A STRONG STATE ROLE IN COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS IMPLEMENTATION:
RUBRIC AND SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

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INTRODUCTION

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) represent an extraordinary opportunity for education in the U.S.: Not only do they provide for the first time a common platform for states to collaborate and to compare performance, but they also align expectations for student achievement with the demands of college and careers in the 21st century and the expectations of top-performing nations.

In nearly every classroom, these standards (and the new tests that measure them) will require dramatically different instruction—and more skilled and knowledgeable instruction. In mathematics, for example, the standards require greater focus by teachers and deeper knowledge by students than many previous state standards; students will need to calculate accurately, understand mathematics concepts beyond "how to get the answer" and choose among mathematical concepts to solve real-world problems. The English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy standards emphasize informational and nonfiction text in addition to literature, expect students to read sources and cite evidence in their writing (compared to previous standards' emphasis on narrative writing based on student opinions and experiences) and push students to understanding increasingly complex text and vocabulary. Just as important, the Literacy standards aren't just for ELA classes—they are inter-disciplinary and designed to embed high-quality reading and writing expectations in history, social studies, the sciences, career-technical education and other areas. See Table 1 for more information about the immediate "instructional shifts" the CCSS expect teachers to make as they transition to teaching the new standards.

This **Rubric and Self-Assessment Tool** is designed to support state leaders in assessing and continuously improving their efforts to implement the new standards and forthcoming aligned assessments. Because the goal is to ensure educators throughout a state have the resources and skills to succeed, the rubric and tool suggest the essential steps and strong actions states will need to consider to succeed. The rubric is purposefully not a checklist, but rather it is designed to guide ongoing efforts to plan and execute on those plans. It is intended to push states towards coherent approaches: carefully chosen activities attuned to real needs in the state, districts and schools, properly sequenced to provide maximum support at the building level and crafted with a clear logic. We also see the tool as a living document, one that will be updated and improved based on state experience and implementation lessons.

State Leadership Needs: Strong Roles but Differing Approaches

The promise of the standards to prepare all students for the world that awaits them after graduation is both invigorating and demanding. Indeed, implementing the CCSS well in each state will require significantly deepening the capacity of school systems—from classroom educators and instructional coaches to principals to central office staff in districts—to support student mastery of these new expectations. It also will require states to recognize and act on the belief that standards alone will not increase student achievement; the expectations in the standards need to be drivers of a whole suite of aligned policies and resources, teacher tools and materials, accountability systems and stakeholder engagement efforts.

Given the significantly higher demands of the CCSS, this tool and rubric articulates a far stronger leadership role from states in implementing these standards and new assessments than most have provided in the past. State leadership is essential to close the gap between today's

capacity and what the standards demand. It isn't only the state's responsibility to build capacity in classrooms and schools, but leaving capacity-building only to schools, districts or regional offices is a strategy that has not worked to date.

At the same time, we know authority, capacity and tradition varies substantially across and within states. States will approach their work in a variety of ways, and there is no one leadership or implementation model that can be applied across states. Plus, in a time of especially constrained resources, states can't and shouldn't address everything themselves. While the responsibility to implement the CCSS will ultimately be shared among states, districts, schools and other partners, states are uniquely positioned to lead the effort.

Recognizing the specifics can and should vary by state, our vision of a *strong* state model—where states should aim—is articulated in the rubric and includes the **expectation that states attend to three critical outcomes:**

1. **Accountability for results**. The state has no more important role than to relentlessly focus on outcomes and key steps needed to get there. Are tools and supports reaching all teachers, classroom coaches and principals? Do users report that state-provided technical assistance or training is clear and useful? Are teachers demonstrating proficiency in the "instructional shifts" the CCSS demands? States must have a monitoring system with "feedback loops" that regularly collects data to address such questions, and then they must be empowered to act to identify and solve problems with their partners if results fall short. (*Chapter 8 of the Achieve-U.S. Education Delivery Institute CCSS implementation workbook, described below, provides an excellent primer on how to set up such systems*.)

2. **Quality of services and products**. States must clearly and consistently define and communicate what quality looks like, and ensure that schools, districts and regional service providers have a way of accessing high quality materials and resources—whether these are required to be used or voluntary. The definition of quality in our rubric varies by topic area (e.g., quality professional development includes attributes such as ongoing and intensive; quality communications include attributes such as consistency of messaging). Quality assurance can be accomplished in any number of ways: publishing criteria for high-quality instructional materials; developing sample instructional units; certifying professional development providers; centralizing materials approval processes; producing externally-verified materials; curating existing materials; developing sample communication messages; and the like.

