This is edition one of the Roadmap for Next-Generation Accountability Systems. As states begin to develop and implement next-generation accountability systems, new insights and challenges will emerge and this document will continue to evolve accordingly so it can best serve as a resource for states.

ROADMAP
for
NEXT-GENERATION STATE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS

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Dear State Leader:

We are pleased to present a *Roadmap for Next-Generation State Accountability Systems* (the "Roadmap") for your use and reference as you work on advancing policy in this critical area of education reform. This Roadmap has been developed by and for states and U.S. territories through CCSSO's Next-Generation State Accountability Systems Taskforce. It represents the vision of chief state school officers and state education agencies to dramatically improve student achievement through the development and implementation of next-generation state accountability systems that are based on the goal of college and career readiness for all students. These next-generation accountability systems will build upon historical and current accountability efforts that have lead to our sharp focus on student performance data. Now that most states have the ability to collect and analyze vast amounts of data and information, we must leverage each element within the accountability system to *utilize* that information and achieve increased student performance.

As the Taskforce prepared this Roadmap, we remained focused on the needs of and benefit to the student. In particular, we know that students must be prepared to participate in a diverse democracy and compete in the 21st century global economy. Next-generation systems of accountability will play a critical role in achieving the goal of college and career readiness for all students by supporting states, districts and schools in their work to ensure students are on a college- and career-ready pathway throughout their education career.

In recent years, states have demonstrated significant leadership for all students and schools, on issues such as common graduation rate calculations, P-20 data systems, and common state standards and assessments aligned with college and career expectations. States have a responsibility to demonstrate this same type of leadership and sound judgment in the development and implementation of next-generation accountability systems. In addition to strong leadership, states must show commitment and innovation – including learning from international models – so as not to be confined by the parameters and realities of the current system. As has been the case in many areas of education reform, such as those referenced above, your vision and leadership will not only shape state accountability policy but will guide and inform federal law and policy on these issues.

We hope that this Roadmap will serve as a foundational tool for states as you take bold action in developing your next-generation state accountability system and further improving student achievement. For policymakers and other interested stakeholders, we intend for this Roadmap to be a clear statement that **states are leading on designing next-generation accountability systems building on other state-led efforts, including college- and career-ready standards and related assessments; states are committed to building new accountability systems that are more innovative and consistent across the systems' components; and we expect federal law to support state leadership, including providing states authority for continuous innovation of these systems.**

We appreciate the support for the work of the Taskforce provided by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation.

Sincerely,

Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director of the Council of Chief State School Officers
David Steiner, Commissioner, New York State Education Department and Co-chair, CCSSO Accountability Taskforce
Joe Morton, State Superintendent of Education, Alabama Department of Education and Co-chair, CCSSO Accountability Taskforce

Executive Summary

This Roadmap was developed by the CCSSO Next-Generation State Accountability Taskforce in order to provide states with a guide for designing and implementing accountability systems aligned with college- and career-ready expectations for all students. The goals and elements of next-generation accountability systems must build upon existing accountability systems and connect with other education reforms to ensure that all students are prepared for college and career upon graduating from high school.

Next-generation accountability systems will:

I. Clearly articulate the state's expectations for school and district performance so that all stakeholders' **actions and decisions are aligned and consistent** towards ensuring all students are ready for college and career.

II. **Differentiate the performance** of schools and districts in valid, reliable, and meaningful ways so that schools and districts in need of improvement **receive appropriate support and interventions** and build capacity to meet expectations; and top-performing/high-growth schools and districts can be recognized and shared as models of excellence.

III. Empower and engage educators, policy/law makers, parents, and the public through regular communication and **transparent, timely reporting of actionable data** on performance and results so that they can take action appropriate to their roles.

IV. Foster a **commitment to innovation and continuous improvement** of the system so new models are used and evaluated to improve performance across the system, increasing achievement and efficiency.

Next-generation accountability systems will meet these goals through eight integrated system elements:

1. Performance goals for all schools and districts aligned to college- and career-ready standards;
2. Measures of student outcomes on a variety of indicators including those of both status and growth;

3. Initial annual determinations of schools and districts focused on student outcomes; including disaggregation of data by student subgroup (for both reporting and accountability);
4. Timely, actionable, accessible data reported to all stakeholders, including outcome and richer data to drive continuous improvement;
5. Deeper diagnostic reviews, used as appropriate, to better link accountability determinations to meaningful supports and interventions;
6. Classification systems that meaningfully differentiate between schools and districts and direct the provision of supports and interventions;
7. Supports and interventions that build district and school capacity for sustained improvement and target the lowest performing schools for significant interventions; and
8. Innovation, evaluation, and continuous improvement in the accountability systems over time.

These elements are individually and collectively integral to an effective accountability system. CCSSO, on behalf of its members, commits to continue state leadership in transforming state education systems through implementation of these next-generation accountability systems that will ensure all students are ready for college and career.

PURPOSE OF THE ROADMAP

This Roadmap presents a vision for next-generation accountability systems to support college and career readiness for all students. It is written by and for states, building on our leadership toward college and career readiness.

This Roadmap has two core purposes:

- To serve as a **statement of state leadership** in developing more robust and meaningful educational accountability systems; and
- To provide a **guide for state action** in developing and implementing next-generation accountability systems.

States recognize accountability as a core strategy designed to achieve educational goals, particularly student achievement outcomes. As states implement college- and career-ready standards and complementary assessment systems through the Common Core state standards and assessment consortia or otherwise, it is critical to consider the accountability implications of these policy shifts and to leverage state accountability systems to support the end goal of college and career readiness for all students.

States will not have to start from scratch in designing and implementing next-generation accountability systems. Instead, they can build upon solid foundations, structured during two decades of standards-based reform and initial accountability efforts, to improve systems and have a dramatic impact on student achievement. For example, under the No Child Left Behind Act, states built systems to collect, analyze, and publicize vast amounts of student performance and other data. Now that states possess this capacity, we must fully utilize those data to promote increased student achievement at all levels

toward college- and career-ready performance. Not only will utilization of these data drive increased student achievement, but it will also drive educational systems to greater resource efficiency.

This Roadmap will assist states in developing their next-generation state accountability systems and will aid states in transitioning to these enhanced systems. This Roadmap seeks to put a clear, usable framework on what is a complex set of issues. As a result, there may be some redundancies, which are designed to communicate issues that may be of importance in multiple places. Further, this roadmap is not meant to answer every question, but to provide a framework for deeper action by clearly identifying the core elements and issues that must be addressed in developing next-generation accountability systems. Finally, this Roadmap is meant primarily to guide state action. While the Roadmap has direct implications for federal law, which are summarized in concrete recommendations toward the end of the document, it is not our intent that all dimensions of this framework be codified in federal law. On the contrary, the strong belief of CCSSO and the Taskforce is that next-generation accountability systems require a great degree of state innovation, within a general framework, as well as continuous improvement over time.

The Roadmap focuses on school and district accountability, while acknowledging that next-generation accountability systems must fully align with other core reforms, including emerging teacher and leader evaluation systems and other capacity-building efforts. In that spirit, the Roadmap presents a framework for school and district accountability that includes the following tightly integrated elements:

- **Performance objectives** aligned to the goal of college and career readiness
- Valid **measures** focused on student performance outcomes and disaggregated by student sub-groups
- **Determinations** that meaningfully capture school and district performance
- **Transparent reporting** of determinations and other useful data
- **Diagnostic reviews** to ensure accurate conclusions about the root causes of school and district performance, including through review and analysis of school/district processes
- **Classifications** that meaningfully distinguish schools and districts, to drive supports and interventions at all levels
- **A range of supports and interventions** to promote continuous improvement toward college- and career-ready performance, particularly with regard to lowest performing schools
- **Innovation, evaluation, and continuous improvement** of the accountability system

Point of Clarity from the Taskforce:

It may be tempting to construe or interpret next-generation accountability systems as an attempt to weaken current accountability systems, particularly if one wants to advocate going back to the "way things were" prior to NCLB. To be clear, this is not the intent of the Taskforce. We envision rigorous and enhanced accountability systems building off of, not departing from, previous accountability efforts. While innovation and flexibility should be encouraged, low-performing schools and districts should face serious and swift interventions so that student achievement levels below expectations (whether in aggregate or by sub-group) do not persist.

BACKGROUND

History of Accountability Systems

Over the last two decades of standards-based reform, accountability has emerged as an essential, strategy to improve student performance. Initially, most states focused their concept of accountability on fund administration, district compliance monitoring, and other input measures without a connection to student achievement outcomes or a clear statewide reform agenda. Beginning in the 1980s, leading states advanced educational accountability by developing standards and aligned assessments. The federal government joined this movement with the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (IASA), a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which shifted from a single focus on funding to a dual focus on funding and reform – requiring states to implement systems of standards, assessments, and accountability. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, the 2002 reauthorization of ESEA) established broader, more rigid requirements for state standards-based reform, including annual assessments, specific requirements for adequate yearly progress (AYP), disaggregation of data, transparent reporting, and specific interventions in underperforming schools. Currently, states have established NCLB-compliant accountability systems in one of three ways: 1) a NCLB-compliant only system (AYP-only basis), 2) a NCLB-compliant system with a parallel state system (e.g., states with AYP and separate school grades), and 3) integrated NCLB-compliant and state systems.

Under IASA, the federal/state relationship regarding accountability could be characterized as "loose-loose" – federal requirements for goals *and* the means to achieve those goals permitted a great deal of state discretion. NCLB created a "loose-tight" relationship where the federal government was loose on the goals that states set (e.g., the definition of proficiency) but tight on the means by which states would work toward achieving those goals. States now have the opportunity to move toward a model that is "tight-loose," whereby the states advance the goal of college and career readiness for all students; have the latitude to determine how best to meet that goal; and establish consequences should the goal(s) not be attained. This further permits greater balance and integration of accountability with other core strategies, include those to build capacity and those that acknowledge the positive aspects of accountability, in addition to negative consequences.

Therefore, the current state-led movement to college- and career-ready standards and the corresponding state collaboration on aligned assessments serve as core pillars to support next-generation accountability systems. These new systems will continue to reflect the organizing function that accountability can provide states striving to achieve educational goals while simultaneously advancing greater state innovation.

