more effectively customize its outreach to individual states and model the critical partnerships that states should have with their respective districts. The OSS builds on the state-focused

support work that the Department has undertaken over the past several years through RTT, SIG, and ESEA Flexibility.

Challenges and Next Steps:

Transitioning to the new OSS is a significant change that will take time to implement fully. OESE and OSS leadership are establishing new processes and procedures, and the transition will take place gradually over the next year. Challenges include clear delegation of responsibilities, appropriate professional development and support for staff, and relevant outreach and communication internally and externally.

Building new and stronger relationships with states and stakeholders who are affected by Department reforms and grants requires significant outreach and effort. The Department will have continuous communication with stakeholders and grantees to share lessons learned across grantees and non-grantees and with the general public. The Department will use its communications channels, such as its printed publications, the [Homerroom blog site](#), the PROGRESS blog, the Education Reform Hub, an OSS technical assistance site, YouTube videos, and speeches to tell the stories of success so that the public can learn from reforms being implemented at the state and local levels.

Objective 6.4: Productivity and Performance Management

Explanation and Analysis of Progress:

The Department of Education, in consultation with OMB, has highlighted this objective as a focus area of improvement. The Department's workforce must be in the right position, at the right time, with the right skills, and at the right cost, led by skilled and engaging supervisors and managers to support its mission. The Department is focusing on enhancing employee productivity and aligning performance management practices with Departmental strategic objectives by aligning priorities and goals at every level in the organization. The Department must manage changing technology, a more mobile workforce, and increased efficiency of workspace.

To date, the Department eliminated staffing classification backlogs, reduced the shortage of trained human capital practitioners, and established performance metrics to align with competency-based training. The Department established performance metrics for all Office of Management employees to include customer service, operations or production work, and general project management. In addition, the performance metrics established a link to all federal certification programs. All employees' certification programs are part of their Individual Development Plans and are tailored to their areas of responsibility. Both employees and managers are held accountable for performance standards at their grade level.

The Department reduced the number of reportable IT security incidents during FY 2014. The reduction is due to a better educated workforce, improved IT security response capabilities, and the introduction of new automated capabilities that intercept a hostile cyber activity or alert IT security response teams before such an adverse event becomes an actual IT security incident.

The Department completed development of a five-year project plan and a business case of the Department's Space Modernization Program. Such a major project involves many underlying elements to ensure success, including training managers for transition, improving management of a more remote workforce, and changing the nature of a performance culture. The Department revised the related internal guidance document with targets for space utilization rates consistent with OMB and the General Services Administration's (GSA) Freeze the Footprint program

requirements. The Department is also updating its telework policies and helping managers learn to oversee employees when they are not in the office physically. The Department has started to implement a more robust telework program by providing mobile workers with 21st century IT tools, strengthening performance management practices, promoting cultural acceptance of a mobile workforce, and offering a new practical training workshop on how to implement telework policies effectively. Finally, the Department increased records management assistance to POs as they assessed their current records inventory and identified records that could be purged, archived, or digitized to reduce their file space footprint.

Challenges and Next Steps:

POs should focus on developing and achieving measurable results within their human capital performance metrics. Training managers on writing meaningful performance metrics, providing ongoing feedback, and providing clear examples of accomplishments for each performance level will be critical for both managers and employees. Future metrics must align with the Department's strategic plan and should cascade from executive, to manager and supervisor, and to the workforce, ensuring that all Department employees have performance metrics that link to the strategic plan.

The Department continued implementation and optimization of its automated response capabilities. These efforts will reduce the number of security incidents in FY 2015 and FY 2016. Additional training for the Department's third-party partners will reduce the potential for Personally Identifiable Information (PII) disclosures and ensure the proper protection of our customers' information.

Employee engagement is a critical component in supporting the changes to workspace, work patterns, and technology. The General Services Administration will continue to provide support through its National Workplace Engagement program. The Department will work with each PO to make the overall transition successful. Continued development of a robust telework program by the Department will add to the success of the overall program.

Selected Strategies to Achieve Goal 6

The Department must support the learning and development of its leaders so that they can assess employee competency gaps and developmental needs, distinguish performance versus conduct issues, and provide meaningful and ongoing feedback to employees so that employees are accountable for producing or exceeding the expected results.

The cybersecurity focus will remain on data protection and control. The Department will continue implementing various capabilities to control the flow of sensitive information, and prevent access to related systems, data, or other critical information and infrastructure by unauthorized individuals. These new capabilities with existing protective measures will ensure the protection of employee and customer data.

Finally, the Department must work with POs to develop customized change management strategies necessary to successful redesign and reduction of the Department's space. By consolidating units, renegotiating leases, and making reductions in the needed space, the Department will cut its overall space footprint by more than half.

Management Priorities and Challenges

The Department continues to make a substantive commitment and investment in improving its working capacity and infrastructure. Goal 6 of the *Strategic Plan* (U.S. Department of Education Capacity: Improve the organizational capacities of the Department to implement the *Strategic Plan*) supports those aims by ensuring that the Department's hiring, staffing, training, culture, systems, and procedures enable the Department to deliver programs and resources in ways that are faster, smarter, and better year after year. Thus, the commitment and the investments are both short- and long-range in nature.

Examples of the Department's employee-focused strategies are seen in prioritizing greater employee engagement, diversity, and inclusion, and on expanding leadership and knowledge management efforts in mission-support operations such as IT customer service. Because the Department aims to be a best place to work, the Department has created a workgroup on employee engagement to work on key areas for improvement, including formalized supervisor and peer recognition, intensive manager training and development pilots, increased development and usage of telework policies and flexibilities, and employee wellness, lifestyle balance, and volunteerism campaigns.

IT delivery is another area where the Department has committed considerable resources. The Office of the Chief Information Officer has pushed for greater technology innovation to improve the workload capacity for employees. Efforts to improve security, gain efficiency in storage, improve network service and responsiveness, increase system speed, and increase the footprint of Wi-Fi and other wireless and mobility solutions in the Department's facilities and for those working remotely, have significantly improved the employee computing experience. These efforts have clarified the Department's needs and provide a clear vision for how technology can help employees in their work.

The Department has also made significant progress on Cybersecurity, one of the President's mission CAP goals. During FY 2014, the Department significantly reduced the number of threats and risks, including security breaches. For example, the technology group saw a nearly 150 percent increase in the number of grantees who now use personal identity verification (PIV) to electronically sign grant award notices. These advances resulted from the Department's proactive strategies to seek innovation.

Office of Inspector General's (OIG) Management Challenges

OIG works to promote efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity in the programs and operations of the Department. Through audits, inspections, investigations, and other reviews, OIG continues to identify areas of concern within the Department's programs and operations and recommend actions the Department should take to address these weaknesses. The *Reports Consolidation Act of 2000* requires the OIG to identify and report annually on the most serious management challenges the Department faces. The *GPRRA Modernization Act of 2010* requires the Department to include in its agency performance plan information on its planned actions, including performance goals, indicators, and milestones, to address these challenges.

Last year OIG presented five management challenges. Although OIG noted some progress by the Department in addressing these areas, each remains as a management challenge for FY 2015.

The FY 2015 management challenges are:

- (1) Improper Payments,
- (2) Information Technology Security,
- (3) Oversight and Monitoring,
- (4) Data Quality and Reporting, and
- (5) Information Technology System Development and Implementation.

These challenges reflect continuing vulnerabilities and emerging issues faced by the Department as identified through OIG's recent audit, inspection, and investigative work.

The full report is published by the OIG. To view the full report, go to:
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/managementchallenges.html>.

OIG noted some progress by the Department in addressing the FY 2014 management challenges. The Department remains committed to improved governance and better business processes. Management has worked closely with OIG to gain its perspective about the Department's most significant management and performance challenges.

Lower-Priority Program Activities

The Cuts, Consolidations and Savings volume of the President's Budget identifies the lower-priority program activities, where applicable, as required under the *GPRRA Modernization Act of 2010*, 31 U.S.C. 1115(b)(10). The public can access the volume at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget>.

Appendices

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Appendix A: Data Validity and Verification

The *Government Performance and Results Act Modernization Act of 2010* requires agencies to describe the accuracy and reliability of data presented. During 2014, the Department continued to strengthen its approach to data verification and validation. Specifically, the Department improved its documentation of the processes used to collect, verify, and validate data. The Department also reassessed the quality and limitations of the data. Details of how the Department assesses the completeness and reliability of the data reported are presented as part of this Appendix. Known limitations of the data are also included.

To my knowledge, the data verification and validation process and the data sources used provide, to the extent possible, complete and reliable performance data pertaining to goals and objectives in our *FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan*.

Through a process of continuous improvement, the Department continues to assess its validation process and welcomes input from stakeholders.

/s/

Arne Duncan
February 2, 2015

The *GPRA Modernization Act of 2010* requires agencies to prepare information on the reliability of data presented. OMB guidance indicates:

Agencies may develop a single data verification and validation appendix used to communicate the agency's approaches, and/or may also choose to provide information about data quality wherever the performance information is communicated (e.g., websites). Agencies should discuss their verification and validation techniques with their respective OMB Resource Management Office, if necessary. The transmittal letter included in Annual Performance Reports must contain an assessment by the agency head of the completeness and reliability of the performance data presented and a description of agency plans to improve completeness, reliability, and quality, where needed.²⁹

The data presented in the Department's *FY 2013 Annual Performance Report and FY 2015 Annual Performance Plan* were described as being obtained from five basic sources (i.e., statistical data, program and enforcement data collections, monitoring and grant applications, management information systems or business operations, and external (nonstatistical) data sources). Although these types of data may still apply to the performance metrics, in this year's report the metrics are presented by goal instead of being categorized by data source.

Below is a list of metrics with information on data quality, limitations, and improvements.

²⁹ OMB Circular A-11, *Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget*, Part 6, Section 260.9, 2014.

FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan Public-Facing Metrics

GOAL 1: POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION, AND ADULT EDUCATION. Increase college access, affordability, quality, and completion by improving postsecondary education and lifelong learning opportunities for youths and adults.

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
1.1.A	Rate of increase in net price of public four-year institutions	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Data Center	Average net price is calculated only on the universe of students who receive financial aid. It does not include students who are attending college without financial aid. Thus, the metric represents the average net price for a subset of students and is not representative of the cost of college for all students.
1.1.B	Rate of increase in net price of public two-year institutions	IPEDS Data Center	<p>Data quality and limitations are identified in IPEDS First Look Publications, “Data Collection Procedures,” and IPEDS methodology available at http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2014/2014067.pdf.</p> <p>Graduation Rates for Selected Cohorts, 2005–10; and Student Financial Aid in Postsecondary Institutions, Academic Year 2012–13: First Look (Provisional Data) NCES 2014—NCES Number: 2014105 Release Date: November 20, 2014 available at: http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2014105.</p> <p>Postsecondary Institutions and Price of Attendance in 2013–14; Degrees and Other Awards Conferred: 2012–13; and 12-Month Enrollment: 2012–13: First Look (Provisional Data), available at: http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2014066rev.</p>
1.1.C	Percentage of high school seniors filing a FAFSA	The denominator is the number of graduating seniors according to the most recent projection by NCES. The numerator is from Federal Student Aid’s Central Processing System and is based on the number of applications during the first nine months of	<p>Since the FAFSA does not ask the year of high school graduation, several assumptions and criteria are made (such as age of applicant) to identify those likely to be high school seniors. These assumptions and criteria are applied consistently across all baseline year and future calculations.</p> <p>These calculations also restrict the application period to the first nine months of the application cycle (the close of the fiscal year), rather than the entire 18 months. Because most applicants, including high school seniors, file their FAFSA prior to the start of the upcoming academic year (usually before fiscal year end), this decision better aligns the performance metric with the fiscal year where most of the</p>

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
		the application cycle that are—as of September 30 of the first year of the application cycle—complete (not rejected); first-time filers; incoming freshmen, with or without previous college attendance; age 18 or less as of June 30 of the first year of the application cycle; reporting high school diploma attainment; and attended a high school in the fifty states and Washington, DC.	performance occurred. The alternative is waiting for the close of the 18-month cycle, where a performance metric would mostly reflect performance from an earlier fiscal year.
1.1.D	Index of national annual aggregate earnings of VR consumers (based on the number of competitive employment outcomes, hours worked, and hourly wages of VR consumers)	Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA)-911	Instructions for submitting the RSA-911 data are provided to agencies. Agency questions for coding particular data elements are provided by Data Unit staff on a case-by-case basis. RSA provides the agencies with the edit program that we use and are encouraged to run their data using the program often, at least quarterly, during the year. In addition, agencies have edits in their own systems which run additional checks.
1.1.E	Index of national annual aggregate earnings of Transition-Age Youth (based on the number of competitive employment outcomes, hours worked, and hourly wages of VR Transition-Age Youth)	RSA-911	
1.1.F	Number of peer-reviewed publications resulting from NIDRR-supported grantee projects	NIDRR—Annual Performance Report (APR) Accomplishments Database	The data are self-reported by grantees in the Department’s APR system. Included in the baseline are all manuscripts generated by NIDRR grantees that are accepted for or published in a peer reviewed journal by the end of the evaluation period. The verification occurs at the grantee level, the project officer level, and the contractor level. The validation occurs as part of the strategic planning with NIDRR’s data group in consultation with the contractor. The <i>Workforce Improvement and Opportunity Act</i> (WIOA) transfers the

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
			NIDRR from the Department to Health and Human Services. For that reason, the Department is considering removing this metric.
1.1.G	Number of VR state directors and other state VR personnel who express knowledge of NIDRR grantee research	New VR state director survey	<p>This data collection effort is planned to be an annual survey item. However, the baseline data are not yet collected as the contract and process for collecting the data are not finalized and may not be.</p> <p>The <i>Workforce Improvement and Opportunity Act (WIOA)</i> transfers the NIDRR from the Department to Health and Human Services (HHS). The Department does not know if HHS will choose to collect these data. For that reason, the Department is considering removing this metric.</p>
1.2.A	Number of low-performing institutions with high loan default rates and low graduation rates	<p>FSA Cohort Default Rate (CDR) Report, September 2014</p> <p>IPEDS Data Center</p>	<p>The number of low-performing Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) is calculated by first identifying institutions with a cohort default rate of 30% or higher (the threshold that jeopardizes an institution's access to federal financial aid if that level is sustained for three consecutive years). The graduation rate within 150% of normal time for each of those IHEs is then extracted from IPEDS, along with the transfer-out rate, if applicable, and the two rates are combined to create a "completion rate." If the completion rate is below the average completion rate for similar types of U.S. Title-IV eligible IHEs—separately categorized as four-year, two-year, and less-than-two-year—then the IHE is included in the number of low-performing institutions. Community colleges that offer a limited number of bachelor's degrees, which are categorized as four-year (primarily associate's degree-granting) institutions in IPEDS, are treated as two-year IHEs in terms of calculating graduation rates and the comparable average completion rate. For four-year IHEs, the graduation rate is based on the degree- or certificate-seeking cohort, not the bachelor's-seeking cohort, since many four-year IHEs offer certificates and associate's degrees in addition to bachelor's degrees, and thus the broader cohort is more indicative of their performance. Institutions which do not have a graduation rate cohort (degree-seeking, first-time, full-time students) and thus no comparable graduation/completion rate are not included in the count. The calculation includes an assumption that the cohort default rates for all institutions for the baseline year will not change. In actuality, institutions can appeal their rates after publication and, if justified, those rates may be changed, thus changing the record from one year to the next. This means the baseline number, or the number in any given year, may not be replicable using revised</p>

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
			<p>data in subsequent reports.</p> <p>Graduation rate data quality and limitations are identified in IPEDS First Look Publications, “Data Collection Procedures,” and IPEDS methodology available at http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2014/2014067.pdf. Data are checked by NCES for consistency.</p> <p>CDR data quality and limitations are available at http://ifap.ed.gov/DefaultManagement/finalcdrg.html. The cohort default rate data, which serves as the basis of the spreadsheet, is verified by FSA prior to publication. Because the process for manually entering the completion rate data is so labor-intensive, there is not a process for Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) verifying the accuracy of the process for extracting the data from IPEDS or the accuracy of the data that has been entered into the spreadsheet.</p>
1.3.A	Degree attainment among 25–34-year-old age cohort	NCES Digest of Education Statistics, Table 104.30 (http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_104.30.asp), Number of persons age 18 and over, by highest level of educational attainment, sex, race/ethnicity, and age: 2013. Tabulated from Current Population Survey data, U.S. Census	Data quality and limitations are documented in http://www.census.gov/cps/files/Source%20and%20Accuracy.pdf . NCES tabulates the data, which is verified prior to publication according to NCES guidelines.
1.3.B	Retention rate of first-time degree-seeking undergraduates; Full-time	IPEDS Data Center	The retention rate is calculated based on degree-seeking, first-time undergraduates at degree-granting U.S. institutions that participate in Title IV.
1.3.C	Retention rate of first-time degree-seeking undergraduates; Part-time	IPEDS Data Center	

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
			<p><i>is at the reporting institution so transfer-outs are not retained at the institution.)</i> Consequently, the retention rate is only an approximation of true retention.</p> <p>Data quality and limitations are identified in IPEDS First Look Publications, “Data Collection Procedures,” and IPEDS methodology available at http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2014/2014067.pdf. Data are checked by NCES for consistency.</p>
1.4.A	Number of STEM postsecondary credentials awarded	IPEDS Data Center	<p>IPEDS collects completions by Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code which may be aggregated into STEM and non-STEM counts. The Department of Education does not currently have a single definition for which CIP codes are STEM.</p> <p>Data quality and limitations are identified in IPEDS First Look Publications, “Data Collection Procedures,” and IPEDS methodology available at http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2014/2014067.pdf. Data are checked by NCES for consistency.</p>

GOAL 2: ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION. Improve the elementary and secondary education system's ability to consistently deliver excellent instruction aligned with rigorous academic standards while providing effective support services to close achievement and opportunity gaps, and ensure all students graduate high school college- and career-ready.