3. **Alignment of services and products with the expectations** articulated in the CCSS. Since these standards represent a fundamental shift in what is expected of students, they also represent a significant shift in what must be taught and how. States will need to communicate consistently with schools and school districts and show how implementation of the CCSS is different from past standards and past expectations. And they will need to ensure that all materials, resources, tools and training are aligned to the CCSS.

   The "key instructional shifts in CCSS" are a useful way to think about the transition from current standards to CCSS. By focusing on these shifts between now and full implementation of new summative statewide assessments in 2014-2015, educators will have time to transition textbooks, lesson plans and units, and to practice the fundamentally different instruction the CCSS require. Table 1 below is a "cheat sheet" on these instructional shifts. The end goal of planning and implementation is to build the capacity of schools and educators to help students successfully master the knowledge and skills embedded in the CCSS.

Table 1. Key Instructional Shifts of the Common Core State Standards

English Language Arts/Literacy	
1. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction and informational texts	The standards address reading and writing across-the-curriculum that complement the content of the standards in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects, thus offering new grounding in informational text and placing a premium on students building knowledge from that reading. In K-5, fulfilling the standards requires a 50-50 balance between informational and literary reading. The K-5 standards also strongly recommend that students build coherent general knowledge both within each year and across years. In 6-12, ELA classes place much greater attention to a specific category of informational text—literary nonfiction—than has been traditional. Part of the motivation behind the interdisciplinary approach to literacy in the standards is the established need that most required reading in college and workforce training programs is informational in structure and challenging in content.
2. Reading and writing grounded in evidence from text	Shifting away from today's emphasis on narrative writing in response to de-contextualized prompts, the standards place a premium on students writing to sources, i.e., using evidence from texts to present careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information. Rather than asking students questions they can answer from their prior knowledge or experience, the standards expect students to answer questions that depend on their having actually read the text. Likewise, the reading standards focus on students' ability to read closely and grasp information, arguments, ideas and details based on textual evidence. Students should be able to answer a range of *text-dependent* questions, questions that require both explicit and/or implicit reference to or citation of the text.
3. Regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary	Rather than focusing solely on the skills of reading and writing, the standards highlight the growing complexity of the texts students must read to be ready for the demands of college and careers. The standards build a staircase of text complexity so that all students are ready for the demands of college- and career-level reading no later than the end of high school. Closely related to text complexity—and inextricably connected to reading comprehension—is a focus on academic vocabulary: words that appear in a variety of content areas (such as ignite and commit).
Mathematics	
1. Focus strongly where the Standards focus	Rather than racing to cover everything in today's mile-wide, inch-deep curriculum, teachers use the power of the eraser and significantly narrow and deepen the way time and energy is spent in the mathematics classroom. They focus deeply on only those concepts that are emphasized in the standards so that students can gain strong foundational conceptual understanding, a high degree of procedural skill and fluency, and the ability to apply the mathematics they know to solve problems inside and outside the mathematics classroom.
2. Coherence: think across grades, and link to major topics within grades	*Thinking across grades*: Instead of treating mathematics in each grade as a series of disconnected topics, principals and teachers carefully connect the learning within and across grades so that, for example, fractions or multiplication develop across grade levels and students can build new understanding onto foundations built in previous years. Teachers can begin to count on deep conceptual understanding of core content and build on it. Each standard is not a new event, but an extension of previous learning. *Linking to major topics*: Instead of allowing less important topics to detract from the focus of the grade, these topics are taught in relation to the grade level focus. For example, data displays are not an end in themselves but are always presented along with grade-level word problems.

3. Rigor: require conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application with intensity	*Conceptual understanding*: Teachers teach more than "how to get the answer" and support students' ability to access concepts from a number of perspectives so that students are able to see mathematics as more than a set of mnemonics or discrete procedures. Students demonstrate deep conceptual understanding of core mathematics concepts by solving short conceptual problems, applying mathematics in new situations, and speaking about their understanding. *Procedural skill and fluency*: Students are expected to have speed and accuracy in calculation. Teachers structure class time and/or homework time for students to practice core functions such as multiplication facts so that students are able to understand and manipulate more complex concepts. *Application*: Students are expected to use mathematics and choose the appropriate concept for application even when they are not prompted to do so. Teachers provide opportunities at all grade levels for students to apply mathematics concepts in "real world" situations. Teachers in content areas outside of mathematics, particularly science, ensure that students are using mathematics—at all grade levels—to ake meaning of and access content.