Resources:

- *"Key Elements for Education Accountability Models", Perie, Park, Klau. CCSSO (December 2007)*

- *Kress, Sandy, Stephanie Zechmann, & J. Matthew Schmitten, "When Performance Matters: The Past, Present, and Future of Consequential Accountability in Public Education", Harvard Journal on Legislation, Vol. 48, p. 185 (2011)*

Context for Accountability Reform

All states and U.S. territories have statewide systems of accountability, including annual determinations of school and district performance. However, these systems fall short of desired results in several ways, based significantly on limitations in federal law that have grown more noticeable over time as states have greatly increased their capabilities. For example, standards may not reflect expectations aligned to college and career readiness goals; accountability determinations focus exclusively on status over growth; reporting systems limit what factors can be considered (and how) in making accountability determinations; and accountability determinations are often only loosely coupled with meaningful supports and interventions because schools and districts have not engaged in diagnostic reviews for root cause analysis. Further, while providing a spotlight on the lowest-performing schools and districts (whether the low performance is persistent or not and/or across the board or between certain student groups), current systems fail to provide the information, tools, and capacity to effectively address these issues.

The current policy landscape – with the emergence of both common and other college- and career-ready standards and complementary assessments, coupled with the delay in ESEA reauthorization – provides states with the opportunity and responsibility to take the lead in designing robust accountability systems that are focused on driving all students to college and career readiness and beyond. This design must be informed by a new **theory of action** that tightly connects each element of the accountability system, replacing the existing theory of action that measuring and reporting results alone will generate *better* results. This system must also promote integration and accountability across other reforms designed to build capacity. We've learned enough to know that educators and leaders must *also* have the capacity and tools to improve student achievement results. We remain committed to measuring and reporting student achievement outcomes while aligning accountability with other reforms meant to increase the capacity of schools and districts to improve their outcomes.

Resources:

- *On the Road to Implementation: Achieving the Promise of Common Core State Standards* (Achieve) (August 2010)
- *Closing the Expectations Gap (2010)* (Achieve)
- *"ESEA Briefing Book", Fordham Foundation (2011)*

Lessons Learned From Previous and Existing Accountability Systems

Next-generation accountability systems should build on present systems of accountability. The lessons we have learned from present accountability systems include the need for tighter integration of accountability system components so that the rich data and information produced through sophisticated data systems inform diagnostic reviews and guide resultant improvement actions. We

have also learned that an accountability system that is not geared towards building capacity in its districts and schools will result in only incremental improvement rather than the exponential improvement that is now needed for our students and society to succeed in the globally competitive environment.

We have also learned from other leading systems around the world, many of which have moved through similar tight/loose accountability policy progressions. For example, Ontario now uses accountability as a support mechanism within a broader set of strategies focused on collective capacity for continuous improvement – placing emphasis on strengthening professional practice and self-evaluation, recognizing that punitive accountability measures can generate only so much improvement. Real and sustained improvement, as evidenced in Ontario, comes from collective capacity building and internal drivers. Michael Fullan, one of the Ontario government's key advisers, lists the following components of "intelligent accountability":

- "Relies on incentives more than on punishment
- Invests in capacity building so that people are able to meet the goals
- Invests in collective (peer) responsibility for internal accountability
- Intervenes initially in a non-judgmental manner
- Embraces transparent data about practices and results
- Intervenes more decisively along the way when required"
  (Adapted from December 2010 Education Funders Strategy Group presentation by Michael Fullan, Special Advisor to the Premier and Minister of Education in Ontario)

England's inspectorate system that reviews all facets of a school's operations and processes can also inform our work as states begin to incorporate diagnostic reviews into state accountability systems for more effective school improvement. Further, England is also proposing a greater focus on shared accountability through increased training, providing more data for boards to use in decision-making, and encouraging businesses to promote participation of their employees on local school boards. Ontario and England represent a small fraction of the numerous international examples from which we will continue to learn.

Resources:

- *"The Importance of Teaching – The Schools White Paper 2010", Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Education by Command of Her Majesty (November, 2010) - http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/CM%207980.*
- *"All Systems Go", Michael Fullan, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA (2010).*

DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF THE ROADMAP

Development of the Roadmap

In 2010, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) formed the Next-Generation State Accountability Systems Taskforce, comprised of state chiefs and other SEA leaders, and supported by EducationCounsel, LLC. The Taskforce met periodically to discuss and share perspectives on the issues

surrounding the development, transition to, and implementation of next-generation accountability systems, drawing on experience with previous and current systems of accountability and research from leading accountability thinkers around the world. Drafts of this Roadmap have been shared with all chief state school officers as well as CCSSO assessment and accountability working groups to obtain feedback, and leading experts in accountability were consulted on the content of the Roadmap.

How to Use this Roadmap

The Roadmap is a statement of state leadership, reflecting the shift to college and career readiness as evidenced in the development of college- and career-ready standards (including the common core standards) and aligned assessments (including through state assessment consortia). State leadership to develop and implement next-generation accountability is the necessary next step.

States and other stakeholders interested in designing next-generation accountability systems may use this Roadmap as a **guide**. It is intended to provide a clear framework for the complex policy discussion that will occur in all 50 states and U.S. territories.

The opening and concluding sections of the Roadmap provide important context as states conceptualize their next-generation accountability systems. The remaining chapters are organized around each element of the accountability system.

Each of these eight elements is essential, individually and collectively, for an accountability system to achieve the goals set forth below. Within these elements, the framework identifies concepts and actions that are essential parts of a state accountability system. The "**shoulds**" represent practices supported by research and the collective experiences of state chiefs and SEAs. Based on the consensus of this Taskforce, the "shoulds" are necessary components for any state accountability system to ensure system integrity and fidelity to the goals of this Roadmap. Potentially as important as the "shoulds," there are also other actions a state might take, depending on each state's historical, political, and policy context, and we therefore identify a number of "**coulds**" within each element. Thus, state options for implementation also will be presented. Sidebars will be used to highlight additional issues that will not necessarily be covered in-depth in this Roadmap.

GOALS AND DISTINCTIONS OF NEXT-GENERATION STATE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS

Goals of Next-Generation Accountability Systems

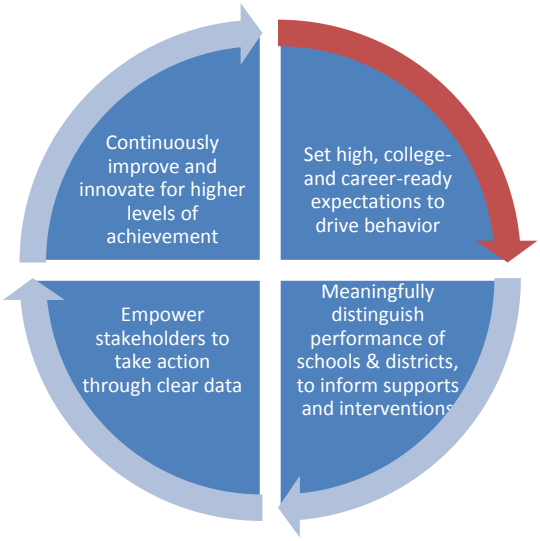
The development of college- and career-ready accountability systems should be driven by clear policy goals centrally focused on improving student achievement to college- and career-ready levels. Additional goals for next-generation accountability systems include:

I. Clearly articulate the state's expectations for school and district performance so that all stakeholders' **actions and decisions are aligned and consistent** towards ensuring all students are ready for college and careers.

II. **Differentiate the performance** of schools and districts in valid, reliable, and meaningful ways so that schools and districts in need of improvement **receive appropriate support and interventions** and build capacity to meet expectations; and top-performing/high-growth schools and districts can be recognized and shared as models of excellence.

III. Empower and engage educators, policy/law makers, parents, and the public through regular communication and **transparent, timely reporting of actionable data** on performance and results so that they can take action appropriate to their roles.

IV. Foster a **commitment to innovation and continuous improvement** of the system so new models are used and evaluated to improve performance across the system, increasing achievement and efficiency.



The goals of next-generation state accountability systems are integrated and mutually-reinforcing.

What is "Next-Generation" about Next-Generation State Accountability Systems?

Next-generation accountability systems build upon and move beyond current accountability systems. While some key attributes will remain the same, including a focus on student outcomes as the key driver of the system and a commitment to disaggregation of data, many features will be enhanced to better drive school (and district) improvement and raise student achievement to college- and career-ready levels, and beyond. The table below outlines some key improvements found in next-generation accountability systems:

Current Accountability Systems	Next-Generation Accountability Systems
➢ Focus on student "proficiency" as the	✓ Focus on a minimum, specific goal of

goal, without clear or consistent meaning across states	college and career readiness upon high school graduation
➢ Tie all judgments to whether students *meet* proficiency without regard to the improvement made in moving towards or surpassing proficiency	✓ Encourage continuous, significant student growth toward college- and career-readiness, and beyond
➢ Emphasize, usually to the exclusion of other elements, measuring and reporting student achievement results	✓ Understand that what is measured and reported must be tightly linked to requisite actions, supports, and interventions (as well as broader capacity-building reforms) to best improve student achievement
➢ Give schools and districts "pass" or "fail" labels without clear context to make the labels meaningful for public reporting or improvement purposes	✓ Annual determinations coupled with diagnostic reviews provide clear and meaningful information to drive school and district performance
➢ Do not purposefully link each component of the system so one informs the other (e.g. goals to measures to determinations to supports, etc.)	✓ Purposefully integrate each element of the system so that one informs the other, creating greater effectiveness and resource efficiency
➢ Tend to incentivize action at the margins of "pass"/"fail" determinations	✓ Provide incentives for growth and achievement at all levels of performance – from the schools and districts furthest behind to those who are currently meeting goals
➢ Are conceived separately from other education reforms	✓ Connect with and are balanced across other reforms, including emerging teacher and leader evaluation systems and capacity-building efforts
➢ Primarily focus on the state to school relationship without regard to state capacity issues and the proper role of the district	✓ Recognize the tight locus of control between districts and their schools and seek to build capacity within districts for supporting their schools and holding them accountable for the same
➢ Have not given enough attention to effectively turning around the lowest-performing schools	✓ Give particular and meaningful focus to the lowest-performing schools and districts
➢ Are disjointed from the practice and considerations of teaching and learning	✓ Place the student at the center of the system by promoting high-quality instruction and reinforcing the importance of sound teaching and learning practices
➢ Ignore the system's motivational effects	✓ Recognize that motivation is a strong component of success and contributes to strong and positive school cultures
➢ Do not exemplify what we now know	✓ Are dynamic – promoting continual

about best educational practices	innovation and improvement based on evaluation of the accountability system and emerging technologies