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
2.1.A	Number of states that have adopted college- and career-ready standards	<i>Elementary and Secondary Education Act</i> (ESEA) Flexibility Monitoring	The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's (OESE) new (and aforementioned) Office of State Support , which replaces and enhances services previously provided by the Office of Student Achievement and School Accountability (SASA), the Office of School Turnaround, and the Implementation and Support Unit (ISU), will count the number of states that either (a) have a memorandum of understanding in place to implement the Common Core or (b) have a letter from an Institute for Higher Education in their state certifying that their state has college- and career-ready standards. There are no known data limitations.
2.1.B	Number of states that are implementing next-generation reading and mathematics assessments, aligned with college- and career-ready standards	ESEA Flexibility Monitoring	The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's (OESE) OSS, which replaces and enhances services previously provided by the SASA, the Office of School Turnaround, and the ISU, monitors states that receive ESEA Flexibility waivers in three phases over the three-year waiver. Monitoring includes desk monitoring and on-site monitoring. OSS state leads use a monitoring protocol and rubric to ensure that monitoring is consistent across all states. OSS state leads work with their Group Leader to finalize monitoring reports. All reports are reviewed by both the Group Leader for Monitoring and Technical Assistance and the OSS Director for consistencies across states. States have an opportunity to review the draft report before the final report is issued. There are no known data limitations.

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
2.2.A	Number of states that have fully implemented teacher and principal evaluation and support systems that consider multiple measures of effectiveness, with student growth as a significant factor	ESEA Flexibility Applications and Monitoring	<p>The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's (OESE) OSS, which replaces and enhances services previously provided by the SASA, the Office of School Turnaround, and the ISU, monitors states that receive ESEA Flexibility waivers. Monitoring includes desk monitoring and on-site monitoring. OSS state leads use a monitoring protocol and rubric to ensure that monitoring is consistent across all states. OSS state leads work with their Group Leader to finalize monitoring reports. All reports are reviewed by both the Group Leader for Monitoring and Technical Assistance and the OSS Director for consistencies across states. States have an opportunity to review the draft report before the final report is issued.</p> <p>Additionally, Chief State School Officers must sign each state's ESEA Flexibility request before it is approved. There are no known data limitations.</p>
2.3.A	Disparity in the rates of out-of-school suspensions for students with disabilities and youth of color (youth of color metric)	Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC)	<p>The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) strives to ensure CRDC data are an accurate and comprehensive depiction of student access to educational opportunities in school districts. The submission system includes a series of embedded edit checks to ensure significant data errors are corrected before the district submits its data. Additionally, each district is required to certify the accuracy of its submission. Only a district superintendent, or the superintendent's designee, may certify the CRDC submission. Ultimately, the quality of the CRDC data depends on accurate collection and reporting by the participating districts.</p>
2.3.B	Disparity in the rates of out-of-school suspensions for students with disabilities and youth of color (SWD, IDEA only metric)	CRDC	

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
2.4.A	Number of persistently low graduation rate high schools	EDFacts	<p>EDFacts works with the data stewards (in this case OESE) to determine the appropriate business rule checks for these data. The checks that were done on these data include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File validation and format checks: Identifies file submissions that don't conform with the file format (unable to be processed), the data universe (school/LEA/state directory), or the reporting requirements (mandatory reporting fields). • SAS Data Quality Reviews: Post submission checks to determine completeness, consistency, and comparability. • DataFlux Data Quality Rules: Post submission checks to determine completeness, consistency, and comparability. • Submission Edit Business Rules: While not utilized for the 2012–13 data collection, several of the post-submission business rule checks performed in SAS and DataFlux for 2012–13 have been implemented against the 2013–14 submission (and beyond). <p>At the end of a collection period these rules are run against the submitted data and presented to the program office. It is the responsibility of the program office (OESE in this case), in consultation with the EDFacts staff, to determine which errors should be escalated to the state for further review. Many of these errors were sent along to the state for remediation (data explanation/update/correction). OESE should be considered the point-of-contact for identifying which rules were escalated and the result of those escalations.</p> <p>Data concerns from 2011–12 were documented in the NCES data release report (http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2014391). The data limitations for the 2012–13 are not yet complete and neither NCES nor OESE are prepared, at this time, to identify the data quality concerns with the 2012–13 submission. If these data are once again released by NCES, then work will be done to impute any missing data for states and to produce a national estimate. The imputation methodology and data limitations will be documented at that time as was done for the 2011–12 data release. This work is still pending and any discussion of the data limitations and/or concerns at this time would be premature.</p>

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
			<p>Path to public release and national rates: For each collection cycle states report their calculated cohort counts and ACGR graduation rates. These counts and rates are tested against a number of business rules for format, consistency, completeness, and comparability. Those business rule checks are delivered to the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) for follow-up correspondence with the state(s). The program office, in consultation with NCES ED<i>Facts</i> staff and other stakeholders, meet to determine which issues identified by the business rules should be raised with the state for explanation, update, or correction. Following that review, data are then aggregated to the national level for the purpose of calculating and publishing a national rate. NCES processes these data to force conformity of reporting categories (mapping reported "Major Racial/Ethnic Groups" to the traditional 5 racial/ethnic groups) and imputes any missing data (3 states were imputed for 2011–12, 1 will be for 2012–13, no imputations are expected to be necessary for 2013–14 forward). After imputations are made, NCES produces a weighted national average rate for the country as a whole; a rate which is representative of every state. Once produced, NCES documents any remaining issues with these data, and the aggregation and imputation methodology in a release report. That report, documentation, and the associated data tables are put through several stages of review including independent reviews at the division (Administrative Data), center (NCES), and agency (IES) levels prior to public dissemination.</p>
2.4.B	Percent of Cohort 1 priority schools that have met the state exit criteria and exited priority school status	ED <i>Facts</i>	ESEA Flexibility plans do not allow for one standard methodology to determine whether or not a school "met the state exit criteria." This will need to be looked at manually, state-by-state, once the list of schools

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
2.4.C	Percent of Cohort 1 focus schools that have met the state exit criteria and exited focus school status	EDFacts	<p>exiting priority status has been identified.</p> <p>EDFacts works with the data stewards (in this case OESE) to determine the appropriate business rule checks for these data. The checks that were done on these data include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File validation and format checks: Identifies file submissions that don't conform with the file format (unable to be processed), the data universe (school/LEA/state directory), or the reporting requirements (mandatory reporting fields). • SAS Data Quality Reviews: Post submission checks to determine completeness, consistency, and comparability. • DataFlux Data Quality Rules: Post submission checks to determine completeness, consistency, and comparability. • Submission Edit Business Rules: While not utilized for the 2012–13 data collection, several of the post-submission business rule checks performed in SAS and DataFlux for 2012–13 have been implemented against the 2013–14 submission (and beyond). <p>At the end of a collection period these rules are run against the submitted data and presented to the program office. It is the responsibility of the program office (OESE in this case), in consultation with the EDFacts staff, to determine which errors should be escalated to the state for further review. Many of these errors were sent along to the state for remediation (data explanation/update/correction). OESE should be considered the point-of-contact for identifying which rules were escalated and the result of those escalations.</p> <p>Data concerns from 2011–12 were documented in the NCES data release report (http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2014391). The data limitations for the 2012–13 are not yet complete and neither NCES nor OESE are prepared, at this time, to identify the data quality concerns with the 2012–13 submission. If these data are once again released by NCES, then work will be done to impute any missing data for states and to produce a national estimate. The imputation methodology and data limitations will be documented at that time as</p>

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
			<p>was done for the 2011–12 data release. This work is still pending and any discussion of the data limitations and/or concerns at this time would be premature.</p> <p>Path to public release and national rates: For each collection cycle states report their calculated cohort counts and ACGR graduation rates. These counts and rates are tested against a number of business rules for format, consistency, completeness, and comparability. Those business rule checks are delivered to the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) for follow-up correspondence with the state(s). The program office, in consultation with NCES ED<i>Facts</i> staff and other stakeholders, meet to determine which issues identified by the business rules should be raised with the state for explanation, update, or correction. Following that review, data are then aggregated to the national level for the purpose of calculating and publishing a national rate. NCES processes these data to force conformity of reporting categories (mapping reported “Major Racial/Ethnic Groups” to the traditional 5 racial/ethnic groups) and imputes any missing data (3 states were imputed for 2011–12, 1 will be for 2012–13, no imputations are expected to be necessary for 2013–14 forward). After imputations are made, NCES produces a weighted national average rate for the country as a whole; a rate which is representative of every state. Once produced, NCES documents any remaining issues with these data, and the aggregation and imputation methodology in a release report. That report, documentation, and the associated data tables are put through several stages of review including independent reviews at the division (Administrative Data), center (NCES), and agency (IES) levels prior to public dissemination.</p>
2.5.A	Percentage of high school and middle school teachers who teach STEM as their main assignment who hold a corresponding undergraduate degree	Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), NCES	<p>The methods report for the 2011–12 SASS is not yet released. Study documentation from the 2007–08 survey is available at http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/methods0708.asp.</p>

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
2.5.B	Number of public high school graduates who have taken at least one STEM AP exam	College Board/AP administrative records	The College Board does not collect or report race/ethnicity based on the federal guidelines. Examinees are asked to select one of the options noted in the data. The College Board Public School List is updated annually by state educational agencies; thus small changes to the list over time are to be expected as schools open, close, and/or merge. Students are assigned to graduating cohorts based on self-reported information (i.e., grade level and/or graduation year) provided at the time of registration (in the case of SAT) or test administration (in the case of AP and PSAT). The College Board matches students' data across programs to identify the most recent valid value when assigning students to cohorts.

GOAL 3: EARLY LEARNING. Improve the health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for all children from birth through 3rd grade, so that all children, particularly those with high needs, are on track for graduating from high school college- and career-ready.

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
3.1.A	Number of states with Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) that meet high quality benchmarks for child care and other early childhood programs	Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Report of States Plans with annual updates from states and territories (HHS/Office of Childcare)	The data are self-reported by the states in their CCDF state plans. In addition, the data do not take into account the participation or coverage of the QRIS systems.
3.2.A	Number of states and territories with professional development systems that include core knowledge and competencies, career pathways, professional development capacity assessments, accessible professional development opportunities, and financial support for childcare providers	Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Report of State Plans (HHS/Office of Childcare)	The data are self-reported by the states in their CCDF state plans. In addition, the data do not take into account the participation or coverage of the professional development systems.
3.3.A	Number of states collecting and reporting disaggregated data on the status of children at kindergarten entry using a common measure	Race to the Top (RTT)-Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance Center (ELC TA)	The data are limited to the 20 RTT-ELC states. Department staff has requested KEA data be collected in the 2015–16 academic year as part of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) State of Preschool data collection and has requested to add KEA data reporting in <i>EDFacts</i> . In addition, the new Preschool Development Grants will provide data on additional states.

GOAL 4: EQUITY. Increase educational opportunities for underserved students and reduce discrimination so that all students are well-positioned to succeed.

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
4.1.A	National high school graduation rate	EDFacts	<p>EDFacts works with the data stewards (in this case OESE) to determine the appropriate business rule checks for these data. The checks that were done on these data include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File validation and format checks: Identifies file submissions that don't conform with the file format (unable to be processed), the data universe (school/LEA/state directory), or the reporting requirements (mandatory reporting fields). • SAS Data Quality Reviews: Post submission checks to determine completeness, consistency, and comparability. • DataFlux Data Quality Rules: Post submission checks to determine completeness, consistency, and comparability. • Submission Edit Business Rules: While not utilized for the 2012–13 data collection, several of the post-submission business rule checks performed in SAS and DataFlux for 2012–13 have been implemented against the 2013–14 submission (and beyond). <p>At the end of a collection period these rules are run against the submitted data and presented to the program office. It is the responsibility of the program office (OESE in this case), in consultation with the EDFacts staff, to determine which errors should be escalated to the state for further review. Many of these errors were sent along to the state for remediation (data explanation/update/correction). OESE should be considered the point-of-contact for identifying which rules were escalated and the result of those escalations.</p> <p>Data concerns from 2011–12 were documented in the NCES data release report (http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2014391). The data limitations for the 2012–13 are not yet complete and neither NCES nor OESE are prepared, at this time, to identify the data quality concerns with the 2012–13 submission. If these data are once again released by NCES, then work will be done to impute any missing data</p>

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
			<p>for states and to produce a national estimate. The imputation methodology and data limitations will be documented at that time as was done for the 2011–12 data release. This work is still pending and any discussion of the data limitations and/or concerns at this time would be premature.</p> <p>Path to public release and national rates: For each collection cycle states report their calculated cohort counts and ACGR graduation rates. These counts and rates are tested against a number of business rules for format, consistency, completeness, and comparability. Those business rule checks are delivered to OESE for follow-up correspondence with the state(s). The program office, in consultation with NCES <i>EDFacts</i> staff and other stakeholders, meet to determine which issues identified by the business rules should be raised with the state for explanation, update, or correction. Following that review, data are then aggregated to the national level for the purpose of calculating and publishing a national rate. NCES processes these data to force conformity of reporting categories (mapping reported “Major Racial/Ethnic Groups” to the traditional 5 racial/ethnic groups) and imputes any missing data (3 states were imputed for 2011–12, 1 will be for 2012–13, no imputations are expected to be necessary for 2013–14 forward). After imputations are made, NCES produces a weighted national average rate for the country as a whole; a rate which is representative of every state. Once produced, NCES documents any remaining issues with these data, and the aggregation and imputation methodology in a release report. That report, documentation, and the associated data tables are put through several stages of review including independent reviews at the division (Administrative Data), center (NCES), and agency (IES) levels prior to public dissemination.</p>
4.2.A	Percentage of proactive civil rights investigations launched annually that address areas of concentration in civil rights enforcement	Office for Civil Rights’ (OCR) Case Management System (CMS) and Document Management (DM) systems	The Contracts and Acquisition Management/Case Management database utilized to collect data for this metric has built-in validation checks (such as requiring certain data elements and valid date entries), as well as automated entries based on other information entered into the system by staff, to reduce errors in data entry. OCR also employs additional safeguards to ensure data accuracy such as

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
4.2.B	Percentage of proactive civil rights investigations resolved annually that address areas of concentration in civil rights enforcement	Office for Civil Rights' (OCR) Case Management System (CMS) and Document Management (DM) systems	(1) periodic monthly checks to address missing or inconsistent entries, (2) publication of guidance materials including data entry requirements, codes, definitions, checklist and protocol for staff responsible for entering data; and (3) additional training and support for primary users inputting the data.

GOAL 5: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF THE U.S. EDUCATION SYSTEM. Enhance the education system's ability to continuously improve through better and more widespread use of data, research and evaluation, evidence, transparency, innovation, and technology.

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
5.1.A	Number of public data sets included in ED Data Inventory and thus linked to Data.gov or ED.gov websites	Data Strategy Team Data Inventory and the public ED Data Inventory at http://datainventory.ed.gov	The data are validated with a crosswalk between Inventory entries and the listing of public Department datasets, ensuring that the data described in the ED Data Inventory is publicly available at the identified web address.
5.1.B	Number of states linking K-12 and postsecondary data with workforce data	State Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) grant monitoring (monthly updates from states, annual performance reports, final performance reports, and site visits)	Data are collected through monitoring of states with active SLDS grants. The data are limited to this population. While 47 states and territories have received these grants over time, by June 2015, there will be fewer than 25 states with active grants, which leads to incomplete and not up-to-date data from states that either have not receive grants or that do not have active grants.

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
5.1.C	Number of states linking K-12 with early childhood data	SLDS grant monitoring (monthly updates from states, annual performance reports, final performance reports, and site visits)	<p>States project teams report data based on current grants. If the state is focusing on an early childhood data system, the state's reporting might reflect only those development efforts, and not statewide P20W (preschool to college workforce) development efforts. There are additional sources for information about state data linkages in the field. For example the Data Quality Campaign (DQC) conducts surveys of state capacity to collect, store, link, and use data. Because the Department does not use the same definitions as DQC, our figures tend to be lower than theirs. For example, we require that a state possess the capacity to follow its own students in order for us to report that the state has the linkage in place. Similarly, we enable states to report on whether particular linkages are planned, in progress, or complete, and report that a state has a linkage when the state reports that the project is complete; DQC might give a state credit for an "in progress" or pilot-stage linkage.</p> <p>A survey administered to the universe of states and territories would enable more systematically collect data about all states' capacity for data linkages and data use. There is a concern, however, that if those data were to be used for public reporting, states might begin to overstate their capacities, particularly on data that are also publicly reported by organizations such as DQC. Currently, data from monitoring is used in an iterative, formative approach to program improvement; our technical assistance program is designed to support states' efforts to improve their systems. This relies on states being honest about their own internal capacities.</p>

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
5.2.A	Average time to close “cases” (PTAC + FPCO)	Case Tracking System (CTS)	<p>The term “case” refers to requests for quick, informal responses to routine questions related to student privacy. These requests are received via email, the Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO)/Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) resource website, or by telephone and subsequently entered into the Case Tracking System (CTS).</p> <p>The preliminary data for this metric are reviewed at least weekly for verification. If anomalous data are identified in the periodic reviews or when anomalies are suspected, individual cases are examined individually to identify if they were properly closed or if their status was entered incorrectly. When appropriate, corrections are made. Staff responsible for entering data into the CTS will continue to be trained on policies and procedures. Quarterly monitoring of data entered will be conducted to assure completeness and reliability of data and to recommend any improvements to the CTS or modifications to the standard operating procedures.</p>
5.3.A	Percentage of select new (non-continuation) discretionary grant dollars that reward evidence	Department calculations based upon multiple Department-controlled data sources, including G5	<p>In determining which discretionary grants are considered “evidence-based” (i.e., the numerator when calculating the percentage), the Department includes all programs that rewarded applicants with supporting evidence of promise or better (per the EDGAR evidence framework). This could be done through a competitive preference or absolute priority, an eligibility requirement, or a selection factor. Only the amounts of the grants awarded for those projects were counted. In determining what counts as discretionary funding (i.e., the denominator when calculating the percentage), the Department includes all programs for which the EDGAR evidence framework could conceivably work. Specifically, we determined that NIDRR and RSA are unlikely to find the evidence framework useful, and did not count funding for those programs in the denominator.</p>

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
5.3.B	Number of peer-reviewed, full-text resources in the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC)	Education Resources Information Center (ERIC)	<p>To be counted as a full-text, peer-reviewed article in ERIC, the document had to be indexed in ERIC and designated with a “peer-reviewed” and “full-text” flag, both of which are available on the public ERIC website.</p> <p>The ERIC contractor uses specified quality assurance procedures. In addition, the IES program officer pays close attention to the metric in their review of deliverables.</p>
5.3.C	Number of reviewed studies in the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) database	What Works Clearinghouse (WWC)	<p>To be counted as a reviewed study, the study had to be listed in the What Works Clearinghouse’s publicly available Database of Reviewed Studies.</p> <p>The What Works Clearinghouse contractors use specified quality assurance procedures. In addition, the IES program officers pay close attention to the metric in their review of deliverables.</p>
5.4.A	Percentage of schools in the country that have actual internet bandwidth speeds of at least 100 Mbps	Education Superhighway, CoSN/AASA E-rate Infrastructure Survey	<p>The Department uses an external data source for this metric and relies on the external, third party’s verification and validation methodology. Based on the information provided (http://cosn.org/cosns-second-annual-e-rate-and-infrastructure-survey), the response rate for this survey may not be sufficient to ensure that the data are representative of all districts in the country. The Department is exploring the feasibility of collecting data on access to and use of education technology from a representative sample of schools and districts across the country. In the meantime, we believe these data are the best currently available and provide useful information to gauge progress on this metric.</p>

GOAL 6: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CAPACITY. Improve the organizational capacities of the Department to implement this strategic plan.