Source: Adapted from Student Achievement Partners, 2011

Across the varying governance and legal authorities different states have over their public schools, we see essentially three ways in which states can individually or in combination with one another promote accountability, quality and alignment in CCSS implementation. States can:

- *Require* that local education agencies, regional service providers, vendors or others adopt or provide the necessary materials and supports, along with strong quality control mechanisms.
- *Provide* materials and supports directly to schools, in partnership with school districts, regional service providers, vendors, institutions of higher education, professional associations, other states or additional organizations.
- *Guide* educators, administrators and other service providers with advice and support on how to make the best use of high-quality, aligned, voluntary resources in their day-to-day work—including by developing examples, templates and models, identifying resource experts, convening and training educators and providing advice on using tools.

No one mechanism will work best for all topic areas of CCSS implementation or for all states. Often the most effective approach will be to combine strategies or to pursue different strategies for different areas (depending on state-level capacity, local needs and resources available). But regardless of the pathway, state actions need to be pursued with a clear articulation for how their work helps districts and schools: What are the assumptions about what educators need, and why does the state think its actions will make a difference? What authority and incentives are in place (or not) to support the effective use of a particular approach? States should have a clear "logic model" that undergirds the choices they have made and the resources and tools they invest in to build capacity.

Partnerships for Success

While expecting a strong leadership role from states, this rubric does not include the expectation that state agencies are the sole actors in implementation. Certainly, a well-designed plan is only effective if it is implemented well—and that will require strong partnerships across state offices and leaders, including state education agencies, legislatures, governors' offices and state boards of education (and other state education

offices); regional service providers; districts; schools; institutions of higher education; professional associations; unions; vendors; and other stakeholders. That partnership will only succeed if everyone shares the same goal, understands their roles and responsibilities in getting to that goal, commits to continuous improvement over time and is working from a comprehensive implementation plan that pulls it all together. Additionally, external groups—such as the business community and statewide and local advocacy groups—can play an important role in advocating for change and maintaining momentum for the complex and critical work ahead.

States also can seek every opportunity to take advantage of the "common" aspect of the CCSS: 46 states and the District of Columbia now have adopted the standards, and each one is working on an implementation plan to guide their roll out. Plans will not, and need not, look the same—but there will be enough overlap that states should actively seek cross-state collaborations, curate existing materials, communicate lessons learned and what's working, and maximize the efficiencies of scale that common standards enable.

Rubric and Self-Assessment Tool

Table 2 summarizes the features of the rubric and self-assessment tool. They include:

- *Implementation elements.* The tool is organized around 16 elements that ought to be addressed in a comprehensive, coherent state implementation plan. These elements cluster into five main categories: **educator supports**; **student supports**; **system alignment**; **infrastructure**; and **outreach**.

- *Rubric*. For each of the elements, a rubric sets the standard for a strong state role. To clearly differentiate strong state actions along a continuum, the rubric also specifies what inadequate, emerging and exemplary actions look like in each element.

- *Questions to consider*. In the areas of the rubric that correspond to the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) cross-state thematic work groups, we provide a series of questions state leaders can ask themselves as they consider the standard articulated in the rubric and how it can inform their future plans and work. To facilitate the use of this tool in conjunction with the Achieve-U.S. Education Delivery Institute CCSS Workbook, we adapted some questions from the workbook related to system capacity and performance monitoring to jumpstart state leader self-assessment. We then pose questions about how to gauge the strength of current state action in implementation. These questions are designed to encourage state leaders to reflect on how the state is attending to quality, alignment and accountability and whether its efforts are at sufficient scale.

- *Descriptions of leading states*. For two important areas where many states are focusing their planning efforts—teacher professional development and curricular resources and instructional materials—we have developed short descriptions of what leading PARCC states are doing that exemplify aspects of the strong rubric categories.

  To identify leading states, we reviewed documentation of state plans to align teacher professional development and curriculum and instructional materials to CCSS. We obtained these plans through a joint data collection effort that Education First and Editorial Projects in Education (EPE) pursued in fall of 2011. To augment these plans, we also reviewed plans embedded in states' Race to the Top (RTTT) applications as well as any Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility waiver applications recently approved by the U.S.