Shared Accountability and Responsibility

State accountability systems should acknowledge and encourage the accountability and/or responsibility of all actors for increased student performance outcomes – including the students themselves, parents, educators, and leaders at both the school and district levels. Accountability needs to be shared if it is to be effective; however, shared accountability cannot be perceived as an excuse for the core, independent responsibility of all schools and districts to ensure that all students succeed. It is important to recognize these other forms of accountability and responsibility to ensure that they align with the state's overall accountability system. These other forms include:

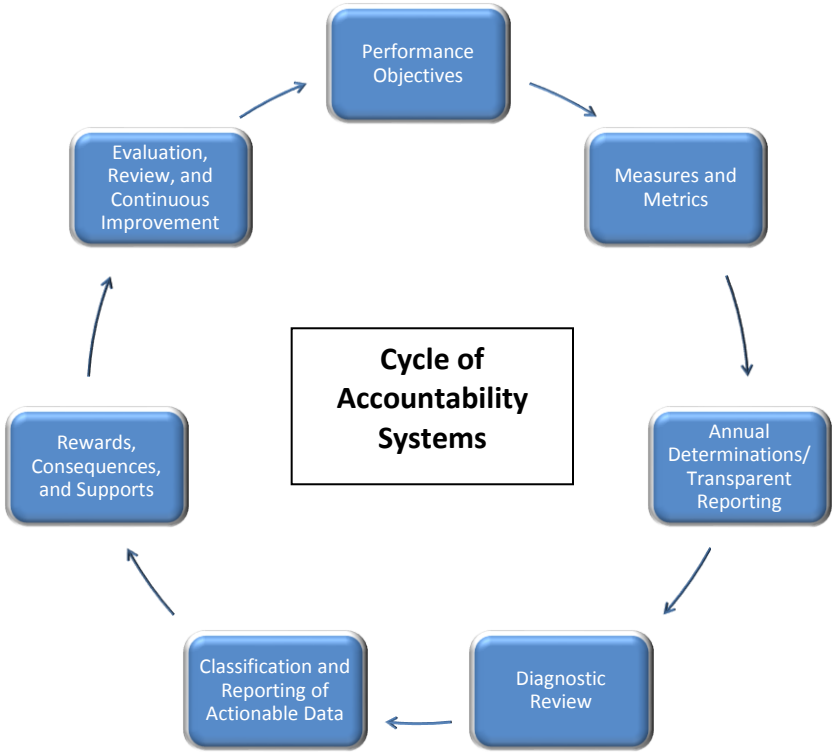
- Student accountability – includes the complex decisions and consequences associated with designing a state assessment system and how the system will be used to gauge individual student progress (e.g., graduation requirements, exit exams, grades) as well as the personal responsibility each student should assume in performing to the best of his or her ability.
- Parent responsibility – recognizes that parents are students' first teachers and therefore have a primary role in ensuring that children rise to their educational potential.
- Teacher and leader accountability – reflects emerging systems of teacher/leader evaluation that hinge on student performance. States are grappling with how to measure the complexity of a teacher's and leader's influence on student learning, but in all cases these systems should align with school and district accountability systems.
- Local school board and superintendent accountability – acknowledges the tight locus of control between districts and schools and the need for effective leadership, including on adequate allocation of resources. A good deal of recent research has identified the local school district as the optimal "unit of change". As such, accountability and school improvement efforts must focus on building district capacity and holding district leaders responsible for the improvement of their schools.
- Early learning accountability – holds programs geared towards ensuring that students enter kindergarten ready to learn accountable for results.
- Higher education accountability – provides more attention to higher education institutions' support and facilitation of student progress and degree attainment after students graduate high school ready for college.
- Educator preparation provider accountability – evaluates higher education institutions' and other providers' ability to produce highly-qualified and effective teachers and leaders.
- State accountability – state leaders and policymakers must provide the resources and supports necessary to ensure that all other actors can perform at the highest levels.

A Next-Generation Accountability System Framework

Introduction

The following policy framework guides states in developing accountability systems that meet the policy goals outlined above. The framework identifies and analyzes major elements of accountability systems and, where appropriate, provides relevant resources and state examples.

Within the framework accountability is viewed as a cyclical process, designed for continuous improvement and innovation.



Each element of the cycle is necessary to promote next-generation accountability and must be tightly connected to advance student achievement.

For each element of the accountability cycle, a state should consider the following questions:

- What is the current status of this element and its components within your state's context?

- How can your state best advance the required components ("shoulds") and consider and select among the optional components ("coulds")?

- How can your state ensure integration across the elements?

Elements of Next-Generation Accountability

1. ***Performance Objectives for Schools and Districts Aligned to the Goal of College- and Career-Ready Students***

Next-generation accountability systems must establish performance objectives for schools and districts that are aligned to college- and career-readiness. These performance objectives must be anchored in college- and career-ready standards, including the knowledge and ability to apply knowledge necessary for future success, and these objectives must drive the accountability system. Given that almost 90% of new jobs in occupations with both high growth and high wages require at least some postsecondary training, college- and career-readiness must be the foundation of next-generation state accountability systems.

To this end, the performance objectives of next-generation state accountability systems should:

What Does College- and Career-Ready Mean?

Students are prepared to undertake entry-level, credit-bearing college courses without remediation and/or are prepared for a career that offers a competitive, livable salary above the poverty line, offers opportunity for advancement, and is in a growing or sustainable industry.

"College" includes 2-year and 4-year post-secondary programs.

1. **Be driven by the goal of <u>all</u> students, including English language learners and students with disabilities, being college- and career-ready by high school graduation.**[1] States can no longer afford to graduate students who are not ready for college and/or meaningful careers. Increasingly fewer opportunities are available for students who do not meet this level of preparedness. College- and career-ready standards with aligned assessments provide the foundation for accountability systems with these higher performance objectives.
2. **Include objectives with targets and benchmarks for each grade level, along with learning progressions, to ensure sufficient progress towards this goal, whether by grade or competency.** Given the more rigorous standards, assessments, and goals, schools cannot afford gaps in their knowledge of how each student is progressing in meeting these goals and objectives. Annual benchmarks are key to ensuring that students are on-track to meet college and career readiness-related objectives and allow for timely intervention if a student is not on-track.
3. **Establish state-approved goals in English language arts and math, including both rigorous knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge**

[1] While college- and career-readiness is the anchor, accountability systems must be designed to promote significant growth for all students, including for the small number of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (for whom college- and career-readiness might not be an appropriate and valuable target) and for advanced students already beyond the college- and career-ready track, for whom the accountability system must expect continued growth.

through higher-order skills. While the Taskforce acknowledges that many subjects are integral to enabling students to be ready for college and careers, we recommend that, at the least, all states include goals with complementary annual targets and benchmarks in English/language arts and math. Research shows that high school graduates need four years of challenging math and four years of rigorous English to be ready for college and careers (see Achieve, Inc. at http://www.achieve.org/raise-high-school-graduation-requirements)

4. **Be transparent and clear so all stakeholders know the rationale behind the ultimate goals toward which they are working.** It is not enough for the State Board of Education or other relevant entity to officially adopt objectives and post them on a website. The goal of college and career readiness and related objectives must be communicated in a manner and method that is clear and readily available to all stakeholders (including local school boards, local superintendents, principals, educators, parents, and students).

Additionally, the following components are presented as options for adoption according to the particular policy and political contexts of each state. States could:

1. **Include targets in subjects and for skills beyond English/Language Arts and Math and beyond grades with standardized tests**. While recognizing the likely continued primacy of literacy and numeracy skills, we also must ensure that the relevance and importance of other subjects is not diminished.
2. **Adopt unique benchmarks for each student subgroup depending on current levels of achievement, but with the same ultimate goal of college and career readiness upon high school graduation.** We must work towards all students being college- and career-ready upon graduation while simultaneously recognizing that students will progress towards this goal at various speeds. Certain sub-groups of students such as English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities encounter factors that may impede their early progress towards the goal; therefore trajectories towards the goal for some students may need to be different from that of the general student population. For example, English Language Learners may have slower growth in mastery of standards/content their first year or two in the U.S., but should ultimately master the same college- and career-ready standards to graduate.

Key Issues to Address

1. **Alignment of student accountability with institutional accountability** – Although all schools, districts, and states must be held accountable for getting all students to college- and career-ready levels by high school graduation, many states may not be ready to hold students accountable for meeting college and career readiness levels in order to graduate from high school as students have not yet had exposure to the rigorous curriculum and related supports needed to achieve that level of readiness. One option to address this non-alignment is for institutions to be held accountable for both the percentage of students graduating high school and the growth in the percentage of students graduating ready for college and careers. Further, the state could set a

trajectory so that eventually, a high school diploma signifies college and career readiness. Finally, states must pay attention to messaging to ensure stakeholders understand the goal toward which students and institutions are working and the meaning of a high school diploma.

2. **Assessment of higher-order skills** – College- and career-readiness rests on both rigorous content knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge. The vital importance of knowledge application is evidenced in the common core standards, which acknowledge the importance of higher order skills, such as problem solving and critical thinking, and in the related performance-based assessments currently in development. Next-generation accountability systems must deliberately reflect the importance of these skills and their contribution to student success.

State Examples

1. **Florida –** In 2010, FL instituted a new high school grading system. Since 1999, its grading system was based solely on standardized test performance (FCAT and Florida's Alternate Assessment). Now, the statewide standardized assessments account for only 50% of a high school's grade. The remainder is calculated by participation and success in advanced coursework (AP, IB, AICE, dual enrollment, industry certifications); graduation rates; ACT/SAT scores; and more.
2. **Kentucky –**KY's proposed accountability model will expand the state's focus beyond achievement on standardized tests to include other measures at all grade levels including growth and gap closing. At the high school level, graduation rates as well as college and career readiness measures will be included.
3. **Indiana –** Late in 2010, the IN Department of Education proposed a restructured accountability framework for comment and feedback by stakeholders. This framework would offer school grades (much like FL). Elementary and middle school accountability would be based on standardized test achievement, growth, and growth of the bottom 25% of students, while high school accountability would focus on end of course assessments, graduation rates, college/career attainment as measured by AP/IB exam scores, attainment of college credit, and industry certification.
4. **Tennessee –** As part of its development of college- and career-ready state policies, Tennessee convened groups of stakeholders to discuss appropriate targets for the college- and career-ready goals and objectives. Their inclusive process provided critical feedback to the state from a wide variety of stakeholders on appropriate benchmarks for all student sub-groups.