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
6.1.A	Staffing gaps percentage	Mission Critical Occupation (MCO) Staffing Gap Report	The Department's Budget Service obtains the staffing gap data from the Department's Federal Personnel and Payroll System (FPPS) Datamart roster and separations reports. As FPPS is a user-driven system, the data used for the Mission Critical Occupation (MCO) Staffing Gap Report are only as reliable as the data that are entered into FPPS. Human Capital and Client Services (HCCS) intends to improve data in FPPS by updating standard operating procedures, implementing process maps, and training customers and HCCS staff to follow these new processes when entering data into the system.
6.1.B	EVS Engagement Index	Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results	Any questionable FEVS data points are brought to the attention of OPM. In turn, the OPM point of contact responds to the inquiry. Further, if there are questions regarding the FEVS data, the Department works with the OPM point of contact to obtain clarity. The 2013 appendix A indicated that the Department would work to increase the participation rate to reduce non-response bias in the FEVS data. However, in 2014 the participation rate decreased from 68.9% in 2013 to 63.3% in 2014.

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
6.1.C	Time to hire	Workforce Transformation Tracking System (WTTTS) and Entrance on Duty System (EOS)	<p>Data are pulled biweekly and tested. Results are tracked and analyzed for consistency and monitored for patterns or trends; anomalies are identified and explored to determine root cause and then corrected (or work-around developed and noted pending further analysis/correction). The data are entered into the systems by Department customers and Human Capital and Client Services (HCCS) staff, so quality of data, and in-turn the quality of the final calculations, are only as reliable as the information entered into the system.</p> <p>As HCCS continues to reduce the shortage of trained human capital practitioners and staff become more proficient leveraging systems' capabilities and streamlining processes, we expect data quantity and quality will increase which will negate the need to have an order of precedence for substitute/back up data when measured data points are missing.</p> <p>Even though the 90 Day Model's time to hire methodology was successfully advanced from initial concept to a stable, sustainable agency-wide process in less than a year, it has not undergone peer review or independent verification and validation to validate its rigor. Facilitated peer review is the recommended next step to ensure continued Department-wide application of this metric as a meaningful measure.</p>
6.1.D	Effective Communication Index	Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results	<p>Any questionable FEVS data points are brought to the attention of OPM. In turn, the OPM point of contact responds to the inquiry. Further, if there are questions regarding the FEVS data, the Department works with the OPM point of contact to obtain clarity.</p> <p>The 2013 appendix A indicated that the Department would work to increase the participation rate to reduce non-response bias in the FEVS data. However, in 2014 the participation rate decreased from 68.9% in 2013 to 63.3% in 2014.</p>

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
6.2.A	Percentage of A-133 Single Audits Overdue for resolution	Office of the Chief Financial Officer's (OCFO) Audit Accountability & Resolution Tracking System (AARTS)	<p>Calculations for this metric are determined by dividing the total number of audits that are overdue at the end of the Department's fiscal year by the total number of audits in the Department's inventory.</p> <p>Access rights to the AARTS database are managed by Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) and all users receive annual IT security training to help ensure data integrity. A Quality Control reviewer initiates a weekly upload of A-133 audit data to AARTS through a file submission directly from the Federal Audit Clearinghouse (FAC). An AARTS administrator (separate from the Quality Control reviewer) must verify the uploaded data with the actual audits. Data for individual programs are verified by Principal Offices (POs) through periodic review by Responsible Managers and Audit Liaison Officials. In addition, the specific data for this metric are verified by POs each month as part of monthly Dashboard reports.</p> <p>Data are validated by OCFO monthly. Staff work to reconcile data reported on the Dashboards with any discrepancies reported by the POs.</p>
6.2.B	Compliance rate of contractor evaluation performance reports	Past Performance Information Retrieval System, www.ppirs.gov , "PPIRS Compliance Report"	<p>Compliance rates of contractor performance evaluations are set by OMB and are calculated by use of a Government wide reporting tool available in the PPIRS (www.ppirs.gov).</p> <p>Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) staff analyzes the PPIRS report weekly to ensure that each contractor performance evaluation reflected on that report should appear on that report, and to rectify any errors on the report.</p>

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
6.3.A	Percentage of states who annually rate the Department's technical assistance as helping build state capacity to implement education reforms.	The Reform Support Network Annual State and CoP Leads Survey (administered Q3 2014)	<p>The source for the data is the Race to the Top (RTT) Annual Leads Survey, which was sent to all 19 Race to the Top Phase 1, 2 and 3 states. Because RTT is a discretionary program, we only surveyed grantee states who received direct technical assistance.</p> <p>The data collection process includes online survey software with questions in which respondents click on the appropriate response choice and data is then downloaded directly to analysis software. By configuring the online software and downloading the data directly, we reduce the opportunities for human error in data entry. Additionally, we utilize data quality assurance procedures which include having analysts review the data by hand upon download and run basic descriptive statistics to illustrate downloading issues, sample size concerns, variable integrity, data types, and other potential data concerns. We then merge with existing data files using established syntax which provides a further check to identify potential data errors. Merged data is examined again for potential data concerns. These procedures are used across a number of federal projects and are well-established and effective for verifying data integrity.</p>
6.4.A	Number of ED IT security incidents	Operational Vulnerability Management Solution (OVMS) System	Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) has standard operating procedures (SOP) to verify and validate the data: 1) OVMS SOP, 2) Incident Response Tracking SOP, and 3) OVMS Checklist. This process is executed on a weekly basis.
6.4.B	EVS Results-Based Performance Culture Index	Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results	Any questionable FEVS data points are brought to the attention of OPM. In turn, the OPM point of contact responds to the inquiry. Further, if there are questions regarding the FEVS data, the Department works with the OPM point of contact to obtain clarity.
6.4.C	EVS Leadership and Knowledge Management Index	Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results	The 2013 appendix A indicated that the Department would work to increase the participation rate to reduce non-response bias in the FEVS data. However, in 2014 the participation rate decreased from 68.9% in 2013 to 63.3% in 2014.

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
6.4.D	Total usable square footage	Department's Master Space Management Plan	<p>Because usable square footage relates directly to rent costs, the Department uses the same data verification and validation procedures. Specifically, the data are collected directly from Occupancy Agreements and rent bills per building.</p> <p>The data are derived from historic examples and relevant experience. Department leadership has agreed to a set of assumptions by which the data are based. Leadership has reached out to subject matter experts to broaden the scope of the data set, and lower risks of missing contingencies that may affect the data. At each step, the data are reviewed independently to double check the work of each team member and provide quality control. These processes help ensure the data's completeness and reliability.</p> <p>For the baseline data, the Department made the following assumptions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) All leased buildings: 2% is applied for anticipation of CPI (Consumer Price Index) annual increases on the anniversary date of the active lease/occupancy agreement (OA); and 2.5% is applied for anticipation of annual tax increases. 2) All federal buildings: 2.5% is applied for operating cost escalations on the anniversary date of the active OA. 3) 20% is applied to all federal buildings after an OA has expired and a new OA is unavailable. (Projected increase on the appraisal.) 4) 40% is applied to all leased buildings after an OA has expired and a new OA is unavailable. (Projected increase on the market rent.) 5) If a new OA is unavailable, 3-months early rent is applied to all buildings that are relocating due to possible Department delays. Example: Changes made to the designs after Scope of Work (SOW) is completed.

#	Metric	Data Source	Data Quality, Limitations, and Improvements
			<p>6) 3-months late rent is applied to all buildings that are relocating due to possible Department delays. For example, delays in returning space back to a rentable condition.</p> <p>The Department reconciles its rent bills per building on a monthly basis.</p>
6.4.E	Rent cost	Department's Master Space Management Plan	<p>The rent is based on the above assumptions. Data are collected directly from Occupancy Agreements and rent bills per building. The actual rent may vary significantly if the Department relocates to a new leased building and/or signs short lease extensions. The Department is leveraging the examples and experience of the mobility labs and building consolidations programs.</p> <p>The Department reconciles its rent bills per building on a monthly basis. Every six months, leadership will re-evaluate the data, the assumptions on which it is based, and incorporate actual costs and project schedules. These steps will become part of our quality assurance program and procedures. Leadership looks to improve completeness, reliability, and quality of the data at these milestones.</p>

Appendix B: Additional Programs by Goal

Most of the Department's 100-plus programs are funded through discretionary appropriation acts enacted each fiscal year. However, there are many education programs—some of them large—that are funded directly through their authorizing statutes. For many budgeting purposes, these programs are classified as mandatory. For the purposes of this document, resources by goal are discretionary funds only. Mandatory programs that contribute to each goal are listed below.

Goal 1: Postsecondary Education, Career and Technical Education, and Adult Education

Other discretionary Goal 1 programs/activities include the following:

POC	Account	Objective	Program
FSA	DM/SAA		Health Education Assistance Loans program
FSA	SFA	1.1	Federal supplemental educational opportunity grants
FSA	SFA	1.1	Federal work-study
OCTAE	HE	1.3	Tribally controlled postsecondary career and technical institutions
OESE	HE	n/a	Special programs for migrant students
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Aid for institutional development: Strengthening institutions
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Aid for institutional development: Strengthening tribally controlled colleges and universities
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.3	Child care access means parents in school
OPE	HE		College Housing and Academic Facilities Loans Program Account: Federal administration
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Developing Hispanic-serving institutions
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4	First in the World/College Completion Initiative
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education
OPE	HE	1.1	Gaining early awareness and readiness for undergraduate programs (GEAR UP)
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	GPRA data/HEA program evaluation
OPE	HE	1.3	Graduate assistance in areas of national need
OPE	HE		Historically Black College and University Capital Financing Program Account: Federal administration
OPE	HE		Historically Black College and University Capital Financing Program Account: Loan subsidies
OPE	HE		Howard University Hospital
OPE	HE	1.2, 1.3	Howard University: General support
OPE	HE	n/a	International education and foreign language studies: Domestic programs
OPE	HE	n/a	International education and foreign language studies: Overseas programs
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Minority science and engineering improvement
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2	Model transition programs for students with intellectual disabilities into higher education
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Promoting post-baccalaureate opportunities for Hispanic Americans
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Strengthening Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-serving institutions
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Strengthening Asian American- and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Strengthening HBCUs
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Strengthening historically Black graduate institutions
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Strengthening Native American-serving nontribal institutions
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Strengthening predominately Black institutions
OPE	HE		Training for real-time writers
OSERS	GU	1.2, 1.3	Gallaudet University
OSERS	NTID	1.2, 1.3	National Technical Institute for the Deaf
OSERS	REHAB	1.1	Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults
OSERS	REHAB	1.1	VR Training

n/a = Not available.

Mandatory programs supporting Goal 1 include:

POC	Account	Objective	Program
FSA	DM/SAA		Student Aid Administration: Not-for-profit servicers
FSA	FDSL	1.1	Federal Direct Student Loans Program Account: Downward modification of existing loans (non-add)
FSA	FDSL	1.1	Federal Direct Student Loans Program Account: Downward re-estimate of existing loans (non-add)
FSA	FDSL	1.1	Federal Direct Student Loans Program Account: Net re-estimate of existing loans (non-add)
FSA	FDSL	1.1	Federal Direct Student Loans Program Account: Net re-estimate of existing loans (non-add)
FSA	FDSL	1.1	Federal Direct Student Loans Program Account: New net loan subsidy (non-add)
FSA	FDSL	1.1	Federal Direct Student Loans Program Account: Upward modification
FSA	FDSL	1.1	Federal Direct Student Loans Program Account: Upward re-estimate of existing loans
FSA	FFEL	1.1	Federal Family Education Loans Liquidating Account: Pre-1992 student loans
FSA	FFEL	1.1	Federal Family Education Loans Program Account: Downward modification of existing loans (non-add)
FSA	FFEL	1.1	Federal Family Education Loans Program Account: Downward re-estimate of existing loans (non-add)
FSA	FFEL	1.1	Federal Family Education Loans Program Account: Net modification of existing loans (non-add)
FSA	FFEL	1.1	Federal Family Education Loans Program Account: Net re-estimate of existing loans (non-add)
FSA	FFEL	1.1	Federal Family Education Loans Program Account: New net loan subsidies (non-add)
FSA	FFEL	1.1	Federal Family Education Loans Program Account: Upward modification of existing loans
FSA	FFEL	1.1	Federal Family Education Loans Program Account: Upward re-estimate of existing loans
FSA	FPL	1.1	Federal Perkins Loan Program
FSA	HEAL	1.1	Health Education Assistance Loans Liquidating Account
FSA	SFA	1.1	Federal Pell grants: Mandatory
FSA	SFA	1.1	Federal Pell grants: Mandatory funding for discretionary program costs
FSA	SFA	1.1	Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants
FSA	TEACH	1.1	TEACH Grants: Downward re-estimate of existing loans (non-add)
FSA	TEACH	1.1	TEACH Grants: Net re-estimate of existing loans (non-add)
FSA	TEACH	1.1	TEACH Grants: New loan subsidy
FSA	TEACH	1.1	TEACH Grants: Upward re-estimate of existing loans
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Aid for institutional development: Mandatory strengthening tribally controlled colleges and universities
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2	America's college promise (proposed legislation)
OPE	HE	1.1	College access challenge grant program
OPE	HE		College Housing and Academic Facilities Loans Liquidating Account
OPE	HE		College Housing and Academic Facilities Loans Program Account Re-estimate of existing loan subsidies
OPE	HE		College Housing Loans Liquidating Account
OPE	HE		College opportunity and graduation bonus (proposed legislation)
OPE	HE		Higher Education Facilities Loans Liquidating Account
OPE	HE		Historically Black College and University Capital Financing Program Account: Re-estimate of existing loan subsidies
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Mandatory developing HSI STEM and articulation programs
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Mandatory promoting post-baccalaureate opportunities for Hispanic Americans
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Mandatory strengthening Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-serving institutions
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Mandatory strengthening Asian American- and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Mandatory strengthening HBCUs
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Mandatory strengthening Native American-serving nontribal institutions
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Mandatory strengthening predominantly Black institutions
OPE	HE	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Masters degree programs at HBCUs and predominantly Black institutions
OSERS	REHAB	1.1	Vocational rehabilitation, Grants to Indians
OSERS	REHAB	1.1	Vocational rehabilitation, state grants
FSA			CHAFL downward re-estimate of loan subsidies

POC	Account	Objective	Program
SFA			FDSL downward modification/negative loan subsidies
SFA			FDSL downward re-estimate of loan subsidies
SFA			FFEL downward modification/negative loan subsidies
SFA			FFEL downward re-estimate of loan subsidies
SFA			General receipts, not otherwise specified
SFA			HBCU capital financing downward re-estimate of loan subsidies
SFA			HEAL downward reestimate of loan subsidies
SFA			Perkins Institutional fund recall (mandatory)
SFA			Perkins loan negative loan subsidies
SFA		1.1	Perkins loan repayments
SFA			Proprietary receipts
SFA			Student Financial Assistance debt collection
SFA		1.1	TEACH downward modification/negative loan subsidies
SFA			TEACH downward reestimate of loan subsidies

Goal 2: Elementary and Secondary Education

Other discretionary Goal 2 programs/activities include the following:

POC	Account	Objective	Program
OESE	ED	2.4	High school graduation initiative
OESE	ED	n/a	State agency programs: Neglected and delinquent
OESE	ED	2.2, 2.4	Striving readers
OESE	I&I	n/a	Advanced Placement
OESE	I&I	2.2	Excellent educators grants
OESE	I&I		Leveraging What Works (proposed legislation)
OESE	I&I	2.2	Teacher and principal pathways (proposed legislation)
OESE	IA	2.3	Impact Aid, Construction
OESE	IA	2.3	Impact Aid, Facilities maintenance
OESE	IA	2.2, 2.3	Impact Aid, Payments for federal property
OESE	IA	2.2, 2.3	Impact Aid, Payments for federally connected children: Basic support payments
OESE	IA	2.2, 2.3	Impact Aid, Payments for federally connected children: Payments for children with disabilities
OESE	SIP	n/a	Education for homeless children and youth education
OESE	SIP	2.2, 2.3, 2.4	Rural education
OESE	SIP		Supplemental education grants
OESE	SSS	2.3	Elementary and secondary school counseling
OESE	SSS	2.3	Physical education program
OESE	SSS	2.3	Safe and drug-free schools and communities national programs
OII	I&I	n/a	Arts in Education
OII	I&I	2.2, 2.3, 2.4	Charter schools grants
OII	I&I	2.5	Next generation high schools (proposed legislation)
OII	I&I	2.2	School leadership
OII	I&I	2.2	Teacher quality partnership
OII	I&I	2.2	Transition to teaching
OII	SIP	2.5	Mathematics and science partnerships
OSERS	APBH	2.1	American Printing House for the Blind
OSERS	SE	2.3	Parent information centers
OSERS	SE	2.2	Personnel preparation
OSERS	SE	2.2	State personnel development

n/a = Not available.

Mandatory programs supporting Goal 2 include:

POC	Account	Objective	Program
OII	I&I	2.2	Teaching for tomorrow (proposed legislation)

Goal 3: Early Learning

Other discretionary Goal 3 programs/activities include the following:

POC	Account	Objective	Program
OII	I&I	n/a	Ready-to-learn television
OII/ OESE	I&I	n/a	Fund for the improvement of education: Programs of national significance

n/a = Not available.