Resources:

- *Key Elements for Educational Accountability Models* (Perie)
- US Dept. of Labor, *America's Dynamic Workforce*, 2008
- *On the Road to Implementation (*Achieve*,* 2010*)*
- SREB's *The Next Generation of School Accountability: A Blueprint for Raising High School Achievement and Graduation Rates in SREB States* (2009)

2. ***Valid Measures Focused on Student Performance Outcomes***

While this Roadmap emphasizes the importance of school and district diagnostics to adequately determine the areas in need of school and district improvement, there can be no mistaking the absolute foundation of evaluating a school and district on its student outcomes. To that end, initial accountability measures should reflect college and career readiness and success across student achievement outcomes. States also must continue current commitments to disaggregate student outcome data. Correspondingly, measures should reflect a range of options at the overall student and subgroup level that are ambitious and achievable. Ultimately, this includes strengthening existing measures like assessments and graduation rates but may also include the addition of other measures that tightly align to college and career readiness and provide more information to drive improvement and innovation. To strengthen their assessment systems, states (or consortia) must work to address the current sources of year-to-year instability in group (class, school, district, and state) assessment measures so that they will be more reliable and valid for the purpose of determining school, educator, and student success.

The measures of next-generation state accountability systems should:

1. **Focus on student outcomes**. While this Roadmap advocates for measurement, collection, and analysis of a variety of indicators (e.g. indicators of resource efficiency and quality school processes) for purposes of transparency and improvement, there can be no mistaking the absolute reliance on student outcome measures for assessing schools and districts.
2. **Gauge student achievement through statewide assessments aligned to college and career readiness and accurate graduation rates**. States' definitions of "proficiency" on grade-level and subject-matter assessments should ensure that students are steadily progressing toward the ability, upon high school graduation, to complete entry-level college work (or the career-oriented equivalent) without remediation. Statewide assessments must continue to include both Math and English/Language Arts and occur in grades 3 through 8. Consistent with the National Governors Association's compact and as ultimately codified in federal regulations, states should utilize the four-year adjusted cohort rate. At the same time, states may also recognize other indicators of attainment such as certificates of completion, career certificates, and dropout recovery.

Calculating High School Graduation Rates

In 2005, Governors signed the NGA Graduation Rates Count Compact to ensure consistency across states in how graduation rates are calculated. In 2008, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) codified a common calculation, based largely on the compact. The required rate is a four-year adjusted cohort rate: the number of students who graduate in four years or less with a regular high school diploma, divided by the number of students who entered high school four years earlier, and adjusting for transfers and deceased student populations (show graphically).

This graduation rate must be disaggregated by subgroup, reported by the end of the 2010-2011 school year, and used for accountability purposes by the end of the 2011-2012 school year. Five and six year graduation rates are allowed in addition to the four year rate described above. As of October 2010, seven states have received USED approval to use extended year graduation rates.

Common Core Standards and Assessments

The Taskforce recognizes that the adoption of Common Core State Standards by an overwhelming majority of states and the development of aligned assessments, both premised on all students achieving college and career readiness by high school graduation, will significantly affect how states devise measures and metrics for next-generation state accountability systems.

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is a state-led effort, coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), to establish a shared set of clear educational standards for English/Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics that states can voluntarily adopt. The standards define the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs.

As of the roadmap's printing, more than 40 states and the District of Columbia have formally adopted the common core standards. States that have formally adopted the standards are now in the critical phase of implementation, which includes essential steps such as rolling out the standards to local districts and ensuring adequate professional development for teachers.

Relatedly, two state-led consortia are working to develop next-generation assessments with the common core standards as a foundation. The Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SMARTER) are both developing comprehensive assessment systems.

Per the U.S. Department of Education requirements, PARCC and SMARTER consortia states must implement the new assessment systems no later than the 2014-2015 school year. In order for a state to remain or become a member state of either consortium, it must have adopted the common core by December 31, 2011. Each participating state must decide no later than the 2014-15 school year which assessment system it will implement.

3. **Focus on both status and growth, which recognize improvement and highlight achievement gaps in student learning.** While continuing emphasis on attainment of the ultimate goal, measurement of growth towards the goal will ensure that students are on-track to college and career readiness and give a better indication of how schools and districts are improving student learning.
4. **Be disaggregated by student subgroup to ensure that intervention needed by one group of students is not hidden by aggregate student achievement.** Only with disaggregation can schools, districts, and states meaningfully target intervention and ensure all students are on track to college and career readiness. Disaggregation should occur at school, district, and state levels and by student race, ethnicity, poverty, limited English proficiency, and disability to determine which sub-groups are not on-track towards

college and career readiness as well as whether achievement gaps are closing.

Additionally, the following components are presented as options for adoption according to the particular policy and political contexts of each state. States could:

1. **Further enhance information on students' college and career readiness by using multiple outcome measures -- a mix of indicators from each of the following categories** (in addition to the indicators that "must" be included as referenced above):
    i. Achievement: aggregate change in student performance on statewide assessments (cohort change); student performance in advanced courses (AP/IB); student achievement on college entrance tests (ACT/SAT); college credit and/or technical credit earned while in high school
    ii. Student growth: projected vs. actual score; projections to future achievement levels
    iii. Other: attendance; on-track indicators; dropout rate; measures that demonstrate progress in getting dropouts back into school or helping credit-deficient students get back on-track (e.g. credit recovery rates, 5-year high school graduation rate); eligibility for merit scholarships; success in college and careers (remediation rates, postsecondary matriculation, retention, and/or success); industry certification

The following matrix depicts some of the options outlined above:

	Progressing Toward College and Career Readiness	Meeting College and Career Readiness	Exceeding College and Career Readiness
Course Completion and Success	• Timely credit accumulation • Credit recovery	• Successful completion of college and career-ready course of study	• Participation in AP, IB and dual enrollment
Achievement	• Performance on aligned assessments of core content and skills early in high school	• Meeting standards on the college and career-ready anchor assessment • Postsecondary	• College-level performance on AP and/or IB exams

	• Grades (given quality control mechanisms)	remediation rates	
Attainment	• Graduation	• Earning a college and career-ready diploma	• Earning credits in dual enrollment courses • Application to and enrollment in postsecondary education

"*On the Road to Implementation: The Common Core State Standards and Accountability*", Achieve, August 2010.

2. **Include measures of performance in other grades, beyond 3-8 and once in high school.** In particular, states should consider how they integrate promotion of early learning through third grade with a focus on school readiness and reading on grade level, a measure that is strongly correlated with future success in high school and beyond.
3. **Include measures of subjects in addition to Reading and Math**. States are aware of the concern that a focus on literacy and numeracy is narrowing the curriculum, particularly in an environment in which other subjects (e.g., science) are increasingly critical and others (e.g., the arts) serve as essential tools for student development. States should be empowered to value other subjects in their accountability systems, using additional assessments, performance-based measures, portfolios, etc.
4. **Tie measures of college access, remediation, persistence, and success back to feeder high schools**. The ultimate measure of whether students are college-ready is their performance in college (2-year, 4-year, and technical). Once a student leaves the K-12 system and enters college, other factors affect the student's achievement other than the high school or district. However, some states – utilizing their longitudinal data systems and/or external vendors such as the National Student Clearinghouse – have successfully tracked their high school students to college in order to tie back student remediation rates, persistence, and ultimate success to the feeder high school.
5. **Focus particularly on and weigh more heavily the achievement of the lowest-performing students.** While next-generation accountability systems must focus on moving all students to higher levels of achievement, schools, districts, and states must exercise extra diligence in ensuring the lowest-performing students are given every opportunity to succeed. If a state chooses to use an index model of accountability, additional weight can be given to a school or district's lowest-performing students to appropriately incentivize focus on these students.

6. **Measure advanced status and ensure that all students are encouraged to maintain and improve performance.** A common criticism of current accountability systems is that they narrowly focus on getting students to minimum proficiency rather than encouraging students to reach further. State systems can emphasize high achievement by measuring and weighting/rewarding a school and district's ability to get more students to advanced levels as measured by attainment and/or growth on assessments.
7. **Include a focus on productivity.** As we move forward in our "new normal" budget outlook, it will be crucial that education systems produce more with current resources, and in many cases more with less. States may wish to focus accountability goals, measures, and/or reporting not just on achievement but the cost-effectiveness of those achievement results – particularly to inform evaluation and continuous improvement over time.

Key Issues to Address

1. **Selection of growth model -** While much discussion and debate has centered on how states calculate growth in student learning (usually through growth or value-added methods), the selection of a particular model may be less impactful than the planned use of the model. The technical piece (e.g. which model to use) is important and states should assess options. But the more fundamental accountability component will be the planned *use* of the model – e.g., what will be a state's criterion for "adequate growth"? Can "adequate growth" differ depending on the student? Does it mean slightly better than a student's peers? Moreover, the state's envisioned use of a growth model must inform the particular model selected – growth models are designed for specific purposes. Thus, states must select the model with the methodology that matches the state's reason for incorporating growth into its accountability system.
2. **District accountability -** For district-level accountability, states must determine whether the measures are aggregated for all schools or whether the district will be held accountable for the performance of each individual school.
3. **Additional elements –**Beyond measures for accountability purposes, states may want to collect and analyze additional measures for a variety of uses. For example, attendance and disciplinary records may be helpful in creating an "early warning system" to identify students at-risk of falling behind or dropping out. There may be additional measures specifically related to district performance that could be incorporated into the accountability system, such as success in improving low-performing schools, resource efficiency, stable governance and other measures often found on "balanced scorecards" and district accreditation standards.

State Examples

1. **Louisiana** - Every year, schools receive numerical scores known as School Performance Scores (SPS). Louisiana's goal is for every school in the state to have an SPS of 120 by the year 2014. School Performance Scores are based on the following calculations:
    a. K-5 Schools – Attendance Index (10%), Assessment Index (90%)

b. K-8, 6-8 Schools –Attendance Index (5%), Dropout Index (5%), and Assessment Index (90%)
c. 9-12 Schools - Graduation Index (30%) and Assessment Index (70%)

2. **Florida** – The state issues expanded annual reports for each high school that includes the number and percentage of graduates who have continued their education, are employed in the state, receive TANF funds or food stamps, and are incarcerated or placed under community supervision as well as graduates' earnings data. Many of these factors are included in Florida's High School Feedback Report (http://data.fldoe.org/readiness/).

Resources:

- *Center for Assessment - http://www.nciea.org/*
- *Alliance for Excellent Education, "Moving Beyond AYP: High School Performance Indicators" Lyndsay Pinkus, (2009)*
- *Alliance for Excellent Education, "Every Student Counts: The Role of Federal Policy in Improving Graduation Rate Accountability", Eric Richmond, March 2009*
- *"Comparing Different Accountability Measures: Status, Improvement, Index, Growth – How are They Alike and How Do They Differ?" Marianne Perie and John Weiss (2009) (for CCSSO?)*
- *Education Sector, "College- and Career-Ready: Using Outcomes Data to Hold High Schools Accountable for Student Success" Chad Aldeman (2010)*

3. *Determinations that Meaningfully Distinguish School and District Performance*

Using the measures discussed above, next-generation accountability systems must annually characterize and differentiate between schools and districts, based on student achievement outcomes. States currently make blunt determinations that roughly distinguish schools and districts based on rigid definitions in federal law (adequate yearly progress). Next-generation accountability systems will provide more meaningful and nuanced determinations by incorporating additional measures of student performance, such as growth in learning.

> **Determinations** are annual characterizations of school and district performance based solely on student outcome measures. **Classifications** can reflect multiple years of performance and can consider additional trend or input data, and/or the results of diagnostic reviews to indicate the type and lengths of supports and interventions needed.

Determinations in next-generation state accountability systems should:

1. **Make annual determinations for all schools and districts and set a high bar for significant achievement and improvement for <u>all</u> students, including ELL and SWD populations.** Except for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, college and career readiness should be the goal. English Language Learners, some Students with Disabilities, and other students may need more time and/or more supports to meet the goal, but the goal and the methods of assessing attainment of the goal should be the same for all students.

2. **Be valid and reliable and make meaningful distinctions between schools and districts, especially between and within low-performing and high-performing groups and through the identification of underperforming subgroups in all schools.** Current pass/fail distinctions do not provide much meaning to practitioners or the public. Next-generation accountability systems must make nuanced distinctions between entities based on their student performance. These nuances must utilize disaggregated data to ensure that underperformance of any student subgroup as well as achievement gaps between subgroups are transparent and can be addressed.
3. **Balance validity and reliability with the ability to clearly and simply explain results to stakeholders.** The most valid and intricate accountability system will be of little value if stakeholders are unable to understand and use the information it provides or do not trust the results.
4. **Value status and progress of schools and districts.** States should focus their determinations on some version of the following two foundational questions: How well is this school/district performing? and is the school/district improving?

Additionally, the following components are presented as options for adoption according to the particular policy and political contexts of each state. States could:

1. **Hold schools and districts to the same annual standard or vary the standard based on a school's or district's unique starting point as long as all schools and districts are on-track to meet the same ultimate performance objectives.** The Taskforce recognizes that schools and districts, like states, face unique contexts, opportunities, and challenges and therefore may not be at the same starting line. Consequently, as long as all schools and districts are held to the same ultimate goal of college and career readiness for all students, states may choose to allow varying annual performance standards towards that goal.

Key Issues to Address

1. **Weighting –** States must consider how status and growth will be weighted in making determinations about schools and districts. Will they be weighted equally or one more heavily than the other? Similarly, state accountability systems must determine how individual students will be weighted through sub-group categories. Under current federal law, the same student may count in multiple sub-group categories which may unintentionally weight one student more than another.
2. **Compensatory/conjunctive -** States must decide whether their system will be compensatory or conjunctive. A compensatory arrangement will allow the superior performance on one measure to compensate for poor performance on another while conjunctive systems require satisfactory performance on all measures. Note however that a state choosing a compensatory system may not allow superior performance by one student subgroup to mask the lower performance of another subgroup.
3. **Exceptions -** Don't allow exceptions to drive determinations. Each state will adopt unique responses to address student achievement issues. For example, states may implement dropout recovery programs, establish alternative schools, and/or create 9th

grade academies. Determinations must recognize the different context and purpose of these strategies rather than deterring their use.

State Examples

1. **Oregon:** The new state growth model, which began in 2008-09, sets "target" scores for below-standard students. The targets will be based on a) each individual student's prior testing history and b) realistic and attainable achievement goals for all students. Students and teachers are made aware of individual targets ahead of time. In contrast to NCLB-AYP that disaggregates data into specific subgroups, the new school report card rating system uses a holistic rating and factors in the performance of *all* subgroups with an historic achievement gap. Growth is a key feature of the new school report card, which provides full credit to schools in which students are showing sufficient growth. By focusing on growth for low-achieving students, the state emphasizes closing the achievement gap and provides recognition to schools successful in this area.
2. **North Carolina***:* A school's rating is based on two main factors. The first factor is a "performance composite" that reflects the percentage of test scores in a school that are at or above the proficiency standard for the respective assessments. The second factor is a "growth composite," in which each student's annual assessment score is compared with the averaged score of the prior two years with an adjustment for regression to the mean. Analyses are done that compare students' actual performance with the expected growth. For AYP purposes, students who are not proficient, but are on track to be proficient within three years of entering a state-tested grade, are included in the USED approved growth model pilot to see if AYP proficiency targets are met. AYP School Detail Reports indicate which subgroups met AYP in the school using the growth model or other means (safe harbor, confidence interval).

Resources:

- *SREB, The Next Generation of School Accountability (year)*
- *CCSSO, Focusing State Educational Accountability Systems: Four Methods of Judging School Quality and Progress, Dale Carson, 2002*
- *Linn, Robert L. "Rethinking the NCLB Accountability System", a paper prepared for a form on No Child Left Behind sponsored by the Center on Education Policy, Washington, D.C., July 28, 2004*

4. *Transparent Reporting of Data*

Next-generation accountability systems must provide transparent reporting of determinations and other information about school and district performance through clear, meaningful, and timely presentation. Transparent reporting is necessary to ensure that stakeholders – students, families, educators, administrators, policymakers, and the public – receive information that can be used to identify and replicate best practices, recognize and correct deficiencies, and continuously improve performance.

Transparent reporting in next-generation state accountability systems should:

1. **Present actionable data in a timely manner so that educators and stakeholders can use it to inform improvement efforts.** Although the quality and amount of available data has increased over the past several years, accountability systems should take care to provide relevant and contextual – actionable – data as quickly as possible so it impacts what happens in the classroom and beyond.
2. **Continue to include disaggregated data.** In order to fulfill the purposes of using data to inform student, school, and district improvement efforts, data should continue to be disaggregated by student sub-groups.
3. **Utilizing the latest technology, present data in a variety of accessible ways (e.g., as graphics and narratives, published on web and paper, allow for user manipulation, present in various languages as applicable, etc.) for multiple stakeholders.** The variety of reporting methods used by a school and district should be as diverse as its population.
4. **Communicate the goals of the accountability system along with the context in which the school and district results can be interpreted by parents and the public.** Next-generation accountability systems must go beyond reporting data alone. Communication regarding the goals towards which students, schools, and districts are working should be pervasive and clear. Context such as how a school's/district's performance (attainment and growth) compares with similar schools and districts is important for ultimate understanding.

Additionally, the following components are presented as options for adoption according to the particular policy and political contexts of each state. States could:

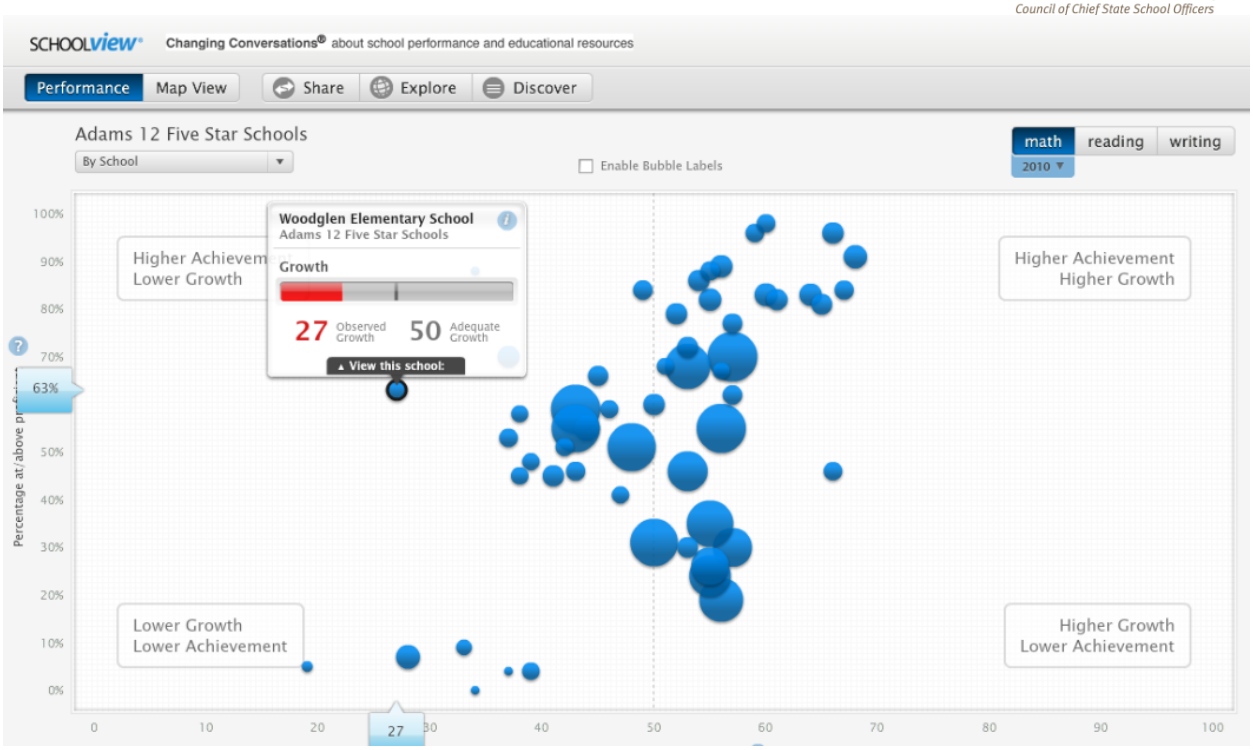
1. **Report data beyond student achievement measures such as data used for early warning systems, validation of college and career readiness using post-secondary data, "return on investment" indicators, and results of diagnostic reviews to provide information that aids schools and districts with capacity-building.** Although ultimate accountability determinations must rest on the measures outlined in element two above, the reporting of additional data can greatly inform improvement efforts. For example, early warning system data can not only inform immediate school and district efforts, but can alert feeder schools to any upcoming student population issues.
2. **Include data from the school and classroom level, such as formative and interim assessments, that can be used to address improvement efforts.** This data could provide a finer grain picture of the school and district's achievement as long as it complies with all relevant state and federal student privacy laws.
3. **Publish data for "families of schools" (similarly situated schools by size, demographic, current achievement level, geographic location, etc.) so that schools can identify peers from which to learn best practices.** Many schools already attempt to identify peers for which to measure themselves against. Given limited resources at the school and district levels, it makes sense for the state to use its sophisticated resources to identify similarly situated schools across the state. It could further encourage cross-state collaboration of these schools through electronic and other means.