Mandatory programs supporting Goal 3 include:

POC	Account	Objective	Program
OESE	SR	3.1	School Readiness: Preschool for all

Goal 4: Equity

No additional programs.

Goal 5: Continuous Improvement of the U.S. Education System

Other discretionary Goal 5 programs/activities include the following:

POC	Account	Objective	Program
IES	IES	5.3	National Assessment Governing Board
IES	IES	5.3	Special education studies and evaluations
OCTAE	CTAE	5.1, 5.3	Adult education national leadership activities
OCTAE	CTAE	5.3	Career and technical national programs
OESE	ED	5.3	Evaluation
OESE	IE	5.1, 5.3	Indian Education: National activities
OESE	SIP	5.1, 5.3, 5.4	Comprehensive centers
OESE	SIP	5.4	Educational technology state grants
OSERS	SE	5.4	Educational technology, media, and materials
OSERS	SE	5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4	Technical assistance and dissemination

Goal 6: U.S. Department of Education Capacity

Mandatory programs supporting Goal 6 include:

POC	Account	Objective	Program
			Contributions

Other

Programs/activities supporting other performance metrics include:

(Dollars in millions)

POC	Account	Program	FY 2014 Appropriation	FY 2015 Appropriation	FY 2016 President's Budget
OSERS	REHAB	Assistive technology programs	33	33	-
OSERS	REHAB	Client assistance state grants	12	13	13
OSERS	REHAB	Demonstration and training programs	6	6	6
OSERS	REHAB	Independent living centers	78	78	-
OSERS	REHAB	Independent living services for older blind individuals	33	33	33
OSERS	REHAB	Independent living state grants	23	23	-
OSERS	REHAB	Migrant and seasonal farmworkers	1	-	-
OSERS	REHAB	National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research	104	104	-
OSERS	REHAB	Protection and advocacy of individual rights	18	18	18
TOTAL, OTHER			308	308	70

Note: Detail may not add to total due to rounding.

Appendix C: Summary of Performance Evaluations Conducted During FY 2014 and Expected During FY 2015–16

For a complete list of program evaluations and studies from the Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, please visit

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oepd/ppss/reports.html>. For a complete list of evaluation studies of the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, please visit <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/evaluation/index.asp>.

Evaluation Reports From FY 2014

National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance

School Choice

Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: An Early Look at Applicants and Participating Schools Under the SOAR Act

1. *Study Purpose:* The April 2011 *Scholarships and Opportunities for Results Act* (SOAR Act) provided for a five-year continuation of a school choice program for low-income residents of Washington, DC. The program, still titled the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP), now provides annual scholarships of \$8,000 (for grades K–8) or \$12,000 (for grades 9–12) to enable low-income students to attend private schools in DC in lieu of the public schools already available to them. The new law also mandated another independent, rigorous evaluation of the effectiveness of the program. This report explores implementation of the DC OSP in the first two years after the reauthorization.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- Private schools: How many participate in the OSP and what are their characteristics?
- Applicants: What is the nature of the demand being generated for the program among eligible students and families? What motivates families to apply to the OSP? How dissatisfied were they with schools before applying and what do they want most in a new school for their child?
- Scholarships: To what extent is the OSP enabling students to enroll in private schools?

3. *Design:* This descriptive report relies entirely on the application forms parents filled out when they applied to the OSP, school characteristics from the program operator's school directory and NCES databases, and scholarship award and use records from the program operator.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The final report was released in October 2014.

5. *Key Findings:*

- Just over half of all DC private schools participated in the OSP, with current schools more likely to have published tuition rates above the OSP scholarship amounts than did participating schools in the past.
- OSP applicants under the SOAR Act represent between 3 and 4 percent of the estimated 53,000 children in DC who meet the eligibility criterion.

- A number of awarded scholarships go unused, with students from disadvantaged schools and families using awarded scholarships at lower rates than others.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20154000/pdf/20154000.pdf>

Students with Disabilities

Evaluation of the Personnel Development Program to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities

1. *Study Purpose:* This descriptive evaluation is of the Personnel Development Program (PDP) funded under IDEA, Title I, Part D, Subpart 2, Sec. 662. Projects funded under the program are designed to help address state-identified needs for personnel in special education, and help ensure that special education personnel are highly qualified and that teachers have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide appropriate instruction to students with disabilities. A portion of PDP grants is awarded to National Centers, which are to provide national capacity-building and scientifically based products and services to a variety of audiences. Grants are also awarded to specific institutions of higher education to develop courses of study for special education teachers and other service providers. These training grants can be used to improve the quality of personnel preparation programs and for stipends that support students enrolled in the programs. The PDP was funded at \$88.299 million in FY 2012.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What products were developed and services provided by the PDP National Centers funded between FY 2001 and FY 2007, and at what cost?
- What were the quality and relevance/usefulness of documented materials and technical assistance provided by PDP National Centers funded between FY 2001 and FY 2007?
- What were the characteristics of funded courses of study at IHEs awarded PDP training grants in FY 2006 or FY 2007?
- How did funded courses of study use PDP training grant funding?
- How many scholars enrolled in the funded courses of study, completed their programs, or dropped out before completion?
- What were the quality and relevance/usefulness of new or significantly modified components for funded courses of study?
- What became of courses of study that did not receive PDP training grant funding?

3. *Design:* The evaluation relied on a combination of extant data and surveys of PDP grantees and applicants. Panels of experts rated the quality and relevance/usefulness of products and services from 12 National Centers and course-of-study components developed or significantly modified by recipients of PDP training grants awarded in FY 2006 or FY 2007.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The report was released in winter 2014.

5. *Key Findings:*

- For 15 products identified by national technical assistance center staff as their signature works and reviewed by independent panels of experts, the mean rating (on a scale of 1–5, with 5 being the highest) was 4.13 for quality and 4.25 for relevance/usefulness. For

86 nonsignature products, the mean rating was 4.11 for quality and 3.91 for relevance/usefulness.

- For 134 new or significantly modified components from 99 courses of study supported by PDP training grants, the mean quality rating (on a scale of 1–5, with 5 being the highest) was 3.71.
- Thirty-four percent of courses of study that were not funded through FY 2006 and FY 2007 training grant competitions were developed or maintained without PDP funding.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144007/>

National Evaluation of the IDEA Technical Assistance and Dissemination Program: Interim Report

1. *Study Purpose:* IDEA, which was most recently reauthorized in 2004, provides funds to assist states and local educational agencies in making available a free, appropriate public education for children with disabilities. Funded at \$12.6 billion in FY 2010, IDEA supports early intervention services for infants and toddlers, special education and related services for children ages 3 through 21, and early intervening services for students not in special education but in need of academic or behavioral support. IES is conducting studies under Section 664 of IDEA to assess the implementation and effectiveness of key programs and services supported under the law.

As specified in IDEA Part D, the Technical Assistance and Dissemination (TA&D) Program is to provide technical assistance, support model demonstration projects, disseminate useful information, and implement activities that are supported by scientifically based research to meet the needs of children with disabilities. The National Evaluation of the IDEA TA&D Program is designed to describe the products and services provided by the TA&D Program grantees, state and local needs for technical assistance, and the role that the TA&D Program plays in meeting these needs and supporting implementation of IDEA.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What are the primary technical assistance activities of the TA&D Program?
- What are states' needs for technical assistance and to what extent are these needs addressed by TA&D centers or other sources?
- For selected topics, to what extent are states satisfied with the products and services received from TA&D Program centers?

3. *Design:* Data collection included administering surveys to TA&D Program grantees, all state IDEA Part B and Part C administrators, and a sample of state-level special education program staff. Data were collected between November 2012 and March 2013. State-level administrators and staff reported on their receipt of technical assistance from TA&D Program grantees during the 2010–11 school year. Grantees reported on their goals and activities from the beginning of their current grant through the interview date. The funding period for the centers included in the interim report varied, with the earliest end date in 2012 and the latest in 2014.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* An interim report was released in October 2013. The final report is scheduled for completion in October 2016.

5. Key Findings of Interim Report:

- TA&D centers most commonly reported providing technical assistance on the topics of parent and family involvement and data systems and use of data for improvement. States identified (a) “General Supervision/Monitoring,” (b) “early childhood transition,” (c) “financing of services/financing for special education,” and (d) “Response to Intervention” as the topics for which they had the greatest need for technical assistance in 2010–11.
- Many TA&D centers provide technical assistance on similar topics. For example, 14 states received “high intensity” technical assistance (i.e., frequent training or consultation) on the same topic from 5 different centers. This evaluation was unable to establish whether such cases are indicators of inefficiency or of complementary and coordinated services.
- State staff rated the majority of technical assistance experiences they had with TA&D centers as “very satisfactory” (71 percent). On average, customers receiving high intensity technical assistance were significantly more satisfied than those receiving lower intensity (i.e., infrequent training and consultation or web-only support). Satisfaction did vary to some degree depending on the special education topic being addressed.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144000/pdf/20144000.pdf>

The Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in School Accountability Systems: An Update

1. *Study Purpose:* The focus of this study is on the inclusion of students with disabilities (SWDs) in school accountability systems and the variation in school practices in schools accountable and schools not accountable for the performance of the SWD subgroup under ESEA.

2. Key Questions Addressed:

- To what extent are schools accountable for the performance of the SWD subgroup, and how does this accountability vary across schools and over time?
- To what extent have schools accountable for the SWD subgroup been identified as needing improvement?
- How does school accountability for the SWD subgroup relate to regular and special education practices for students with disabilities?

3. *Design:* The evaluation is relying on descriptive statistics to study patterns of school accountability across states and over time and to examine how school practices vary with school accountability for the SWD subgroup. Data sources for the evaluation include extant data from the Department’s ED*Facts* database and 2011 surveys of principals and special education designees from elementary and middle schools in 12 states.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* This report, an update of the 2012 interim report, was released in October 2013. A third report, which will address the third key question listed above, will be released in winter 2015.

5. Key Findings:

This report addressed the first two key questions listed above for this study:

- Across the 44 states with relevant data and DC, 35 percent of public schools were accountable for the performance of the SWD subgroup in the 2009–10 school year, representing 59 percent of SWDs in those states. In those same 44 states and DC,

62 percent of middle schools were accountable for SWD performance, while 32 percent of elementary schools and 23 percent of high schools were accountable.

- In 31 states with relevant data, 56 percent of public schools were not accountable for the SWD subgroup in any of the 4 years examined, in comparison with 23 percent of schools that were consistently accountable in each of the 4 years.
- Among schools that were consistently accountable for the performance of the SWD subgroup across 22 states during the 4 years, 56 percent were never identified for school improvement over this time period. By comparison, among schools that were consistently not accountable for SWD subgroup performance in these states, 80 percent were never identified for improvement.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20134017/>

Teacher Quality

Access to Effective Teaching for Disadvantaged Students

1. *Study Purpose:* Recent Department of Education initiatives, such as RTT, the Teacher Incentive Fund, and the ESEA Flexibility policy, are designed in part to ensure that disadvantaged students have equal access to effective teaching. This study provides information about the extent that disadvantaged students receive less effective teaching than other students. The study also examines teacher mobility in participating districts and how patterns of mobility might contribute to unequal access.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- To what extent do disadvantaged students have equal access to effective teaching within school districts, and how does this change over time?
- Is access to effective teaching related to different patterns of teacher hiring, retention, and mobility for high- and low-poverty schools?
- What policies are districts implementing that could promote an equitable distribution of effective teachers?

3. *Design:* The study is descriptive. It documents the distribution of effective teaching, as measured by value added, and changes in the distribution of effective teaching across the 2008–09 through 2012–13 school years. The study also describes district policies designed to address inequitable distribution of effective teaching implemented during those years. Lastly, the study will examine teacher mobility patterns within participating districts. Data collection included the annual collection of district administrative records, including student achievement, to conduct value-added analyses as well as annual semi-structured interviews with district leadership to provide information on district policies. Data collection also included district personnel data to examine teacher mobility within participating districts. The study will be conducted in 29 geographically dispersed school districts.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The report was released in November 2013.

5. *Key Findings:*

- On average, disadvantaged students had less access to effective teaching than relatively more advantaged students. Providing equal access to effective teaching for disadvantaged

and other students would reduce the student achievement gap from 28 percentile points to 26 percentile points in English/language arts (ELA), and from 26 percentile points to 24 percentile points in math, in a given year.

- Access to effective teaching patterns for disadvantaged students were similar over the three years studied, 2008–09 through 2010–11.
- Access to effective teaching varied across study districts. Access ranged from districts with equal access to districts with differences in access as large as 0.106 standard deviations of student test scores in ELA and 0.081 standard deviations of student test scores in math, favoring relatively more advantaged students.
- Access to effective teaching was more related to the school assignment of students and teachers than the way that students were assigned to teachers within schools.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144001/pdf/20144001.pdf>

Do Disadvantaged Students Get Less Effective Teaching? Key Findings from Recent Institute of Education Sciences Studies

1. *Study Purpose:* Recent Department of Education initiatives, such as RTT, the Teacher Incentive Fund, and the ESEA Flexibility policy, are designed in part to ensure that disadvantaged students have equal access to effective teaching. This brief provides information about the extent that disadvantaged students receive less effective teaching than other students by synthesizing findings from several IES-funded studies, including the report, “Access to Effective Teaching for Disadvantaged Students.”

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What do three IES-funded studies on teacher distribution conclude about equitable access to effective teaching?

3. *Design:* This evaluation brief synthesizes the descriptive findings from three IES-funded studies on teacher distribution that have been peer-reviewed. The brief presents the findings from each study using the same approach, measuring whether disadvantaged students had less effective teaching on average than other students. The sample, collectively, spans 17 states.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The evaluation brief was released in January 2014.

5. *Key Findings:*

- Disadvantaged students received less effective teaching on average. Based on data from 29 districts in grades 4–8 and two states in grades 4 and 5, disadvantaged students received less effective teaching in a given year than other students in those grades. The average disparity in teaching effectiveness was equivalent to about four weeks of learning for reading and two weeks for math. For context, the overall achievement gap for disadvantaged students in grades four through eight is equivalent to about 24 months in reading and 18 months in math. Study authors estimate differences in teaching effectiveness for one year represent 4 percent of the existing gap in reading and 2 to 3 percent in math.
- Access to effective teaching varied across districts. The size of the differences in effective teaching in a given year between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students varied across the 29 districts studied. The disparities for each district ranged from no statistically

significant difference to a difference equivalent to 14 weeks of learning in reading and math in grades 4 through 8.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144010/pdf/20144010.pdf>

Evaluation of the Teacher Incentive Fund: Implementation and Early Impacts of Pay-for-Performance After One Year

1. *Study Purpose:* The Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) is authorized by Title V, Part D of ESEA and annual appropriations acts. The purpose of the TIF program is to develop and implement performance-based compensation systems (PBCSs) for teachers, principals, and other personnel in high-need schools. Research indicates that high quality teachers are critical to raising student achievement in low-performing schools, but schools most in need often have difficulty in attracting and retaining high-quality teachers. Performance pay is a policy promoted by the TIF program to improve the quality of teachers in high-need schools. This evaluation studies performance pay that provides substantial and differentiated bonus pay to high-performing teachers in low-performing schools with high-need students.

2. Key Questions Addressed:

- What are the characteristics of all TIF grantee districts and their performance-based compensation systems? What implementation experiences and challenges did TIF districts encounter?
- How do teachers and principals in schools that did or did not offer pay-for-performance bonuses compare on key dimensions, including their understanding of TIF program features, exposure to TIF activities, allocation of time, and attitudes toward teaching and the TIF program?
- What is the impact of pay-for-performance bonuses on students' achievement on state assessments of math and reading?
- How do pay-for-performance bonuses affect educator mobility, including whether mobility differs by educator effectiveness?
- What performance-based compensation system features are associated with student achievement or educator mobility?

3. *Design:* Study schools were randomly assigned within a grant to either implement all components of the PBCS or the PBCS with a 1 percent across-the-board bonus in place of the differentiated effectiveness incentive component of the PBCS. Data collection will include a grantee survey, a survey of teachers and principals, teacher and principal school assignment records, student record information (such as student demographics and student test scores), and grantee interviews to document implementation information, as well as to conduct impact analyses.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The first report was released in September 2014. The second report, which will include impacts, is scheduled for completion in 2015.

5. Key Findings:

- Fewer than half of all 2010 TIF districts reported implementing all four required components of the TIF program, although most implemented three of the four components.

- Across all 2010 TIF grantees, districts expected to award a pay-for-performance bonus to more than 90 percent of eligible educators, with the average payout about 4 percent of the average educators' salary. The districts expected a maximum pay-for-performance bonus for teachers that was twice as large as the average bonus, and a maximum bonus for principals that was 50 percent larger than the average bonus.
- Many educators demonstrated a misunderstanding of the performance measures and the pay-for-performance bonuses used for TIF.
- Most teachers and principals reported being satisfied with their professional opportunities, school environment, and the TIF program. Educators in schools that offered pay-for-performance bonuses tended to be less satisfied than those in schools that did not offer such bonuses. However, educators in schools offering pay-for-performance bonuses were more satisfied with the opportunity to earn additional pay, and a greater percentage indicated feeling increased pressure to perform due to the TIF program.

6. *Links to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144019/pdf/20144019.pdf>

Transfer Incentives for High-Performing Teachers: Final Results from a Multisite Randomized Experiment

1. *Study Purpose:* This evaluation studies implementation of a policy, known to participating study school districts as the Talent Transfer Initiative (TTI), that provides incentives to identified high value-added teachers to teach in low-performing schools with high-need students.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What can we learn from the implementation of TTI? Specifically, what can we learn about timing and scale of implementation, who transfers, and from where they transfer?
- What were the intermediate impacts on participating schools? Specifically, how did TTI affect the dynamics within the school, such as the allocation of resources, staffing patterns, assignment of students to teachers and courses, and school climate?
- What was TTI's impact on student test scores?
- What was TTI's impact on teacher retention?

3. *Design:* The study is being conducted in 10 school districts (168 school-grade teams in 112 schools), and the design consists of segmenting the schools within districts to those eligible and not eligible for the treatment (the pay incentive). The treatment-eligible schools are randomly assigned to receive the treatment or not. Using value-added analysis, high-performing teachers teaching in the non-eligible schools are identified. The two-year treatment, conducted in school years 2009–10 and 2010–11 (in seven of the districts) and 2010–11 and 2011–12 (in an additional three districts), consists of hiring among the pool of those identified as high performing and interested in teaching in the treatment schools. The control schools follow normal hiring practices. Program transfer teachers receive a transfer incentive of \$10,000 for each of the two years that they remain in the treatment school. Existing teachers in study-eligible schools that meet program criteria and remain in their school receive a retention payment of \$5,000 a year. Data collection includes measures of teacher characteristics and hiring experiences, district/school hiring experiences and practices, and student achievement obtained from administrative records.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The final report was released in November 2013.

5. *Key Findings:* The report examined the willingness of teachers to transfer when offered an incentive, teacher retention in the schools to which they transferred, and the impact on student achievement at the low-performing schools. The study found that:

- The transfer incentive successfully attracted high value-added teachers to fill targeted vacancies.
- The transfer incentive had a positive impact on teacher-retention rates during the payout period; retention of the high-performing teachers who transferred was similar to their counterparts in the fall immediately after the last payout.
- The transfer incentive had a positive impact on math and reading achievement at the elementary school level in each of the two years after transfer. These impacts were equivalent to raising achievement by between 4 and 10 percentile points relative to all students in their home state.
- There were no impacts—positive or negative—on achievement in middle schools.
- Author calculations suggest that this transfer incentive intervention in elementary schools would save approximately \$13,000 per grade per school compared to the cost of class size reduction aimed at generating the same size impacts. However, overall cost effectiveness can vary depending on a number of factors, such as teacher retention rates after the last installments of the incentive are paid out after the second year.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144003/pdf/20144003.pdf>

Other

Case Studies of Schools Receiving School Improvement Grants: Findings After the First Year of Implementation

1. *Study Purpose:* School Improvement Grants are authorized by Title I, Section 1003(g) of the ESEA. The purpose of the grants—awarded based on the Title I funding formula to states, which then competitively distribute the funds to districts applying on behalf of their eligible schools—is to support the turnaround of the nation’s persistently lowest-achieving schools. To qualify for the three-year grant, schools must (among other requirements) be willing to implement one of four prescribed intervention models: turnaround, restart, closure, or transformation. About \$546 million was allocated in FY 2009 for SIG with a supplement of \$3 billion from ARRA. With the possibility of rollover funds, this amounts to a \$3.5 billion injection into the SIG program during the 2010–11, 2011–12, and 2012–13 school years. This study will provide descriptively rich, primarily qualitative information for a small set of schools receiving SIG in the first cohort to implement an intervention model beginning in the 2010–11 school year.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What is the background and context of these persistently lowest-achieving schools? How do the leadership and staff in these schools define the performance problem, and to what do they attribute their problems?
- What leadership styles do the principals of these persistently lowest-achieving schools exhibit? What actions do these schools engage in to try to improve their history of low performance?

- What is the change process in these persistently lowest-achieving schools, particularly in terms of school climate and staff capacity?
- What improvements do school stakeholders perceive during the three-year course of SIG, and do these improvements appear to be sustainable?

3. *Design:* This study employs a school-level case study design. A core sample of 25 SIG schools was purposively selected from six states to represent a range of geographic regions, urbanities, school sizes, racial/ethnic compositions, socioeconomic statuses, SIG intervention models, and SIG funding levels, among other factors. Data collection took place over three school years, beginning in spring 2011 and concluding in spring 2013, and included interviews with each state's SIG leaders, a teacher survey, and site visits to the case study schools, which included an analysis of fiscal records, as well as interviews and focus groups with district officials, principals, teachers, parents, union officials, external support providers, and students.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The first report, based on the first year of data, was released in 2014. The final report, based on the second and third year of data, is scheduled for completion in 2015.

5. *Key Findings:*

- Findings after the first year of implementation in the 25 “core” sample schools reveal that while all were low-performing, the schools differed in their community and fiscal contexts, performance and reform histories, interpretations of the causes of—and potential solutions for—their performance problems, and perceptions of improvement after the first year of SIG.
- However, most schools did report that their improvement strategies and actions during the first year of SIG were a continuation of activities or plans that predated SIG, and few schools appeared to have experienced a disruption from past practice as of spring 2011.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144015/pdf/20144015.pdf>

A Focused Look at Rural Schools Receiving School Improvement Grants

1. *Study Purpose:* School Improvement Grants are authorized by Title I, Section 1003(g) of the ESEA. The purpose of the grants—awarded based on the Title I funding formula to states, which then competitively distribute the funds to districts applying on behalf of their eligible schools—is to support the turnaround of the nation's persistently lowest-achieving schools. To qualify for the three-year grant, schools must (among other requirements) be willing to implement one of four prescribed intervention models: turnaround, restart, closure, or transformation. About \$546 million was allocated in FY 2009 for SIG with a supplement of \$3 billion from ARRA. With the possibility of rollover funds, this amounts to a \$3.5 billion injection into the SIG program during the 2010–11, 2011–12, and 2012–13 school years. This report will provide descriptively rich, primarily qualitative information for a small set of rural schools receiving SIG in the first cohort to implement an intervention model beginning in the 2010–11 school year.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What are the context and challenges of these rural SIG schools that are trying to turn around a history of low performance?

- How did these rural SIG schools perceive their rural context to influence the recruitment and retention of teachers and the engagement of parents, and what improvement actions did they implement in these two areas?

3. *Design:* This study employs a school-level case study design. A sample of nine SIG schools located in rural areas was purposively selected from four states to represent a range of geographic regions, school sizes, racial/ethnic compositions, socioeconomic statuses, SIG intervention models, and SIG funding levels, among other factors. Data were collected in spring 2012, and included interviews with each state's SIG leaders, a teacher survey, and site visits to the case study schools, which included analysis of fiscal records, as well as interviews and focus groups with district officials, principals, teachers, parents, union officials, external support providers, and students.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The report was released in 2014.

5. *Key Findings:*

- Although rural SIG schools reported some challenges that nonrural SIG schools have also reported, such as low student motivation and staff morale, the rural schools reported additional challenges resulting from their schools' remote locations and large catchment areas. For example, respondents reported that these rural characteristics affected the recruitment or retention of teachers and, to a lesser extent, parents' involvement in the schools.
- School and district administrators in eight of the nine schools suggested that long teacher commutes or isolated communities posed challenges to recruiting or retaining teachers. To counter these challenges, respondents in two schools reported offering direct support for teacher commutes (for example, gas stipends or vans), and respondents in three schools reported offering signing bonuses to incoming teachers.
- School and district administrators and teaching staff in the nine schools mentioned multiple factors limiting parent involvement in school-based activities. Respondents from five schools perceived that a lack of access to transportation limited parent involvement, whereas respondents from three schools noted that the distance between schools and parents' homes was a contributing factor. Four schools focused on hiring or expanding the role of parent liaisons to increase parent involvement.

6. *Links to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144013/pdf/20144013.pdf>

A Focused Look at Schools Receiving School Improvement Grants That Have High Percentages of English Language Learner Students

1. *Study Purpose:* School Improvement Grants are authorized by Title I, Section 1003(g) of the ESEA. The purpose of the grants—awarded based on the Title I funding formula to states, which then competitively distribute the funds to districts applying on behalf of their eligible schools—is to support the turnaround of the nation's persistently lowest-achieving schools. To qualify for the three-year grant, schools must (among other requirements) be willing to implement one of four prescribed intervention models: turnaround, restart, closure, or transformation. About \$546 million was allocated in FY 2009 for SIG with a supplement of \$3 billion from ARRA. With the possibility of rollover funds, this amounts to a \$3.5 billion injection into the SIG program during the 2010–11, 2011–12, and 2012–13 school years. This report will provide descriptively rich, primarily qualitative information for a small set of schools

with high percentages of EL students, that are receiving SIG in the first cohort to implement an intervention model beginning in the 2010–11 school year.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What are the context and challenges of these high-EL SIG schools that are trying to turn around a history of low performance?
- How did these high-EL SIG schools approach the improvement process, and what supports did they provide to their ELs?
- What capacity did these high-EL SIG schools have to address the unique needs of their ELs?

3. *Design:* This study employs a school-level case study design. A sample of 11 SIG schools with high percentages of ELs was purposively selected from four states to represent a range of geographic regions, urbanities, school sizes, racial/ethnic compositions, socioeconomic statuses, SIG intervention models, and SIG funding levels, among other factors. Data were collected in fall 2011, and included interviews with each state's SIG leaders, a teacher survey, and site visits to the case study schools, which included analysis of fiscal records, as well as interviews and focus groups with district officials, principals, teachers, parents, union officials, external support providers, and students.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The report was released in spring 2014.

5. *Key Findings:*

- Although all 11 schools reported providing specialized supports for EL students, the schools' approaches to improvement during the initial phase of SIG appeared to include only moderate or limited attention to the unique needs of ELs.
- District and school administrators perceived challenges related to teachers' expertise and skills in meeting the unique needs of ELs; however, teachers' perceptions of their own capacity were more mixed. The capacity of the schools' district offices to support ELs appeared to vary as well, with two small districts reporting no district-level staff with EL training or experience and seven larger districts reporting district-level English-as-a-second-language (ESL) departments with multiple trained staff members.
- Schools that appeared to provide stronger attention to the unique needs of ELs in their improvement process were more likely to report having school staff dedicated to EL needs, such as EL coordinators, EL coaches, and ESL/bilingual teachers and tutors. Such schools also were more likely to be located in districts that reportedly provided expertise and an explicit focus on ELs within the context of SIG.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144014/pdf/20144014.pdf>

Operational Authority, Support, and Monitoring of School Turnaround

1. *Study Purpose:* The federal SIG program, to which \$3 billion were allocated under ARRA, supports schools attempting to turn around a history of low performance. School turnaround also is a focus of RTT, another ARRA-supported initiative, which involved a roughly \$4 billion comprehensive education reform grant competition for states. Given the size of these federal investments, in 2010 IES began to conduct a large-scale evaluation of RTT and SIG to better understand the implementation and impacts of these programs. The SIG component, in

particular, focuses on a purposive sample of SIG-eligible schools, including (1) a group of schools that received SIG to implement one of four intervention models specified by the U.S. Department of Education and (2) a comparison group of schools from the same districts that were not implementing one of these four intervention models with SIG support. Though the results from this evaluation of SIG are not necessarily generalizable to SIG schools nationwide, they are nonetheless important because they add to the limited knowledge base about the implementation and impacts of SIG-funded school turnaround efforts.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:* This report focuses on the implementation of SIG by examining three interrelated levers for school improvement: (1) school operational authority, (2) state and district support for turnaround, and (3) state monitoring of turnaround efforts.

3. *Design:* SIG principles emphasize that school leaders should be given the autonomy to operate on matters such as staffing, calendars, and budgeting, but then also be appropriately supported and monitored by states and districts to ensure progress. It is thus of interest to document the actual policies and practices related to these three levers, and to see whether there are differences between study schools implementing a SIG-funded intervention model and comparison schools not implementing a SIG-funded intervention model. Findings are based on spring 2012 survey responses from 450 school administrators and interviews with administrators in the 60 districts and 21 of the 22 states where these schools are located.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The report was released in January 2014.

5. *Key Findings:*

- The most common area in which schools implementing and not implementing a SIG-funded intervention model reported having primary responsibility was their budgets (55 percent and 54 percent). Fewer than half of the schools in both groups reported primary responsibility in the other seven operational areas examined, such as student discipline policies (38 percent and 35 percent), staffing (37 percent and 46 percent), assessment policies (25 percent and 21 percent), and curriculum (18 percent and 16 percent).
- The most common technical assistance and other supports for turnaround that states reported providing related to developing school improvement plans (20 of the 21 states interviewed) and identifying effective improvement strategies (19 of the 21 states interviewed). These two supports were also the ones districts and schools most frequently reported receiving. Schools implementing a SIG-funded intervention model were no more likely than non-implementing schools to report receiving supports in nine of twelve areas examined, including working with parents, school improvement planning, and recruiting or retaining teachers.
- All 21 of the states interviewed reported being responsible for monitoring low-performing schools, although just 13 of them reported that districts were also responsible. State monitoring almost universally took the form of analyzing student data (21 states) and conducting site visits (20 states), and to a lesser extent having discussions with parents/community (16 states) and surveying school staff (12 states). Most states also reported that monitoring not only served accountability purposes, but also was used for formative purposes, such as to assess implementation fidelity (14 states) and identify additional supports for schools (14 states).

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144008/>

State Implementation of Reforms Promoted Under the Recovery Act

1. *Study Purpose:* ARRA provided an unprecedented \$100 billion of funding for the U.S. Department of Education. While the initial goal of this money was to deliver emergency funding for education and government services, ARRA is also being used as an opportunity to spur innovation and reform at different levels of the education system. In turn, ARRA provides a unique opportunity to foster school improvements and to learn from reform efforts. Although funds are being distributed through different grant programs, their goals and strategies are complementary, if not overlapping, as are likely recipients. For this reason, data collection and analysis took place across grant programs (i.e., was “integrated”), rather than separately for each set of grantees, allowing for a broad assessment of ARRA as a whole. The Department seeks to understand through this evaluation how states, districts, and schools are working to implement the education reforms promoted by ARRA.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

First report:

- At the state and local levels, who were the recipients of ARRA funds? To what extent did child poverty, state fiscal condition, student achievement, and other variables relate to funding?

Interim report:

- To what extent did SEAs report implementing key reform strategies promoted by the Recovery Act in the 2010–11 school year?
- How much of the 2010–11 school year implementation reflects progress since the Recovery Act?
- What were the greatest reform implementation challenges for SEAs in the 2010–11 school year?

Final report:

- To what extent were states implementing the key education reform strategies promoted by the Recovery Act in 2010–11 in the areas of standards and assessment, data systems, educator workforce development, and support for low performing schools?
- To what extent did 2010–11 implementation of key education reforms reflect progress since the Recovery Act funds were initially distributed in 2009–10?
- What were the greatest challenges experienced by states working to implement key education reforms in the 2010–11 school year?

3. *Design:* This study is primarily based on data from surveys of all 50 SEAs and DC, and a nationally representative sample of school districts administered between spring 2011 and 2012. Survey respondents were the chief state school officer or other state agency officials designated by the chief as most knowledgeable about the topics in the survey. Descriptive and correlational analyses are used to answer the study’s research questions.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* A first report, titled “State and District Receipt of Recovery Act Funds,” was released in 2012. An interim report was released in January 2014. The final report is scheduled for release in 2015.

5. Key Findings of Interim Report:

- Almost all SEAs provided guidance for choosing and implementing one of the four school intervention models the Department recommended to improve low performing schools, while only two reported supporting teacher evaluation models that included the complete set of criteria (e.g., use of student achievement gains) that the Recovery Act promoted.
- Difficulty in measuring student growth for teachers of non-tested subjects was the challenge reported by the largest number of SEAs.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144011/pdf/20144011.pdf>

State Requirements for Teacher Evaluation Policies Promoted by Race to the Top

1. *Study Purpose:* Congress appropriated approximately \$5.05 billion for the RTT program between 2009 and 2012, including approximately \$4.35 billion through ARRA. The RTT initiative encouraged states to implement education policies in six core areas, including teacher evaluations. Evaluations are an important strategy to assess teacher quality, and there is growing consensus about the need for evaluation systems that could yield higher-quality information to improve teacher performance. An increasing body of evidence also suggests that some of the teacher evaluation policies promoted by RTT, such as using multiple measures and multiple rating categories, could help to produce more valid and reliable estimates of teacher quality. Given the substantial federal investment in RTT to promote certain teacher evaluation policies, it is important to learn about the policies that states are actually requiring. Many states have started to alter their policies, but knowledge of their progress remains limited.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:* This brief describes the extent to which states required teacher evaluation policies aligned with the RTT initiative as of spring 2012.

3. *Design:* This brief examines the presence of state-level requirements for certain practices but not the actual district- or school-level implementation of such practices. Findings are based on interviews with administrators from 49 states and the District of Columbia (12 Round 1 and 2 RTT states, 7 Round 3 RTT states, and 31 non-RTT states).

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The report was released in April 2014.

5. Key Findings:

- States, on average, reported requiring less than half of eight teacher evaluation policies aligned with RTT priorities, although the number of policies required by RTT states was higher than non-RTT states (3.7 policies for Round 1 and 2 RTT states, 3.6 for Round 3 RTT states, and 2.2 for non-RTT states).
- States' reported teacher evaluation policies were most aligned with RTT priorities focused on using multiple measures to evaluate teacher performance (30 states); using multiple rating categories to classify teacher performance (31 states); and conducting annual evaluations (25 states).
- States' reported teacher evaluation policies were least aligned with RTT priorities focused on using evaluation results to inform decisions regarding career advancement (one state) and compensation (six states for annual salary increases, and five states for performance-based compensation).

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144016/pdf/20144016.pdf>

Policy and Program Studies Service (PPSS)**National Assessment of Career and Technical Education: Final Report**

1. *Study Purpose:* The *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006* (Perkins IV) was intended to raise the academic and technical rigor of secondary and postsecondary CTE instruction in order to prepare students for entry into high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations. Perkins IV introduced new accountability requirements as well as a requirement that local subgrantees offer one or more programs of study (POS)—career pathways that help students make the transition from secondary to postsecondary education while pursuing an industry-recognized credential, postsecondary certificate, or degree. This final report of the congressionally mandated National Assessment of Career and Technical Education (NACTE) summarizes the most recent available data on the implementation of Perkins IV, as well as student participation and outcomes for CTE more generally.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- Has student participation in CTE programs changed?
- How were Perkins IV funds allocated and used?
- How were states and local subgrantees developing and implementing POS?
- How were states implementing accountability provisions, and what measurement issues affect the validity and reliability of the accountability data that were reported?
- Are educational and employment outcomes showing positive results for CTE participants?

3. *Design:* This report summarizes data from studies commissioned for the NACTE, reviews of existing research, and analyses of extant data from state performance reports and from the National Center for Education Statistics. A study of Perkins IV implementation included surveys of all states and a representative sample of 2,041 LEAs and 1,006 IHEs in fall 2009.

4. *Completion Date:* The final report was released in September 2014.