Key Issues to Address

1. **Validity –** As noted above, states must balance validity with transparency. While an accountability system should not be so cumbersome that stakeholders do not understand its inputs or outputs, it similarly should not sacrifice validity for transparency. Individual and collective data points used to make determinations and classifications must be rigorously examined for accuracy and relatedness to the goal being measured.
2. **Student privacy –** States must adhere to applicable student privacy laws and regulations such as FERPA and relevant state privacy laws.
3. **Timing –** States must balance the need to quickly produce data for transparency, diagnostic, and intervention purposes with ensuring that the data are valid. This often calls for a close working relationship among assessment, accountability, and data offices of the SEA.
4. **Data interpretation –** States must ensure that there is a comprehensive plan to assist stakeholders, particularly educators, with interpreting and using the data that the accountability system provides to build capacity and enhance student learning.

State Examples

1. **Colorado** - Colorado has made significant progress on its reporting system for results from its state assessment and growth model. Colorado's growth model calculations are performed at the individual student level, and are expressed as percentile scores that easily lend themselves to a normative interpretation (i.e., a comparison with each student's academic peers). These student growth percentiles can be easily aggregated to summary statistics for local school districts, schools, or other groups of students. An online interface allows users to toggle between years and subjects, and to highlight and track bubbles through different views of the data. The web application contains a map-based view, as well as interactive bubble plots to show growth and achievement in relation to state performance. Educators with access to student-level data can drill down from public views into longitudinal displays of individual students, or whole groups of them, and download individual student reports for use at parent-teacher conferences or school data digs. The Colorado Growth Model tool helps the public and educators identify the state's most effective schools and districts in terms of both growth and achievement. An extensive library of videos helps users navigate through the various kinds of data available on the SchoolVIEW.org website.



Resources:

- SchoolVIEW.org

5. *Diagnostic Reviews to Ensure Comprehensive Analysis of School and District Performance*

Rather than relying solely on student performance data, next-generation accountability systems should employ and support richer analyses and diagnostic reviews of schools and districts to gain a more comprehensive picture of school and district performance and therefore provide more targeted and effective supports and interventions where needed. Diagnostic reviews recognize the importance of high-quality instructional and operational processes to increasing student achievement and enable the state and districts to evaluate these to gain a clearer and deeper picture of the policies, practices, and conditions affecting student performance and the opportunities for improvement. These reviews are essentially "x-rays" of a school in order to determine the most appropriate diagnosis. This will, in turn, contribute to the efficiency of the educational system as a whole, as supports and interventions will be more precise and more effective. Further, it can spur ideas and options for all schools (even those currently meeting minimum standards) to achieve at higher levels.

Diagnostic Reviews in next-generation state accountability systems should:

1. **Incorporate key quality standards, based on research and best practice, with outcome determinations to gain a complete picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement** (and identify the most effective methods for improvement). These quality standards could include processes that influence student outcomes such as

governance and leadership, the curriculum used to implement standards, the use of data to inform instruction, community engagement, and more.

2. **Be timed so that they inform the provision of supports and interventions**. Data analysis and diagnostic reviews help schools and districts ensure that supports and interventions are more nuanced, targeted, and timely and therefore, more effective and efficient. Ideally, the diagnostic reviews would occur after the determinations, but before the provision of supports and interventions.
3. **Require that at least low-performing schools undergo a diagnostic review.** "Low-performing" includes those schools with achievement issues in aggregate or with certain sub-groups. Although diagnostic reviews could also help high performing schools improve even further, the Taskforce recognizes that state education budgets are constrained. Therefore, first priority is to require these reviews for low-performing schools with expansion in later years as budgets allow.

Additionally, the following components are presented as options for adoption according to the particular policy and political contexts of each state. States could:

1. **Use existing accreditation procedures/best accreditation practices.** Many schools and districts are already engaged in a process of continuous improvement through accreditation. Best accreditation practices use student outcome data and a quality review process to gain a clear picture of school or district effectiveness. This information can then be used to guide improvement efforts so that schools and districts are following an aligned, rather than parallel and duplicative, accreditation/accountability system.
2. **Employ independent, third-party reviewers for the external review.** Conducting the diagnostic reviews as contemplated in this Roadmap requires capacity. Depending on how states define classifications (as discussed below) and structure their provision of supports and interventions, they may find their capacity stretched. Some states have found success in partnering with external providers, whether they are accreditation agencies or other entities, to conduct the diagnostic reviews and share the results with the state. This does not have to be an either/or approach as states and external entities can easily collaborate to conduct these reviews. For example, the UK organizes teams of principals to evaluate each other's schools to build capacity and promote mutual accountability.
3. **Include relevant state and federal monitoring requirements for optimal efficiency and relevance.** Depending on state requirements and the school or district being reviewed, diagnostic reviews must include all monitoring requirements to the extent possible (e.g. Title I, state-specific requirements, etc.).
4. **Inform classifications.** As stated above, the main purpose of diagnostic reviews is to ensure supports and interventions are better targeted and provided to schools and districts. To do this, diagnostic reviews can lead to more accurate and relevant classifications.
5. **Expand the scope of diagnostic reviews to encompass the examination of early learning opportunities and other community-based supports for student achievement**

and attainment. These efforts could encompass gathering information on the proportion of young children who are participating in high quality early childhood programs, the prevalence of family engagement and education programs for parents of young children, and the extent to which elementary schools have built partnerships with early learning and child care programs to align standards, curricula, assessment and professional development efforts from early childhood through grade 3.

Key Issues to Address

1. **Building capacity –** Both personnel and financial resources must be cultivated to effectively implement diagnostic reviews. States could examine repurposing some existing federal funding sources or look to leverage school/district accreditation fees where already in place. It is important that states establish a sustainable structure and strategy for conducting diagnostic reviews and using information to build capacity.
2. **External, independent reviewers –** As states and districts review their capacity, they may determine that the most cost-effective option is to utilize external reviewers in conducting the diagnostic reviews. Certainly, states that are already using best accreditation practices may choose to continue or further align with those practices. Other options include contracting with third-party providers to provide the reviews and/or train state or district staff to conduct them.
3. **Data and instructional improvement systems** – Diagnostic reviews will be successful only if they use student outcomes and other data as a foundation for inquiry. Data are indicators of the "health" of the school or district. Diagnostic reviews delve more deeply into what the indicators are saying and how they can be improved.

State Examples

1. **Massachusetts** – Massachusetts utilizes a system of inspectors to look "underneath the hood" of a school or district to determine its assets and liabilities. This is used in two ways: 1) to evaluate the suitability of an underperforming school's or district's improvement plan and 2) to learn what successful schools and districts are doing for replication purposes. Although reviews of underperforming schools are conducted in the context of annual review of progress on their turnaround plans, the main focus is on building district capacity given their influence on schools. Limited because of budgetary constraints, the State is averaging 20 district reviews per year. A team of external reviewers is hired and trained by the SEA to review six areas of district quality ranging from governance practices and leadership effectiveness to the effectiveness of its systems for student support. There are several potential levels of consequences stemming from the findings of a review. For most districts, the State issues findings and recommendations. For some, it requires accelerated improvement plans without additional consequences although the State's public reporting lever is not inconsequential as a bully pulpit. For these districts (five currently), the State guides the development of the accelerated improvement plan, provides the district with plan management support, and monitors and reports progress publicly every six months. The State also has legal authority to take over a district, in whole or in part, if district progress on the accelerated improvement plan is inadequate.

Resources:

- AdvancED - *www.advanc-ed.org*
- "The Importance of Teaching – The Schools White Paper 2010", Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Education by Command of Her Majesty (November, 2010) - http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/CM%207980
- Wyoming Department of Education - http://edu.wyoming.gov/Programs/accreditation.aspx
- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/review/school/

6. *Classifications that Direct the Provision of Rewards, Supports and Interventions to Schools and Districts*

Next-generation accountability systems must delineate schools and districts based on a combination of student performance data (which result in determinations) and diagnostic reviews (that provide nuanced information about school and district conditions). A state's classification system not only differentiates schools and districts, using current and historical data, to communicate differences to the public in an easily comprehensible way; they should also indicate the type, intensity, and length of supports and interventions to be provided. To validly and reliably employ a classification system that corresponds to levels of rewards or consequences, states need not rely strictly on determinations but also can incorporate deeper analysis and diagnostic reviews to guide school and district improvement efforts.

Classifications within a next-generation state accountability system should:

1. **At the least, identify the lowest-performing schools, both by overall student performance and greatest gaps/lowest-performing subgroups, to target the most significant supports and interventions.** Current accountability systems rarely help narrowly tailor school interventions to specific issues. Rather, reforms are tied to broad classification categories based on isolated factors, particularly years of underperformance. Next-generation accountability systems will utilize more nuanced classifications to more accurately and effectively target supports and interventions, especially to the lowest-performing schools.
2. **Identify the highest-performing schools for recognition and best practices replication.** Along with identifying the schools in most need of improvement, next-generation classification systems should recognize those schools that have made great gains and achieved high student achievement results so that where applicable, their practices can be replicated elsewhere.