5. *Key Findings:*

- Secondary CTE coursetaking declined slightly from 1990 to 2009, while academic coursetaking increased. Some occupational areas saw large increases in CTE course-taking, most notably health sciences and public services.
- Subgrantees most commonly used Perkins IV funds for equipment, career guidance, and academic counseling.
- Both state and local CTE directors reported incomplete compliance, as of 2008–09, with requirements that POS link secondary and postsecondary education by aligning course sequences.
- States and local subgrantees are not required to report on POS participation and outcomes, and there are no national data on the number of students participating in POS or the outcomes they achieve.
- States showed substantial variation in their definitions of CTE concentrators and in the specific measures they used for performance indicators.

- Studies that used quasi-experimental methods to control for student background found little or no relationship between CTE coursetaking and academic achievement.
- Education and employment outcomes varied considerably by CTE field. For example, completion of a postsecondary degree or certificate in the same field was most common among high school graduates who concentrated in health sciences.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/sectech/nacte/career-technical-education/final-report.pdf>

Summary of Performance Evaluations Expected During FY 2015 and FY 2016

National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance

Literacy

Effectiveness of Interventions for Improving Reading Achievement of Struggling Adolescent Readers: An Assessment and Summary of the Evidence

1. *Study Purpose:* Striving Readers is a discretionary grant program focused on raising reading achievement of middle school and high school students through intensive interventions for struggling readers and enhancing the quality of literacy instruction across the curriculum. The 2006 and 2009 cohorts of grantees were required to conduct rigorous, experimental evaluations. This study summarizes the evidence of the effectiveness of interventions aimed at struggling adolescent readers, including—but not limited to—the evaluations of the 16 Striving Readers grantees.

2. *Key Question Addressed:*

- What is the evidence of the effectiveness of interventions aimed at struggling adolescent readers?

3. *Design:* The study is descriptive; it provided technical assistance to the local evaluations of Striving Readers grantees and also reviewed existing literature on interventions to raise reading achievement among struggling adolescent readers. The report will synthesize the evidence of the effectiveness of these interventions.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in winter 2015.

Early Childhood Language Development

1. *Study Purpose:* Differences between the reading skills of disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers have been measured nationally as early as kindergarten entry in the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study. The focus of this evaluation is the identification of classroom practices that are associated with improved student language development and comprehension. Such practices could be used in a future rigorous evaluation of these strategies.

2. *Key Question Addressed:*

- What classroom practices are associated with greater student progress in language development, background knowledge, and comprehension in prekindergarten through third grade?

3. *Design:* The evaluation will analyze the relationships between the study's observational measures of classroom practices and direct assessments of students collected during the 2011–12 school year in 83 Title I schools.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in 2015.

Evaluation of Response to Intervention Practices for Elementary School Reading

1. *Study Purpose:* The focus of this evaluation is the implementation and impact of Response to Intervention (RtI) practices for struggling readers in elementary school. Response to Intervention (RtI) is a multistep approach to providing early and more intensive intervention and monitoring within the general education setting. IDEA permits some Part B special education funds to be used for “early intervening services” such as RtI, and also permit districts to use RtI to inform decisions regarding a child's eligibility for special education under the category of specific learning disabilities.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- How do RtI practices for early-grade reading vary across schools?
- How do schools experienced with RtI vary the intensity of reading instruction to children based on student benchmark reading performance?
- What are the effects on grade 1–3 reading achievement of providing intensive interventions to children who are on the margin of identification for reading difficulties?

3. *Design:* The evaluation is relying on a combination of descriptive data collection from school staff and regression discontinuity methods to address the research questions, and is focusing on practices in place during the 2011–12 school year.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The final report from this evaluation is scheduled for completion in 2015.

Pathways to Career or College

Upward Bound at 50: Reporting on Implementation Practices Today

1. *Study Purpose:* Upward Bound is the oldest and largest of the federal college access programs targeted to low-income students and those who would represent the first-generation of college completers in their families. First established in 1965, the program currently serves more than 60,000 high school students at a cost of about \$4,300 per youth with a wide array of academic and college transition support services. While much about the structure of Upward Bound and the services to be offered are prescribed in legislation, little is currently known about the intensity, duration, and mix of services provided by projects or about how they are delivered. Because of the importance of its mission, and the comprehensiveness and costs of its services, Upward Bound has long been of interest to policymakers. This report describes the approaches to providing program services as reported by Upward Bound project directors.

2. Key Questions Addressed:

- Within the core service areas of the program, where do projects focus their efforts?
- How are services delivered to Upward Bound participants?
- In what ways does the focus or delivery of services vary across different Upward Bound projects?

3. *Design:* This descriptive report relies primarily on findings from a summer 2013 survey of all regular Upward Bound project directors.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The report is scheduled for completion in 2015.

School Choice

Evaluation of Conversion Magnet Schools

1. *Study Purpose:* Since the mid-1970s, magnet schools have been critical to school districts' efforts to implement voluntary desegregation plans and, in some cases, court desegregation orders. More recently, they have become an important component of public school choice as well as a strategy used by districts aiming to improve the achievement of all students, particularly students who are disadvantaged. Since 1985, the Office of Innovation and Improvement's (OII) Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP; funded at \$100 million in FY 2010) has provided grants to school districts to support magnet programs with the specific goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority group isolation, improving student achievement, and promoting diversity and increasing choice in public schools through the development of innovative educational methods and practices.

Despite the popularity and longevity of this educational strategy, there have been few rigorous studies of the effects on important student outcomes, with mixed results. Drawing broad conclusions is particularly challenging because the structure and target population of magnet school programs are varied. This more targeted evaluation of magnet schools focuses on a single, common category of school receiving funding through MSAP: elementary schools that convert to become whole-school magnets.

2. Key Questions Addressed:

- How did student composition change, in terms of diversity and achievement, in neighborhood schools that converted to magnet schools?
- To what extent were changes in diversity and achievement in these schools related to magnet conversion?

3. *Design:* A feasibility study determined that there was a sufficient number of neighborhood schools that converted to magnet schools (conversion magnets) funded in the two most recent grant cycles to focus on these schools. School records data (student achievement scores, demographic characteristics, and school attended) were collected for the 2005–06 through 2010–11 school years, three years before and up to four years after the magnet school conversion. Descriptive analyses are being conducted to examine changes in diversity and achievement before versus after conversion for the entire student population in the schools in our sample, as well as for relevant subgroups within the schools. We will also compare changes over time for the conversion magnet schools to those for other neighborhood schools in their districts (comparative interrupted time series analysis) to explore the hypothesis that any

changes we see are associated with the conversion itself and not other efforts underway in the districts.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in 2015.

Students with Disabilities

Preparing for Life After High School

1. *Study Purpose:* The National Longitudinal Transition Study 2012 (NLTS 2012), also referred to as the Study of Transition Outcomes for Youth with Disabilities, is the third in a series examining the characteristics and school experiences of a nationally representative sample of youth with disabilities. NLTS 2012 focuses on youth ages 13 to 21 (in December 2011), but also includes a small sample of students without disabilities to enable direct comparisons of students with and without individualized education programs (IEPs). It is part of the congressionally mandated National Assessment of the IDEA and is supported with funds authorized under Section 664 of IDEA.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What are the personal, family, and school characteristics of youth with disabilities in public schools across the country?
- What regular education, special education, transition planning, and other relevant services and accommodations do youth with disabilities receive?
- How do the services and accommodations differ from those of youth not served under IDEA, including those identified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act?
- How do the services and accommodations for youth with disabilities vary with the characteristics of youth?
- How much have the services and accommodations of youth with disabilities changed over time?

3. *Design:* Phase I of the study collects survey data (spring 2012–summer 2013) on a nationwide sample of 12,000 youth in school, of which 10,000 are students with IEPs across the federal disability categories. Surveys of both youth and their parents/guardians will be administered.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* Two reports are scheduled for completion in summer 2015.

Teacher Quality

Teaching Residency Programs: Description of a New Model for Preparing Teachers for High-Need Schools

1. *Study Purpose:* Teaching Residency Programs (TRPs) involve a year-long “clinical” experience (the “residency”) shadowing and co-teaching with an experienced mentor. TRPs also provide continued support and mentoring after participants become teachers of record. Before and during their residencies, participants in TRPs take coursework. The evaluation of TRPs, which focuses on residency programs that have received grants from the Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Program, will provide important descriptive and implementation

information on TRPs, as well as information on the teacher retention outcomes of teachers who participate in TRPs.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What are the characteristics of TRPs (e.g., length of overall program, criteria for selecting program participants)? What are the characteristics of participants in TRPs?
- What are the retention rates of novice TRP teachers and their novice colleagues who did not go through TRPs?

3. *Design:* Descriptive information concerning TQP grantees operating TRPs was collected through a survey administered in spring 2012. More detailed implementation information was collected through TRP program director interviews and surveys of residents and mentors, conducted within a subset of TRPs during spring 2012. Teacher mobility will be tracked through district records and teacher surveys in order to examine retention in the profession, district, and school, among novice TRP and novice non-TRP teachers in a subset of six districts.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The first report was released in November 2014. A follow-up evaluation brief is expected in 2015.

5. *Key Findings:*

- In keeping with their intended purpose and the grant requirements, the residency programs provided a fieldwork experience, typically with a trained and experienced mentor teacher, along with integrated coursework. Residents reported an increase in the number of days fully in charge of instruction between the first and second halves of their residency (21 versus 37 days, on average). Most TRP mentors had substantial teaching experience (10 years, on average), were trained by the residency program (averaging 37 hours of training), and had prior mentoring experience (an average of 3.5 semesters). TRPs included the equivalent of 10 courses, on average, with core emphasis on content and pedagogy, classroom management, and student assessment and a lesser emphasis on child development and education philosophy. Most residents reported that their fieldwork reinforced what they learned in their coursework and that their coursework was well-integrated with their residency classroom experiences (83 and 68 percent of residents, respectively).
- The residency programs somewhat broadened the pool of people entering the teaching profession in the participating districts. Novice teachers in the study who had completed a TRP appeared more likely than their non-TRP peers to have made a distinct career change when they joined their programs. For example, they were more likely than non-TRP teachers to report having worked in a full-time job other than teaching (72 percent versus 63 percent). However, novice TRP and non-TRP teachers had similar demographic characteristics (sex, race/ethnicity, and age).
- Novice teachers from residency programs had similar retention rates to other novice teachers. Focusing on teachers after their first or second years of teaching, about 92 percent of TRP teachers and 90 percent of non-TRP teachers reported staying in the same district from spring 2012 to fall 2012; about 4 percent of TRP teachers and 6 percent of non-TRP teachers were no longer teaching. None of these were statistically significant differences.

Other

Adoption of Policies and Practices Promoted by Race to the Top and School Improvement Grants

1. *Study Purpose:* RTT and SIG are signature Department programs in the Obama Administration, and both programs received substantial funding through ARRA. As part of OMB's FY 2010 Evaluation Initiative, IES proposed to conduct an impact evaluation of the RTT and SIG programs, focusing on the initial general state competition for RTT and the first cohort of SIG schools implementing intervention models beginning in the 2010–11 school year. This is the first evaluation report of the Impact and Implementation Evaluation of RTT and SIG.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- Which policies and practices promoted by the RTT program do RTT states report adopting, and how do they compare to the policies and practices that non-RTT states report adopting?
- Is receipt of an RTT grant related to improvement in student outcomes?
- Are SIG-funded schools adopting the improvement or turnaround strategies promoted by the four SIG intervention models, and how do they compare to strategies in schools not implementing a SIG-funded intervention model? How are states and districts supporting such efforts?
- Does receipt of SIG funding to implement a school intervention model have an impact on outcomes for low-performing schools?
- Is implementation of the four school intervention models and the strategies prescribed by those models related to improvement in outcomes for low-performing schools?

3. *Design:* The RTT sample will include all 50 states and DC. Data from interviews with all states and DC will inform the first evaluation question. The second evaluation question will be addressed using a short interrupted time series design with state-level NAEP data comparing, before and after the RTT competition, states that were awarded an RTT grant to states that applied for but were not awarded an RTT grant.

The SIG sample will include about 525 schools in 60 districts from 22 states. This sample will be purposively selected to support a regression discontinuity design to address the fourth evaluation question, exploiting cutoff rules that states used to identify their persistently lowest-achieving schools as eligible for SIG to implement one of the four intervention models. Data from state and district interviews, as well as school surveys from the SIG sample, will inform the third and fifth evaluation questions. Student- and school-level achievement data will also be collected from administrative records up to the 2012–2013 school year to inform the fourth and fifth evaluation questions.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The first report on early implementation findings for SIG and RTT is scheduled for completion in 2015. The final report on implementation and impacts is expected in 2016.

Are Low-Performing Schools Adopting Practices Promoted by School Improvement Grants?

1. *Study Purpose:* The SIG program is authorized through Title I of ESEA and provides 3-year awards to support turnaround in the nation's persistently lowest-achieving schools. In FY 2009,

the \$546 million SIG appropriation was supplemented by \$3 billion through ARRA, for a total of \$3.5 billion. SIG funds are distributed to states by formula based on Title I allocations. States then competitively award funds to districts applying on behalf of their eligible schools. Schools receiving SIG must implement one of four prescriptive intervention models: turnaround, transformation, closure, or restart. Previous research provides evidence that low-performing schools adopt some practices promoted by the four models, but little is known about how schools combine these practices. This study describes the individual SIG-promoted improvement practices adopted by low-performing schools.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:* This brief describes both the individual SIG-promoted improvement practices and the combinations of these practices that low-performing schools reported adopting.

3. *Design:* Findings are based on spring 2013 survey responses from 480 school administrators in 60 districts and 22 states. The 480 schools are all low-performing schools, with some receiving SIG and others not.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The report was released in October 2014.

5. *Key Findings:*

- Schools on average reported adopting 20 of 32 improvement practices promoted by the SIG transformation or turnaround models.
- No school reported adopting all practices required under the transformation or turnaround models.
- More than 96 percent of schools reported adopting each of the three most commonly adopted individual practices: using data to inform and differentiate instruction, increasing technology access for teachers or using computer-assisted instruction, and providing ongoing professional development that involves teachers working collaboratively or is facilitated by school leaders.
- For 16 of the 32 practices examined, schools implementing a SIG model were statistically significantly more likely than schools not implementing one to report adopting that practice.
- Almost every school reported adopting a unique combination of practices, but certain practices (for example, the three most commonly adopted practices listed above) were much more likely than others (for example, using financial incentives to recruit and retain effective teachers and principals) to be included in these combinations.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/evaluation/other_racetotop.asp

Building Teacher Capacity to Support ELLs in Schools Receiving SIG

1. *Study Purpose:* School Improvement Grants are authorized by Title I, Section 1003(g) of the ESEA. The purpose of the grants—awarded based on the Title I funding formula to states, which then competitively distribute the funds to districts applying on behalf of their eligible schools—is to support the turnaround of the nation’s persistently lowest-achieving schools. To qualify for the three-year grant, schools must (among other requirements) be willing to implement one of four prescribed intervention models: turnaround, restart, closure, or transformation. About \$546 million was allocated in FY 2009 for SIG with a supplement of \$3 billion from ARRA. With the possibility of rollover funds, this amounts to a \$3.5 billion injection into the SIG program during the 2010–11, 2011–12, and 2012–13 school years. This

study will provide descriptively rich, primarily qualitative information for a small set of SIG schools with high proportions of EL students that are receiving SIG in the first cohort to implement an intervention model beginning in the 2010–11 school year.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:* This brief describes the efforts of SIG schools with high proportions of ELs to improve teachers' capacity for serving ELs through staffing strategies and professional development.
3. *Design:* This study employs a school-level case study design. A sample of 11 SIG schools with high percentages of ELs (a median of 45 percent ELs) was purposively selected from four states to represent a range of geographic regions, urbanities, school sizes, racial/ethnic compositions, socioeconomic statuses, SIG intervention models, and SIG funding levels, among other factors. Findings are based on EL case study data collected in fall 2011, spring 2012, and fall 2012.
4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The report is scheduled for completion in spring 2015.

Case Studies of Schools Receiving School Improvement Grants: Final Report

1. *Study Purpose:* School Improvement Grants are authorized by Title I, Section 1003(g) of ESEA. The purpose of the grants—awarded based on the Title I funding formula to states, which then competitively distribute the funds to districts applying on behalf of their eligible schools—is to support the turnaround of the nation's persistently lowest-achieving schools. To qualify for the three-year grant, schools must (among other requirements) be willing to implement one of four prescribed intervention models: turnaround, restart, closure, or transformation. About \$546 million was allocated in FY 2009 for SIG with a supplement of \$3 billion from ARRA. With the possibility of rollover funds, this amounts to a \$3.5 billion injection into the SIG program during the 2010–11, 2011–12, and 2012–13 school years. This study will provide descriptively rich, primarily qualitative information for a small set of schools receiving SIG in the first cohort to implement an intervention model beginning in the 2010–11 school year.
2. *Key Questions Addressed:*
 - What is the background and context of these persistently lowest-achieving schools? How do the leadership and staff in these schools define the performance problem, and to what do they attribute their problems?
 - What leadership styles do the principals of these persistently lowest-achieving schools exhibit? What actions do these schools engage in to try to improve their history of low performance?
 - What is the change process in these persistently lowest-achieving schools, particularly in terms of school climate and staff capacity?
 - What improvements do school stakeholders perceive during the three-year course of SIG, and do these improvements appear to be sustainable?
3. *Design:* This study employs a school-level case study design. A core sample of 25 SIG schools was purposively selected from six states to represent a range of geographic regions, urbanities, school sizes, racial/ethnic compositions, socioeconomic statuses, SIG intervention models, and SIG funding levels, among other factors. Data collection took place over three school years, beginning in spring 2011 and concluding in spring 2013, and included interviews with each state's SIG leaders, a teacher survey, and site visits to the case study schools, which

included analysis of fiscal records, as well as interviews and focus groups with district officials, principals, teachers, parents, union officials, external support providers, and students.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The first report, based on the first year of data, was released in 2014. The final report, based on the second and third year of data, is scheduled for completion in 2015.