Additionally, the following components are presented as options for adoption according to the particular policy and political contexts of each state. States could:

1. **Identify classifications for the whole range of schools – from the lowest- to highest-performing.** Above, we note that at the least states should employ classification systems that recognize the lowest- and highest-performing schools. Yet, a full range of classifications can direct supports and interventions along a spectrum of performance and ensure that all schools increase their achievement levels.

Key Issues to Address

1. **Balance** – States must work to find the balance between accurately and validly articulating the classifications of schools and districts and ensuring that communication to the public and stakeholders is understandable and meaningful. While there is no bright line, a system with 30 possible classifications or complicated coding may prevent optimal use. Similarly, a classification system with only one or two categories may be too broad to convey relevant information.

State Examples

1. **Indiana** – Under its differentiated accountability model, Indiana employs index ratings to differentiate schools into categories of improvement, including low-performing schools, and accelerate interventions for the lowest-performing schools. The differentiation method analyzes student achievement for all students and for student subgroups. Schools are classified according to the percentage of cells (overall and subgroups) missing AYP targets as well as the distance from English/Language Arts and math achievement targets.
2. **South Carolina** – In its differentiation model, South Carolina employs criteria to distinguish schools and districts within stages of improvement. Schools and districts in improvement are classified as Tier 1 (missing fewer than 6 AYP objectives), Tier 2 (missing 7-9 AYP objectives), Tier 3 (missing 10-14 AYP objectives), and Tier 4 (missing 15-22 AYP objectives). These classifications enable South Carolina to recognize the differences in schools and districts and target comprehensive interventions to the lowest-performing schools.

7. *Supports and Interventions to Reinforce School and District Efforts to Produce College- and Career-Ready Students*

Informed by its classification system, a next-generation accountability system must provide supports and interventions that are well-matched to both the strengths and weaknesses of schools and districts. In tailoring supports and interventions to specific schools and districts, the state must recognize that schools and districts have different needs and will require different supports and interventions. Priority of attention and resources must go to the lowest-performing schools and districts, and failure to improve must result in significant, systemic action, but the state must build a system of supports that can help drive continuous improvement across the full range of schools and districts as well. The state also must ensure that supports and interventions are tied to a strong model of delivery and are designed

to build capacity, particularly at the district level. Supports and interventions in next-generation state accountability systems should:

1. **Promote significant, systemic interventions in the lowest-performing schools and districts, measured both by overall student outcomes and by performance gaps among students.** Meaningful and sustained resources should be directed to these lowest performing schools in a manner that is sustainable and coordinated. Turning around our lowest performing schools will require systemic change, which might require action in terms of leadership, teaching force, curriculum, instructional practice, and more. These actions must be tightly and transparently designed and implemented. Districts serve as a core partner in this effort, and states should address the critical role of building district capacity.
2. **Provide a range of general and specific supports that are well-matched to the needs of schools and districts with supports and interventions offered along a continuum of need**. As stated above, the diagnostic review will allow states to be more targeted, and therefore more effective and efficient, in the provision of supports and interventions offered to districts and schools. Further, this continuum of need should identify performance issues of both schools and districts.
3. **Be tied to a strong model of delivery to ensure effective, coordinated and sustainable implementation of supports and interventions**. States must review what entities are delivering services and to whom those entities are responsible. For example, are intermediate service centers playing a lead role in delivery of supports and/or interventions? If so, are those centers accountable to the SEA? Does the SEA prescribe the supports that will be provided or do the centers make that call? How do schools and districts in need of support make sense of the myriad support offerings? If a system of delivery is not strategically designed and implemented, even the highest quality professional development will not have the desired impact.

Incentives
Increased funding may not always be the most available or effective incentive or reward for schools and districts showing significant achievement and/or growth. Offering schools and districts greater autonomy in operations and expenditures may be just as attractive an incentive while also encouraging continued improvement through innovation. Georgia offers districts the opportunity to enter into contracts with the state board of education and SEA exchanging increased district accountability (beyond minimum NCLB-related measures) for increased district flexibility and autonomy.

4. **Focus attention on effective interventions.** A well-designed system of supports and interventions will lend itself to regular evaluation for impact and hold providers of supports and interventions accountable. In one example of a well-designed system, the SEA would track the interventions and supports provided in each district and school and assess outcomes to determine whether certain activities were more impactful than others. Also, are the right services being provided to the right schools and districts? Are those services having the desired impact?
5. **Be motivational, not just punitive.** At their core, accountability systems must be a tool that incents action, rather than simply a tool for classification. Recent research finds that purely extrinsic carrots and sticks often do not incentivize the behaviors we want. States must consider research-based characteristics of human motivation when designing their system, namely, people are motivated by a combination of autonomy, mastery, and purpose.

Additionally, the following components are presented as options for adoption according to the particular policy and political contexts of each state. States could:

1. **Include interventions and supports for students and teachers.** Though not the subject of this Roadmap, interventions for students and teachers can be part of an integrated system of delivery. As stated earlier in this Roadmap, the Taskforce believes that school/district accountability systems must be aligned with the evaluation of student and teacher performance.
2. **Utilize a cadre of providers**. States must maintain a well-structured delivery system including defining "who does what." The SEA should have a centralized coordinating role in this delivery system and may rely on other government and non-government entities to carry out certain portions of state/local/school improvement plans or to lead whole school/district turnaround efforts.
3. **Focus significant interventions on moderately low-performing schools and districts.** By addressing identified problems early, states may be able to purposefully address issues and prevent a slide to significant underperformance.
4. **Provide rewards in the form of recognition, flexibility, or funding to high performers.** Current accountability systems tend to focus on interventions given the imperative to ensure all students are achieving at optimal levels. However, this ignores the motivational effects of supports in the form of rewards to those schools and districts that experience student achievement gains and high attainment levels.
5. **Consider more far-reaching and fundamental efforts to enhance and mobilize communities, families, early education programs and other partners to complement the influence of school-based improvement initiatives.** As stated earlier in this Roadmap, the Taskforce believes in the concept of shared accountability. While the focus of this Roadmap is on the school, district, and state role in improving student achievement, research tells us that families, communities, and other programs can have a large impact on student achievement. States may want to consider involving these entities as wrap-around supports for students, schools, and districts.

Key Issues to Address

1. **State expertise** – Beyond identifying schools and districts in need of support or intervention and ensuring that those schools and districts undertake reforms, SEAs should continually evaluate the specialized expertise needed to address the specific issues facing their schools and districts (e.g., increasing achievement of ELLs or migrant students). SEAs can choose to build their internal capacity to include this expertise or partner with expert organizations and individuals.
2. **High schools** – States and districts must be careful not to rely solely on Title I funding to direct the provision of supports and interventions. Many high schools do not receive this programmatic federal funding, yet sorely need supports and interventions from the district and the state.

Resources:

- *"Improving School Quality and Student Achievement through Statewide Systems of Support and Intervention", EducationCounsel, LLC for the College and Career Ready Policy Institute convening in Nashville, TN, November 2009.*
- *Pink, Daniel. Drive*

8. *Commitment to Innovation, Evaluation, and Continuous improvement of Next-Generation Accountability Systems*

A next-generation accountability system should promote, not hinder, innovation in teaching and learning and school models, as well as in accountability itself. States should continuously evaluate and improve the elements of their next-generation accountability systems for maximum effectiveness. Continuous improvement routines, within which a state can select from a range of research, evaluation, and measurement options, enrich the validity, reliability, and efficacy of the accountability system at driving progress on state goals and identifying any unintended consequences. While we know several actions that will strengthen current accountability systems, we do not yet know what works best to drive continuous growth across all schools and districts at scale. It will take openness to judgment and innovation, with rigorous evaluation, to drive continuous improvement and the kind of dramatic improvements in student achievement that we need at all levels.

Continuous improvement of next-generation state accountability systems should:

1. **Build in evaluation of the accountability system as a whole as well as each individual element.** As stated earlier in this Roadmap, each element of the framework is important both individually and as part of the whole. Therefore, when considering evaluation of the accountability system, each element should be reviewed individually and as part of the whole. Questions to consider include: whether the system as a whole is effectively serving as the core organizing strategy in meeting the state's student achievement goals; whether each element contributes and works in tandem with the other elements; and whether the feedback received from users of the accountability system, particularly educators, is positive.
2. **Establish expectations for review and improvement**. These should be articulated early in the development of the system and expected to be used throughout the implementation process**.**
3. **Include a focus on unintended consequences.** State accountability systems should be designed to spur innovation and improvement in education practice – at a school level and beyond. States should be deliberate about monitoring the impact of innovation and continual improvement efforts on teaching and learning in order to prevent barriers to greater reform.
4. **Make the evaluations and reviews transparent.** Rather than confining the results of the continuous improvement evaluations to SEA leaders and staff, disseminate the results more broadly so that all stakeholders understand how the accountability system is working or not and why changes may be necessary.
5. **Act on the results.** Once a state knows what needs to be enhanced or changed, leaders must exercise the political will to do so. Actors within the educational system must

adapt to an environment that continuously innovates and improves for greater levels of student achievement.

Additionally, the following components are presented as options for adoption according to the particular policy and political contexts of each state. States could:

1. **Utilize external entities to review the effect of the state's system on improving student achievement.** States must consider cost-effectiveness, capacity, and the potential for bias when deciding whether to utilize "in-house" resources to conduct the research or contract out with third-party organizations.
2. **Look beyond their own contexts to other state and international models.** Whether or not a third-party conducts the evaluations, states must respond to any resultant issues or needed changes by looking within and beyond their own state borders for best practices from states and/or countries with similar contexts.

TRANSITION PLANNING

As states analyze, design, and implement these elements, they must develop a plan for transitioning from their current systems to next-generation accountability systems consistent with the goals and elements above. As states raise the bar for student performance to college- and career-ready levels, new baselines and objectives are set, and as systems are created to incentivize new action, a lag between old and new systems will occur.