5. *Key Findings from the Interim Report:*

- Findings after the first year of implementation in the 25 “core” sample schools reveal that while all were low-performing, the schools differed in their community and fiscal contexts, performance and reform histories, interpretations of the causes of—and potential solutions for—their performance problems, and perceptions of improvement after the first year of SIG.
- However, most schools did report that their improvement strategies and actions during the first year of SIG were a continuation of activities or plans that predated SIG, and few schools appeared to have experienced a disruption from past practice as of spring 2011.

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20144015/pdf/20144015.pdf>

Evaluation of the Regional Educational Laboratories: Final Report

1. *Study Purpose:* The RELs are a networked system of 10 organizations that serve the educational needs of 10 designated regions across the United States. The Department is authorized by the *Education Sciences Reform Act* (ESRA) to award contracts to 10 RELs to support applied research, development, wide dissemination, and technical assistance activities. The REL program is administered by the Knowledge Utilization Division of the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEEERA) within the Department’s IES, which was established by ESRA in 2002. The FY 2012 appropriation for the REL program was \$57.426 million.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What activities did the RELs undertake to fulfill the missions specified in ESRA?
- What were the technical quality and relevance of REL Fast Response Project reports published by IES and of the corresponding proposals?
- What were the technical quality and relevance of REL impact study reports published by IES and of the corresponding proposals?
- How relevant and useful were the REL technical assistance products to the needs of the states, localities, and policymakers in their regions?

3. *Design:* This descriptive study is relying on a combination of extant data, FY 2010 interviews with REL directors, and FY 2012 surveys of potential REL customers from state and local educational agencies. Panels of experts met during FY 2010 and FY 2012 and rated the quality and relevance of REL Fast Response Project proposals and final reports and REL impact study proposals and final reports.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* An interim report was released in 2013. The final report is scheduled for completion in winter 2015.

5. Key Findings from the Interim Report:

- REL staff members reported activities under each of the 10 missions of the REL program specified in ESRA. The statement of work (SOW) for the REL contracts in place between 2006 and 2011 aligned explicitly with 6 of the 10 statutory missions for the REL program. Four additional statutory missions were not explicitly in the SOW for the RELs, but RELs reported activities under those missions as well.
- As of December 1, 2009, the 10 RELs had submitted 297 proposals to IES to conduct Fast Response Projects (FRPs), of which 46 percent (137) were accepted for performance under the REL contracts.
- The IES-published FRP reports received a mean quality rating of 3.81 on a 5-point scale, while the corresponding proposals received a mean quality rating of 3.24. Both of these means fell between the categories of “adequate” and “strong” quality.
- The IES-published FRP reports received a mean relevance rating of 3.64 on a 5-point scale, while the corresponding proposals received a mean relevance rating of 3.39. Both of these means fell between the categories of “adequate” relevance and “relevant.”

6. *Link to Additional Information:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20134014/>

Implementation and Impact Evaluation of Race to the Top and School Improvement Grants

1. *Study Purpose:* RTT is a competitive grant program of the Department that funds states and districts planning to implement comprehensive education reform in one or more core areas. Since its first awards in 2010, RTT has funded general state competitions, state competitions focused on early learning, and district competitions focused on personalized learning. With funds from ARRA, the general state competition awarded approximately \$4 billion to states in support of comprehensive K–12 education reform in four core areas: teachers and leaders, standards and assessments, data systems, and school turnaround. The SIG program is authorized through Title I of the ESEA and provides three-year awards to support turnaround in the nation’s persistently lowest-achieving schools. In FY 2009, the \$546 million SIG appropriation was supplemented by \$3 billion through ARRA, for a total of \$3.5 billion. SIG funds are distributed to states by formula based on Title I allocations. States then competitively award funds to districts applying on behalf of their eligible schools. Schools receiving SIG must implement one of four prescriptive intervention models: turnaround, transformation, closure, or restart. Both RTT and SIG received substantial funding through ARRA. This study will examine the implementation and impacts of RTT and SIG, focusing on the initial general state competition for RTT and the first cohort of SIG schools implementing intervention models beginning in the 2010–11 school year.

2. Key Questions Addressed:

- Which policies and practices promoted by the RTT program do RTT states report adopting, and how do they compare to the policies and practices that non-RTT states report adopting?
- Is receipt of an RTT grant related to improvement in student outcomes?
- Are SIG-funded schools adopting the improvement or turnaround strategies promoted by the four SIG intervention models, and how do they compare to strategies in schools not implementing a SIG-funded intervention model? How are states and districts supporting such efforts?

- Does receipt of SIG funding to implement a school intervention model have an impact on outcomes for low-performing schools?
- Is implementation of the four school intervention models and the strategies prescribed by those models related to improvement in outcomes for low-performing schools?

3. *Design:* The RTT sample includes all 50 states and DC. Data from interviews with all states and DC will inform the first evaluation question. The second evaluation question will be addressed using a short interrupted time series design with state-level NAEP data. The SIG sample includes about 525 schools in 60 districts from 22 states, purposively selected to support a regression discontinuity design to address the fourth evaluation question. Data from state/district interviews and school surveys will inform the third and fifth evaluation questions. Administrative data on student and school achievement are being collected through the 2012–13 school year to inform the fourth and fifth evaluation questions.

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The first report is scheduled for completion in 2015, and the final report is expected in 2016.

State Capacity to Support the Turnaround of Low Performing Schools

1. *Study Purpose:* RTT is a Department-sponsored competitive grant program that funds states and districts planning to implement comprehensive education reform in one or more core areas. Since its first awards in 2010, RTT has funded general state competitions, state competitions focused on early learning, and district competitions focused on personalized learning. With funds from ARRA, the general state competition awarded approximately \$4 billion to states in support of comprehensive K–12 education reform in four core areas: teachers and leaders, standards and assessments, data systems, and school turnaround. This study examines the implementation of RTT, focusing on state capacity to support school turnaround.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:* This brief describes states' reported priorities for school turnaround, gaps in state-level expertise to support turnaround, and approaches to enhance capacity to support school turnaround. Consideration is given to whether these reports have changed between 2012 and 2013, and whether they differ for RTT and non-RTT states.

3. *Design:* Findings are based on interviews in spring 2012 and 2013 with administrators from 50 states and the District of Columbia (12 Round 1 and 2 RTT states, 7 Round 3 RTT states, and 32 non-RTT states).

4. *Estimated or Actual Completion Date:* The report is scheduled for completion in 2015.

Policy and Program Studies Service (PPSS)

State and District Implementation of Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

1. *Study Purpose:* The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program provides grants to states and other grantees with the goal of ensuring that homeless children and youth have access to the same free, appropriate public education as do other children and youth. This study examined the implementation of the EHCY program at the state and school district levels based on surveys and analysis of extant data.

2. Key Questions Addressed:

- How do states allocate EHCY funds?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of the state coordinator and district liaison? What services do districts provide to homeless children and youth?
- How do states monitor and provide technical assistance to districts as part of the EHCY program? What technical assistance needs do state coordinators and district liaisons report?
- What data do states and districts collect about homeless children and youth?
- What do state coordinators and district liaisons perceive as barriers to school success for homeless children and youth?

3. *Design:* The study surveyed all state coordinators for the EHCY program and a sample of 448 district liaisons of EHCY districts for the 2010–11 school year. The study also examined state-submitted data on homeless children and youth.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in early 2015.

Evaluation of State and Local Implementation of Title III Standards, Assessment, and Accountability Systems

1. *Study Purpose:* Under ESEA Title III accountability provisions, annual measurable achievement objectives (AMAOs) are used to provide district-level and state-level summary information about EL students' progress in attaining English proficiency and meeting state standards in English/language arts and mathematics. This report uses a rigorous method for examining the performance and progress of EL students that controls for compositional shifts in the EL student population and is able to disaggregate performance by subgroup characteristics (e.g., poverty status, level of English language proficiency).

2. Key Questions Addressed:

- Are EL students making progress in learning English? Does the amount of progress vary by student characteristics?
- How long does it take for EL students to attain proficiency on the state ELP assessments, and to be redesignated as former English learners?
- Are EL students making progress toward meeting achievement targets on state content assessments in English/language arts and mathematics?
- Are achievement gaps narrowing for EL students and for former EL students?

3. *Design:* The study used longitudinally linked student-level assessment data in four jurisdictions—New York, Texas, and two school districts in California—to examine student progress for consistent cohorts of ELs, former ELs, and non-ELs who could be followed over a period of at least three years. Most analyses examined a three-year period, from 2006–07 through 2008–09 for New York and from 2005–06 through 2007–08 for the other three jurisdictions. The analytic sample of students is not representative of all students served by the four jurisdictions, so the findings cannot be generalized to all ELs, non-ELs, or former ELs in those states and districts, or to the nation as a whole.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in early 2015.

Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers: State and Local Responses to Federal Initiatives

1. *Study Purpose:* This report provides a broad overview of state efforts, as of the 2011–12 school year, to monitor equitable access to qualified and effective teachers among schools; develop and adopt multiple measures of teacher performance to rate teachers among at least three performance levels; and implement targeted strategies for promoting equitable access to qualified and effective teachers in schools serving high proportions of poor and/or minority students, including the use of measures of teacher qualifications and teacher performance in the implementation of these strategies.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What measures did states use to monitor equitable access to qualified and effective teachers among schools?
- To what extent were states developing or using multiple measures of teacher performance to rate teachers among at least three performance levels?
- What strategies did states use to promote equitable access to qualified and effective teachers in schools serving high proportions of poor and/or minority students?

3. *Design:* This report is based on telephone interviews with officials in SEAs in all states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Study staff also reviewed extant sources including equity plans, Consolidated State Performance Reports, reports from federal monitoring visits, and other information on state websites.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in early 2015.

Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT) Enrolled in Alternative Routes to Certification and Licensure

1. *Study Purpose:* Title I of ESEA requires that all teachers of core academic subjects be highly qualified—meaning they have a bachelor’s degree, full state certification, and demonstrate expertise in the subject matter they teach—and that states work to ensure that poor and minority students are not taught by teachers who are inexperienced, out-of-field, or unqualified at higher rates than their peers. Under federal regulations (34 CFR § 200.56), the Department allows teachers who are enrolled in programs that provide alternate routes to certification or licensure to be considered highly qualified before meeting full state certification requirements. At the same time, alternate route programs have traditionally been used to address shortages, which are especially acute in urban areas, special education, and in certain content areas such as mathematics and science. This congressionally mandated report examines the extent to which students in four different subgroups are taught by teachers enrolled in alternative certification programs and classified as “highly qualified” under the ESEA: (1) students with disabilities, (2) English learners, (3) students in rural areas, and (4) students from low-income families.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What percentage of HQTs across the nation, in each state, and in each district are enrolled in an alternative certification program?

- What percentage of highly qualified special education teachers across the nation, in each state, and in each district are enrolled in an alternative certification program?
- What percentage of highly qualified Title III teachers across the nation, in each state, and in each district are enrolled in an alternative certification program?
- What percentage of HQTs working in rural areas across the nation and in each state are enrolled in an alternative certification program?
- What percentage of HQTs working in high-poverty areas across the nation and in each state are enrolled in an alternative certification program?

3. *Design:* This report provides a descriptive analysis of data collected by the Department from states in summer and fall 2014 on the numbers of all teachers, special education teachers, and Title III teachers who are enrolled in alternative certification programs and deemed highly qualified.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in early 2015.

Evaluation of the Carol White Physical Education Program

1. *Study Purpose:* The Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP) provides grants to school districts or community-based organizations (CBOs) to initiate, expand, and improve physical education for students in kindergarten through grade 12. In 2010, the Department revised PEP regulations to: include an increased focus on healthy eating habits and nutrition; require projects to conduct a needs assessment, and require that districts use four designated modules of the Center for Disease Control's School Health Index (SHI); use this assessment to develop project goals and plans to address identified weaknesses; encourage grantees to establish partnerships with community entities; encourage grantees to collect and use body mass index (BMI) data; and establish new performance measures and standard data-collection methods. This report provides the results of the implementation study of the 76 projects (64 district-led and 12 CBO-led) funded by FY 2010 PEP grant awards—the first cohort of grantees under the revised PEP.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What were the results of PEP grantees' self-assessments of their physical activity, health, and nutrition policies and practices?
- What physical activity and nutrition policy efforts did PEP grantees report?
- What types of physical fitness and nutrition activities did PEP grantees report?
- What role did community partnerships play in PEP projects?
- What were PEP grantees' experiences collecting and using BMI data?
- What implementation challenges and lessons learned did PEP grantees report?

3. *Design:* This study used a mixed-methods research design that included surveys and case studies. Surveys of project directors were conducted in 2011 and 2013, the first and third years of the grant period. Case studies of five PEP projects (three districts and two CBOs) gathered more in-depth information from 59 interviewees regarding grantees' experiences with community partners and BMI data collection.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in spring 2015.

Study of the Early Implementation of the ESEA Flexibility Provision

1. *Study Purpose:* On September 23, 2011, President Obama announced the opportunity for states to request flexibility of certain ESEA provisions to help states move forward with efforts to improve student achievement and the quality of instruction in their schools. With input from broad and diverse stakeholders, the Department designed the ESEA Flexibility initiative so that states could build on their existing reform efforts to: (1) transition to college- and career-ready standards and aligned assessments; (2) implement new systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support for schools; (3) evaluate and support teacher and principal effectiveness in more robust ways; and (4) reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on school districts by removing any duplicative and burdensome reporting requirements. The early implementation study will provide documentation of early state- and local-level implementation of the flexibility provision. This information is intended to inform federal and state policymakers and to support the Department's monitoring and technical assistance to states. The study includes reviews of state and local documents; interviews with education officials at the state, district, and school level in early implementing states; and analysis of baseline student outcome and other data obtained through extant data sources.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

States & Districts:

- Approaches to accountability and support under ESEA Flexibility. What prior experiences and rationales guided state approaches to accountability and support under the ESEA Flexibility initiative, including states' selection of annual measurable objectives (AMOs)?
- Components of a system of accountability and support under ESEA Flexibility. What are the primary components of state accountability and support systems under ESEA Flexibility, including state processes for identifying reward schools and for identifying priority, focus, and other low-performing schools?
- Intervention and support for low-performing schools and districts. What interventions and supports are states and districts implementing in low-performing schools, and what approaches are states taking to identify and intervene in low-performing districts?
- Issues related to ESEA Flexibility implementation. To what extent and what challenges are states and districts experiencing related to ESEA Flexibility implementation, and to what extent and in what ways are states and districts communicating with stakeholders regarding ESEA Flexibility provisions?

Schools:

- To what extent did principals report understanding their state's accountability system under ESEA Flexibility, and how did they perceive the communication efforts of their states and districts about the system?
- How did principals perceive the criteria that their states were using to identify low-performing schools under ESEA Flexibility?
- What improvement strategies did principals describe implementing?
- What state and district support did principals report receiving to support their improvement efforts?

- What incentives or recognition for success did principals of reward schools report receiving from their states as a result of their reward designation?

3. *Design:* The primary data sources for this study included state ESEA Flexibility applications, state and district policy documents, and interviews with officials identified by state and district leaders as holding primary responsibility for accountability and support systems under ESEA Flexibility. The sample was purposefully selected to include officials representing 12 states, 24 districts, and 36 schools.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in spring 2015.

Study of English Learners with Special Needs

1. *Study Purpose:* The purpose of this study is to describe, on an exploratory scale, common issues in the identification of ELs for special education. The report will focus on four topics: procedures and practices used in identification; assessment data and instruments used to bring ELs into special education; personnel, qualifications, and professional development to assist in identification; and instruments on which decisions are often made to exit ELs with disabilities out of their language instruction programs.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What procedures, practices, and instruments are used to assess and identify ELs with disabilities, and how do these differ from those used with non-ELs?
- What are the roles, backgrounds, and qualifications of school and district personnel involved in the assessment and identification of ELs with disabilities?
- What challenges do districts and schools encounter in the assessment and identification of disabilities among ELs and what strategies do they use to overcome these challenges?
- What procedures and practices do districts and schools use to exit ELs with disabilities from language instruction educational programs, and what are the challenges they face?

3. *Design:* The study relied on a purposive sample of a diverse group of six case study districts, containing 18 schools total, which the study team visited in spring 2013. Study methods onsite largely consisted of interviews of a large number and types of stakeholders involved in ESL, special education, and related support services at both the school district and school levels. Other data collected included special education data; published reports, guides, and regulations related to identification; and data on district and school websites. The data were coded to one or more of the four key questions and the findings were compared to those from a prior review of research.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in spring 2015.

Evaluation of the Teacher Incentive Fund: Final Report

1. *Study Purpose:* This study examines program implementation in the first two cohorts of TIF grantees (2006 and 2007), which included 33 grantees. All 33 grantees implemented performance pay systems for principals and other school administrators; 31 grantees also included teachers in their performance pay systems. The final report is a complement to a 2012 report on early implementation of the program, and analyzes award payouts and educator perspectives on a variety of issues related to implementation and sustainability.

2. Key Questions Addressed:

- How did the size and composition of incentive awards vary across educators and grantees?
- How did participating educators perceive the fairness and effectiveness of the performance pay systems?
- Did grantees expect to continue their performance pay projects beyond the life of the TIF grant?

3. *Design:* Data collection included surveys of a representative sample of teachers and principals in schools served by TIF projects; financial data for awards paid to educators; interviews with TIF project directors, teachers, principals, and other stakeholders; and reviews of extant documents. The surveys were conducted in spring 2011, and the incentive award payout data are primarily for the 2010–11 school year.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in spring 2015.

Study of Emerging Teacher Evaluation Systems

1. *Study Purpose:* This study will provide descriptive information on the design and early implementation of teacher evaluation systems in eight school districts. The findings are intended to help other districts and states learn from the experiences of eight districts featured in the study, and apply the design and implementation lessons to their own work as it relates to teacher evaluation and support.

2. Key Questions Addressed:

- What steps did the districts take to design a teacher evaluation system? What are the purported purposes of the new teacher evaluation systems in the case study districts? With what stakeholders did district staff consult when designing the new systems? What are the types of measures districts included in their teacher evaluation systems and how are each of those measures weighted?
- What steps did the districts take prior to full implementation to test the system and prepare teachers and staff to implement it?
- How do the districts structure and conduct the classroom observation component of their teacher evaluation systems?
- How do the districts analyze student achievement and other data to evaluate teacher performance?
- How do the districts use teacher evaluation results to make human resource decisions? To what extent are professional development decisions and opportunities tied to evaluation results?
- What administrative structures do/did districts use to support their new teacher evaluation system?