During this time, it is imperative that certain considerations be kept in mind. Transitioning to an end-goal of college- and career readiness for all students likely will reveal substantial deficits in student achievement – especially as states phase in new assessments – and states must be prepared to address the reactions of stakeholders and key constituent groups, including the public, families, and state legislatures. States may adopt key transition rules, such as holding schools in their accountability status for a limited time as states move to new, improved assessments and accountability models. To further support the transition, states should maintain a focus on their longitudinal data systems and maintain or ensure ability to link information back to their prior systems. Further, states must plan for transition in the context of federal accountability systems by working to inform pending revisions to federal systems (e.g., ESEA reauthorization) and utilizing existing systems (e.g., NCLB waiver authority). For instance, it does not make fiscal or common sense for federal law to require significant investment in existing systems during a transition to next-generation systems. Relatedly, states must address the "hand-off" between old and new state systems. Should states operate parallel systems for a short period of time? Should states restart classifications and supports under the new system when improved diagnostics highlight better avenues for addressing deficiencies? States will likely choose varied, but equally rigorous, paths to address these new realities, and federal law should allow for and support this variation rather than dictating a one-size-fits-all approach.

Resources:

- *"Key Elements for Educational Accountability Models in Transition: A Guide for Policymakers,"* CCSSO, Prepared by Kenneth Klau with William Auty and Pat Roschewski, 2010

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF NEXT-GENERATION ACCOUNTABILITY

Beyond the specific elements required for a next-generation accountability system discussed above, there are several other considerations that must be taken into account when designing a state accountability system. These are briefly addressed below.

1. **Unique Needs of Small and Rural Schools and Districts** – Rural schools and districts encounter unique challenges in designing and implementing accountability systems. For example, rural schools and districts may experience issues when reporting valid student data, given small cell sizes or certain subgroups; further, they may face capacity constraints when implementing a wide range of supports and interventions. This Roadmap allows for variability, even within a state. A state may rightly choose to have different processes for small or rural schools and districts – e.g., more individualized reviews of particular schools and districts. Indeed, the elements outlined in this Roadmap allow for a more effective accountability and supports system for small and rural schools. For example, employing diagnostic reviews as part of a continuous improvement process allows for incremental change rather than discrete and disruptive change that may be beyond the school or district capacity.

2. **Student Level Longitudinal Data System Requirements to Support Next-Generation Accountability Systems** – States must not overlook the need for robust P-20 data systems in order to generate and create the data necessary to support next-generation accountability systems. As requirements under NCLB, and later ARRA, spurred states to develop and implement P-20 data systems, we now have a strong basis for building capacity of our schools and districts to improve based on the use of emerging, rich data sets. Further, the collection and use of the data is not an "end" in itself, but rather only the beginning of meaningful improvement. Action, for remediation and/or continuous improvement, must stem from the data generated by these next-generation systems.

3. **Lessons Learned from the USED Differentiated Accountability Pilot** – Nine states are now implementing differentiated accountability plans approved by USED. These plans provide states with greater flexibility to determine appropriate interventions for schools and districts based on the specific reasons a school or district is in improvement status. However, while the pilot allows states to target consequences, it does not permit states to include multiple, nuanced measures to reach determinations. In return, the SEA commits to building their own capacity and taking the most significant actions for the lowest-performing schools. The pilot program is only in its second full year of implementation, so the ability for "lessons learned" is currently limited, but should be kept in mind.

4. **Engaging Early Childhood Education to Improve Student Achievement, Attainment and School Performance** – As noted in several Elements of the Framework, we urge states to expand their accountability and school improvement efforts to incorporate data on

children's early childhood program experiences and their progress in learning and development, from birth to 3rd grade, and building a more coherent and powerful continuum of early learning by partnering with early education, child care and parent education programs.

Resources:

- U.S. Department of Education, *Differentiated Accountability*, Press Releases and Letters, accessible at http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/differentiatedaccountability/index.html
- Data Quality Campaign, www.dataqualitycampaign.org

IMPLICATIONS FOR FEDERAL LAW

As states lead the process of developing and implementing next-generation accountability systems, we must evaluate implications for federal law and ensure purposeful integration among federal, state, and local accountability systems and expectations. In January 2011, CCSSO and its member states released a letter to the Congress and the Administration laying out a vision of a new state-federal partnership and asserting state leadership on accountability. The letter indicated that states are leading on accountability and called on the federal government to promote flexibility and support state innovation in this regard.

On June 22, 2011, CCSSO released a Statement of Principles and announced a commitment from the vast majority of states to build individual state accountability systems consistent with those principles. This state-facing Statement and the Roadmap create a blueprint for federal recommendations. ESEA reauthorization could and should support and incentivize state and local movement toward next-generation accountability systems. Rather than providing discrete, technical "fixes" through reauthorization, Congress should embrace a new strategy designed to maximize innovation with concrete expectations for results. In other words, federal law and policy should raise the bar on educational *goals,* but return power and judgment to the states and districts with regard to the *means* of achieving those goals.

States are committed to being held accountable for all students' attainment of college- and career readiness. To that end, states will design accountability systems that meet the following Principles:

- ✓ Aligning performance goals for all schools and districts to college- and career-ready standards;
- ✓ Making meaningful annual accountability determinations for all schools and districts;
- ✓ Focusing initial determinations on student outcomes, including status and growth;
- ✓ Continuing to disaggregate data by subgroup, for reporting and accountability;
- ✓ Reporting timely, actionable, accessible data to all stakeholders, including outcome and richer data to drive continuous improvement;
- ✓ Promoting deeper diagnostic reviews, as appropriate, to better link accountability determinations to meaningful supports and interventions;

- ✓ Building district and school capacity for sustained improvement;
- ✓ Targeting specifically lowest performing schools for significant interventions; and
- ✓ Promoting innovation, evaluation, and continuous improvement in accountability over time.

Federal law should codify, where appropriate, these broad requirements, but otherwise leave specific design authority to the states to ensure validity and legitimacy in each state's context. Further, federal policy should encourage innovation along with evaluation and cross-state communication to establish proof points and drive continuous improvement in policy and practice. To strike the proper balance, the U.S. Department of Education should establish a standing process of rigorous, interactive peer review for proposed state accountability systems and should afford significant flexibility to states in transitioning assessment and accountability systems as they adopt college- and career-ready standards.

Meanwhile, if ESEA reauthorization is delayed, states should exercise the authority expressly granted them by Congress in NCLB to develop and propose new, innovative policy models of accountability and other areas that move beyond NCLB. The federal government should encourage and support this strategy so that current law does not become a barrier to innovation and achievement. The U.S. Department of Education should approve proposals of states with models of education reform that are educationally sound, consistent with this Roadmap, and that can better advance student achievement in each state's context.

We call on the federal government to support the state-led efforts to design and execute next-generation accountability systems and further recommend that ESEA's waiver authority ultimately be amended and peer review improved to adopt a "state innovation authority," such that the Secretary will approve new policy models in assessment, accountability, supports and interventions, etc. on the basis of sound, meaningful peer review. Ultimately, federal law, best articulated in a reauthorized ESEA, should expect and promote innovation, evaluation, and continuous improvement in state policy.

Resources:

- *ESEA Reauthorization Principles and Recommendations* (CCSSO) March 2010
- *Key Elements for Educational Accountability Models in Transition* (ASR SCASS)
- *Letter to Secretary Duncan from CCSSO Membership on ESEA Reauthorization (January 2011)*

CONCLUSION

States are ready and willing to take the lead in developing and implementing rigorous and meaningful next-generation accountability systems; this guide provides a framework to do just that. The guide is unequivocal in its statement of goals and elements. All students must be ready for college and careers upon high school graduation. All schools and districts must continually improve. There are no exceptions.

Next-generation state accountability systems must encourage and allow students, schools, and districts to meet the challenges before them. These new systems must hold students, schools, and districts to more rigorous standards than ever before and inculcate the conditions that build capacity to meet educational goals.

We recognize that accountability systems will evolve and continuously improve over time in response to changing contexts. Just as common college- and career-ready standards are now prompting next-generation accountability systems, new assessments and other innovations will encourage continual improvement of the accountability systems outlined in this Roadmap. In truth, our work will only be successful if states use the framework contained in this Roadmap to devise a next-generation accountability system and continually improve it over time.

We also urge states to not only work harder, but smarter as well. Current budget realities may well be the "new normal" for the foreseeable future, and it is important that states focus on effectiveness *and* efficiency by pooling resources, tools, and experiences across states as they build new systems. To this end, CCSSO and EducationCounsel have created a multistate consortium to help each state design an improved accountability system that can promote college- and career-ready performance, consistent with CCSSO's *Statement of Principles and Processes for State Leadership on Next-Generation Accountability Systems* and this *Roadmap for Next-Generation State Accountability Systems*. The consortium will provide a forum for cross-state interaction and learning, as well as expert support, in dealing with tough issues identified in this Roadmap such as identifying valid outcome measures; developing growth models; establishing diagnostic reviews; and ensuring significant, effective interventions in lowest-performing schools. With the support of the consortium, each state will be better prepared to design and implement its own plan for a next-generation state accountability system. While each state plan will be consistent with and adhere to the Statement of Principles, each state will create their own plan that is uniquely designed to fit its needs. Further, this consortium will provide guidance to states in exercising their authority to design more valid, meaningful accountability systems in the context of a new Elementary and Secondary Education Act (if reauthorized) or within the current No Child Left Behind Act's Section 9401 "waiver" authority, if reauthorization does not occur. We urge the federal government to provide support to states in this endeavor and to, in turn, hold us accountable for our results. Only with this combination of cooperation, support, and – indeed – accountability will we meet the challenges before us.

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General Resources

- "Key Elements for Educational Accountability Models", Marianne Perie (Center for Assessment), Judy Park (Utah), Kenneth Klau (MA) for CCSSO Accountability Systems and Reporting State Collaborative, December 2007
- "Blueprint for Building a Single Statewide Accountability System", Scott R. Palmer and Arthur L. Coleman, Nixon Peabody LLP, for CCSSO, February 2004
- "Measures that Matter: Making College and Career Readiness the Mission for High Schools", Achieve, Inc. and The Education Trust, November 2008
- "Redesigning Accountability Systems for Education", Susan H. Fuhrman and Richard F. Elmore (Eds.), Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 2004.
- "Core Principles for New Accountability in Education", Report from July 2009 workshop in Aspen, CO on Designing Next-Generation Accountability and Support Systems: Implications for Federal, State, and Local Policy; produced by The Aspen Institute Education and Society Program.
- "Working Together for Student Success: Accountability, Data, and High Standards", Report from April 5, 2010 public hearing in New Orleans, LA of the Commission on No Child Left Behind, The Aspen Institute
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