3. *Design:* This descriptive study relies on interviews with key district administrators, principals, teachers, and representatives of community stakeholder groups, from eight districts, who were involved in the development and early implementation of the respective districts' teacher evaluation system. Given the limited sample, the findings cannot be generalized to other districts.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in spring 2015.

Feasibility Study on Improving the Quality of School-Level Expenditure Data

1. *Study Purpose:* This feasibility study explores options for improving the completeness, consistency, and accuracy of school-level expenditures that would be most appropriate to include for assessing equity, as well as technical and operational challenges for including certain types of expenditures. The study also examines the experiences of states and districts that currently track school-level expenditures, including variations in definitions and practices used in these jurisdictions, the types of changes to accounting systems and practices that are required, and the potential cost of implementing such strategies.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- In states and districts that currently track expenditures at the school level, what types of personnel and non-personnel expenditures are included in the school-level data?
- What is the quality of existing school-level expenditure data? What specific steps could be taken to improve the completeness, consistency, and accuracy of these data?
- What changes would states and districts need to make to track expenditures at the school level if they do not currently do so? What costs have states and districts incurred to implement such data systems?

3. *Design:* The study will explore options for improving the completeness, consistency, and accuracy of school-level expenditure reporting by: (1) convening an expert panel to identify specific challenges and potential solutions; (2) interviewing fiscal staff in five states and four school districts that have finance systems that track school-level finance data; and (3) collecting and analyzing available school-level expenditure data in the selected states and districts.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in summer 2015.

National High School Reform Study

1. *Study Purpose:* This nationally representative survey of high school administrators is examining strategies that schools are using to reduce students' likelihood of dropping out of high school and to increase their likelihood of attaining a high school credential. The study examines dropout prevention strategies used by high schools, with an emphasis on those supported by the High School Graduation Initiative, authorized under Title I, Part H of ESEA, as amended. The survey seeks information on what schools are implementing what activities with what students under what circumstances or conditions.

Data from the National High School Reform Study will inform a descriptive report on the strategies that high schools are using to help students graduate from high school, especially students at risk for dropping out and students in high schools with low graduation rates. Information from the survey will fill critical information gaps about the use and prevalence of high school reform strategies to support at-risk youth.

2. *Key Question Addressed:*

- What are the prevalence and characteristics of key high school reforms, especially dropout prevention strategies, operating in the nation's public high schools, overall and in high schools with low graduation rates?

3. *Design:* A 30-minute survey administered online to a nationally representative sample of approximately 2,000 high school administrators.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* Data collection is scheduled to begin in early 2015 and continue through June 2015. The final report is scheduled for completion in spring 2016.

Study of Experiences and Needs of Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) Grantees and Subgrantees

1. *Study Purpose:* The purpose of this descriptive study is to examine how grantees and subgrantees use REAP funds provided through the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) and Rural and Low-Income Schools (RLIS) programs—on their own or in combination with other federal funds—as well as to explore technical assistance needs related to REAP. The study will inform program operations, technical assistance to grantees, and future reauthorization of the programs.

2. Key Questions Addressed:

- What are REAP grantees' experiences of grant eligibility determination? To what extent do districts contact, or are they contacted by, the SEA regarding eligibility?
- On what types of activities are REAP funds spent and in what proportions? What are grantees' experiences of deciding how to target funds (e.g., processes and factors, personnel and stakeholders involved, integration in larger spending decisions)? Do districts perceive a need for greater flexibility in the use of federal Title VI funds? How does this vary by grantee characteristic?
- How do grantees use REAP funds in combination with other federal program funds? To what extent are other Department or other federal programs (e.g., E-Rate, USDA Rural Development grants) considered or integrated? What are the challenges in spending REAP funds?
- How many SRSA-eligible grantees use REAP flexibility? Does the use of flexibility differ by grantee characteristics? If flexibility is not used, why not? Exactly how do SRSA grantees tend to use flexibility?
- What are the major challenges and technical assistance needs that REAP grantees face (e.g., eligibility determination and compliance with program requirements)? Are there technical assistance needs that grantees perceive to be unaddressed? For what? What is the frequency of technical assistance use by grantees? What is the purpose of such assistance, and who offers it?
- Is there anything that districts or states would recommend changing about the REAP program administration or design?

3. *Design:* The study consists of: 1) a survey of a sample of approximately 1,000 SRSA grantees and RLIS subgrantee districts; 2) telephone interviews with a sample of 30 SRSA grantees and RLIS subgrantees; and 3) telephone interviews with REAP coordinators in all states receiving REAP funds. Data collection will begin in winter 2015 and is expected to be completed by spring 2015. At the state level, the study will include interviews with all state REAP coordinators about state goals and priorities, the planning process for use of RLIS funds, the eligibility process for districts, management and distribution of SRSA and RLIS funds, and recommendations for the program. At the school district level, the study will include an online survey of a nationally representative sample of REAP coordinators about the REAP eligibility

determination process, administration of REAP, and challenges and technical assistance needs related to REAP, as well as telephone interviews with a subsample of 30 districts. The interviews will include questions about program administration, technical assistance needs, and recommendations for changing the REAP program to better meet the needs of rural districts.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in spring 2016.

Case Studies of the Implementation and Use of Kindergarten Entry Assessments

1. *Study Purpose:* The purpose of the KEAs implementation case studies is to document the processes, accomplishments, challenges, and solutions of four states implementing KEAs and to share what they have learned with federal and state policymakers and the field. Of particular interest is to identify what is working well in states that are early adopters of KEAs. This information is needed to support the technical assistance efforts of the Department and to inform KEA efforts across the nation.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- How have KEAs been developed and adopted by four states that were early to adopt a comprehensive KEA?
- How are KEAs being implemented by 12 school districts within four states that were early adopters?
- How do these four states and their districts and schools communicate and use KEA results to inform policy and practice?
- What lessons did states, districts, and schools learn about KEA adoption, implementation, and use?

3. *Design:* The nested sample design includes four states, 12 districts, and 24 schools. Data collection will include review of state and local documents, phone interviews with SEA preschool directors and professional development staff who facilitate district-level training, and in-person interviews with district administrators, principals, kindergarten teachers, and other staff involved in local administration of KEAs.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The final report is scheduled for completion in spring 2016.

Study on Sustaining the Positive Effects of Preschool

1. *Study Purpose:* This study will accomplish two goals: (1) summarize what is known about policies, programs, and practices that can help students in grades K–3 build on the positive effects of preschool or make cognitive, social-emotional, and academic gains; and (2) provide detailed case study descriptions of five innovative programs that aim to help disadvantaged students sustain and build upon preschool's positive effects.

2. *Key Questions Addressed:*

- What is known about policies, programs, and practices that can help students in grades K–3 build on the positive effects of preschool or make cognitive, social-emotional, and academic gains?

- What are the characteristics of innovative programs (including school-based interventions, district-wide approaches, and comprehensive state policies) that sustain the positive effects of preschool for students, particularly for disadvantaged students?
- Based on what research or experiences did the designers of these programs develop the program structures and content?
- What are some of challenges of implementing these programs and how have staff and leaders tried to overcome these challenges?

3. *Design:* The literature review consists of a two-stage systematic review of three topics: (1) preschool and K–3 alignment, (2) differentiated instruction, and (3) interventions to sustain the effects of preschool. Stage 1 will be a descriptive mapping review. Stage 2 will be an evidence review and will only apply for studies of the three topics that employed a rigorous design. The case studies will examine five sites at the elementary (K–3) level that are implementing policies, programs, or strategies related to one of the above three topic areas and have successfully demonstrated gains for disadvantaged students (e.g., economically disadvantaged children; children who are learning English as their second language; and children who come from homeless, neglected, or migrant populations) in cognitive, social-emotional, or academic domains.

4. *Estimated Completion Date:* The literature review is scheduled for completion in summer 2015. The final case study report is scheduled for completion in fall 2016.

Appendix D: Selected Department Web Links and Education Resources

College Cost Lists

The Department provides college affordability and transparency lists under the *Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008*. Each list is broken out into nine different sectors to allow students to compare costs at similar types of institutions, including career and technical programs. <http://collegecost.ed.gov/catc/>

College Navigator

The Department provides a multidimensional review of higher education options for students and provides links to other sites. <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

College Scorecards

College Scorecards in the Department's College Affordability and Transparency Center make it easier to find out more about a college's affordability and value.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/education/higher-education/college-score-card>

One-Stop Shopping for Student Loans

The Department provides a site from which students can manage their loans.

<http://studentloans.gov/>

College Preparation Checklist

This Departmental tool gives prospective college students step-by-step instructions on how to prepare academically and financially for education beyond high school. Each section is split into subsections for students and parents, explaining what needs to be done and which publications or websites might be useful to them. <http://studentaid.ed.gov>

Additional resources within the checklist assist students in finding scholarships and grants.

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/checklist/main.html>

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/checklist/MoreSourcesOfStudentAid.html>

College Completion Toolkit

The College Completion Toolkit provides information that governors and other state leaders can use to help colleges in their state increase student completion rates. It highlights key strategies and offers models to learn from, as well as other useful resources.

<http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/cc-toolkit.pdf>

Resources for Adult and Career and Technical Education

The Department, through the Perkins Collaborative Resource Network, offers resources and tools for the development and implementation of comprehensive career guidance programs. This includes guides for students, parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators across relevant topics, such as planning and exploring careers, selecting institutions, finances, and guidance evaluation. This source is an example of interdepartmental cooperation between the Department and the U.S. Department of Labor.

http://cte.ed.gov/nationalinitiatives/gandctools.cfm?&pass_dis=1

The Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) is a Department initiative that seeks to expand evidence-based practice in the field of adult literacy. LINCS provides high-quality, on-demand educational opportunities to practitioners of adult education in order to help adult learners successfully transition to postsecondary education and employment. LINCS is comprised of three components: 1) the LINCS Resource Collection provides free online access to high-quality, evidence-based materials and self-access courses to help practitioners and state and local staff improve programs, services, instruction and teacher quality; 2) LINCS Regional Professional Development Centers work with states to offer practitioners training and professional development activities; and 3) LINCS Community provides an online social learning space (a community of practice) for networking, information sharing, and collaboration among adult education leadership, professional developers, administrative staff, and practitioners across the country. <http://lincs.ed.gov/>

Program Inventory

The *GPRA Modernization Act of 2010*, P.L. 111-352, requires that OMB establish a single website with a central inventory of all federal programs, including the purpose of each program and its contribution to the mission and goals of the Department. The initial Federal Program Inventory was published in May 2013. The Department described each program within 27 budgetary accounts, as well as how the programs support the Department's broader strategic goals and objectives.

Since that time, Congress passed the *Digital Accountability and Transparency Act* (DATA Act) requiring new public reporting requirements, which impact the definition of program used in this guidance. OMB is currently working with agencies to merge the implementation of the DATA Act and the Federal Program Inventory requirements to the extent possible to avoid duplicative efforts. While OMB and agencies determine the right implementation strategy, the initial Federal Program Inventory remains available on the Department's website and at Performance.gov.

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/inventory.pdf>

Grants Information and Resources

In addition to student loans and grants, the Department offers other discretionary grants. These are awarded using a competitive process, and formula grants, which use formulas determined by Congress. This site lists Department discretionary grant competitions previously announced, as well as those planned for later announcement, for new awards organized according to the Department's principal program offices. <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html>

Additional program information is available. <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/gtep/gtep.pdf>

Federal Registry for Educational Excellence

Federal Registry for Educational Excellence (FREE) provides easily accessible resources in a wide gamut of subjects for educators. The tool breaks resources into categories ranging from art and music to science and mathematics. FREE is built on the Learning Registry, an open database for sharing educational resources. It also offers a wide variety of primary documents, photos, and videos. In addition, FREE allows educators to follow via Twitter, a social network, which facilitates the sharing of ideas. This tool acts as a library of digital resources for educators to help them enrich their lessons. <http://free.ed.gov/>

Practice Guides for Educators

The Department offers guides that help educators address everyday challenges faced in classrooms and schools. Developed by a panel of nationally recognized experts, practice guides consist of actionable recommendations, strategies for overcoming potential roadblocks, and an indication of the strength of evidence supporting each recommendation. The guides themselves are subjected to rigorous external peer review. Users can sort by subject area, academic level, and intended audience to find the most recent, relevant, and useful guides.

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications_reviews.aspx

Performance Data

EDFacts is a Department initiative to put performance data at the center of policy, management, and budget decisions for all K-12 educational programs.

<http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/index.html>

Condition of Education and Digest of Education Statistics

The Condition of Education is a congressionally mandated annual report that summarizes developments and trends in education using the latest available statistics. The report presents statistical indicators containing text, figures, and data from early learning through graduate-level education. <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/>

The primary purpose of the Digest of Education Statistics is to provide a compilation of statistical information covering the broad field of American education from pre-kindergarten through graduate school. The Digest includes a selection of data from many sources, both government and private, and draws especially on the results of surveys and activities carried out by the National Center for Education Statistics. <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/>

Projections of Education Statistics to 2021

For the 50 states and the District of Columbia, the tables, figures, and text in this report contain data on projections of public elementary and secondary enrollment and public high school graduates to the year 2021. The report includes a methodology section that describes the models and assumptions used to develop national and state-level projections.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2013008>

Open Government Initiative

The Department's Open Government Initiative is designed to improve the way the Department shares information, learns from others, and collaborates to develop the best solutions for America's students. <http://www2.ed.gov/about/open.html>

National Assessment of Educational Progress

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assesses samples of students in grades 4, 8, and 12 in various academic subjects. Results of the assessments are reported for the nation and states in terms of achievement levels—basic, proficient, and advanced. <http://nationsreportcard.gov/>

Government Accountability Office

The Government Accountability Office supports Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and helps improve the performance and accountability of the federal government for the benefit of the American people. <http://www.gao.gov/docsearch/agency.php>

Office of Inspector General

The Office of Inspector General conducts independent and objective audits, investigations, inspections, and other activities to promote the efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity of the Department's programs and operations. <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/index.html>

A list of reports is available. <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/reports.html>

Appendix E: Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AARTS	Audit Accountability and Resolution Tracking System
AFGR	Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate
AFR	<i>Agency Financial Report</i>
AP	Advanced Placement
APG	Agency Priority Goal
API	Application Program Interfaces
APP	<i>Annual Performance Plan</i>
APR	<i>Annual Performance Report</i>
ARRA	<i>American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act)</i>
CAMP	College Assistance Migrant Program
CAP Goals	Cross-Agency Priority Goals
CDA	Child Development Associate
CEDS	Common Education Data Standards
CEELO	Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes
CHAFL	College Housing and Academic Facilities Loan Program
CMS	Case Management System
CoSTEM	Committee on STEM Education
CRDC	Civil Rights Data Collection
CTE	Career and Technical Education
CTS	Case Tracking System
DLL	Dual Language Learner
DM	Document Management
DoD	Department of Defense
DOJ	Department of Justice
DST	Data Strategy Team
EAG	Enhanced Assessment Grant
ECPC	Early Childhood Personnel Center

EDGAR	Education Department General Administrative Regulations
ELC TAC	Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance Center
ERIC	Education Resources Information Center
ESEA	<i>Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965</i>
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FERPA	<i>Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act</i>
FEVS	Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey
FFEL	Federal Family Education Loan
FMFIA	<i>Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982</i>
FPCO	Family Policy Compliance Office
FREE	Federal Registry for Educational Excellence
FSA	Federal Student Aid
FY	Fiscal Year
G5	Grants Management System
GPRA	<i>Government Performance and Results Act of 1993</i>
GPRAMA	<i>GPRA Modernization Act of 2010</i>
GSA	General Services Administration
HBCUs	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
HCERA	<i>Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010</i>
HEA	<i>Higher Education Act of 1965</i>
HEAL	Health Education Assistance Loans
HEP	High School Equivalency Program
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
HSGI	High School Graduation Initiative
i3	Investing in Innovation Fund
IDEA	<i>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</i>
IES	Institute of Education Sciences
IHE	Institution of Higher Education

IOM	Institute of Medicine
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
ISU	Implementation and Support Unit (reorganized into the Office of State Support)
IT	Information Technology
KEA	Kindergarten Entry Assessment
LEA	Local Educational Agency
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
MEP	Migrant Education State Program
MSP	Mathematics and Science Partnerships
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
NAM	Native American and Alaska Native Children in Schools
NAS	National Academy of Sciences
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
NCLB	<i>No Child Left Behind Act of 2001</i>
NIDRR	National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research
NIH	National Institutes of Health
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPD	National Professional Development
NSF	National Science Foundation
OCFO	Office of the Chief Financial Officer
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
OCTAE	Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education
OELA	Office of English Language Acquisition
OESE	Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OII	Office of Innovation and Improvement
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OPE	Office of Postsecondary Education

OPEPD	Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
OSERS	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
OSS	Office of State Support (formerly the Implementation and Support Unit)
PIC	Performance Improvement Council
PO	Principal Office
PPIRS	Past Performance Information Retrieval System
PTAC	Privacy Technical Assistance Center
QPR	Quarterly Performance Review
QRIS	Quality Rating and Improvement Systems
RDA	Results-Driven Accountability
RELS	Regional Educational Laboratories
RSA-911	Rehabilitation Services Administration-911
RTT	Race to the Top
RTTA	Race to the Top-Assessment
RTT-ELC	Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge
SAFRA	<i>Student Aid and Financial Responsibility Act</i>
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
SAT	Senior Assessment Team
SEA	State Educational Agency
SFA	Student Financial Assistance
SIG	School Improvement Grant
SLDS	Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems
SPFI	<i>Summary of Performance and Financial Information</i>
SSDI	Supportive School Discipline Initiative
SSIP	State Systemic Improvement Plan
SST	State Support Team
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

SY	School Year
TA	Technical Assistance
TAACCCT	Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training
TEACH	Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant
TQRIS	Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement Systems
Treasury	U.S. Department of Treasury
U.S.	United States
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation
WDQI	Wage Data Quality Information Program
WIOA	<i>Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act</i>
WTTS	Workforce Transformation and Tracking System
WWC	What Works Clearinghouse



**OUR MISSION IS TO PROMOTE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND PREPARATION FOR
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ENSURING EQUAL ACCESS.**

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