Department of Education. Finally, for some states we relied on analysis and interview data Education First gathered for a report to Achieve in late 2011 that described CCSS implementation efforts for several PARCC states. Taken together, these sources provided us with enough information to identify a range of states and approaches that exemplify strong state actions in these two areas. (We also reviewed plans for teacher evaluation, but we did not find any that would illustrate beyond an emerging approach.)

While we did not have enough information to reliably "rate" each state's plan for teacher professional development and curriculum and instructional materials against the rubric—and indeed our intention is not to "grade" or rank states—we were able to identify several states whose efforts can spark ideas and discussion in other states working to strengthen their own CCSS implementation plans.

Table 2. State Implementation Elements and Tool Contents

IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENT	RUBRIC	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	DESCRIPTIONS OF LEADING STATES
Educator Supports			
Teacher professional development	X	X	X
Curricular resources and instructional materials	X	X	X
Teacher evaluation systems	X	X	
Principal instructional leadership and capacity	X		
Formative assessment	X		
Teacher preparation and advancement	X		
Student Supports			
Targeted interventions	X	X	
Funding for student supports	X		
System Alignment			
Summative assessments	X	X	
Accountability	X	X	
K-12 and higher education alignment with CCSS	X	X	
High school graduation requirements	X		
Infrastructure			
Technology infrastructure	X	X	
State funding alignment	X		
Outreach			
Communications	X	X	
Stakeholder engagement	X	X	

The "What" and the "How:" Complementing the Common Core State Standards Workbook

To support state planning and decisionmaking for effective implementation of the new standards and assessments, PARCC already has been working with states using a CCSS Implementation Workbook produced by Achieve and the U.S. Education Delivery Institute (EDI). These two tools—that workbook and this rubric—are designed to complement one another.

The workbook sets out the foundation for successful implementation by outlining a self-readiness assessment tool for state leaders and mapping out the key steps that need to be taken to implement the CCSS in major areas, including educator professional development and instructional materials alignment. (The workbook can be downloaded here on the PARCC website). In designing this rubric and its "questions to ask" to help states improve their planning efforts, we assumed states will have completed the self-assessment in the workbook, adopted a timeline for aligning the suite of policies to CCSS, and begun the work to reach the milestones set forth in their adopted timeline. Several of the actions and exercises in that workbook set the foundation for successful implementation, including most importantly the setting, monitoring and tailoring of activities based on the attainment of crucial outcomes, such as demonstrated proficiency of educators after the provision of deep, scaffolded professional development.

The Achieve-EDI workbook is mainly about "the how"–what it takes to organize and manage the complex implementation plan required. This rubric focuses more directly on the "what." This Achieve-Education First rubric will be most helpful for states that have plans and are managing them, but want to take a closer look at whether they are focusing on the right strategies and components.

EDUCATOR SUPPORTS

A comprehensive implementation plan involves several integrated efforts to provide ongoing, high-quality, aligned and sustained efforts to support educators—chiefly classroom teachers, but also including principals, paraprofessionals, instructional coaches and special service providers (e.g., speech pathologists). In this section, we define what states can do to support educators in several categories: teacher professional development, curricular resources and instructional materials, teacher evaluation, principal instructional leadership and capacity, formative assessment and teacher preparation and advancement.

Teacher Professional Development

A Strong State Role

Ensuring that classroom teachers acquire the knowledge and skills they need to teach the CCSS effectively is arguably the single most important aspect of a successful implementation strategy. Although schools, districts, regional service providers and higher education institutions often play the central role in providing professional development to teachers,[i] without strong state support and leadership they are unlikely to succeed in delivering the deep, engaged learning teachers need to make the CCSS "instructional shifts."

What should states do to support professional development that leads to deep teacher reflection and learning? Box 1 describes what a few leading PARCC states are doing. Though the specifics vary, states adopting a *strong* state role have some important things in common. First, they have a clear focus on ensuring that the professional development teachers engage in is *aligned* to the CCSS and the "instructional shifts" they describe. These states are also providing the *resources*—funding and time—needed to engage *all* teachers in these professional development opportunities. What also differentiates these states from others is that they are regularly *monitoring* the outputs and results of professional development to identify and solve problems with delivery and quality. They are asking teachers to self-identify what content knowledge and help with instruction they need, they are tracking metrics such as teacher participation and satisfaction, and they are seeking suggestions for ways the state can support success and using those data to drive improvements in the system. Finally, states focus on the quality of teacher professional development by publishing and widely disseminating a definition of high-quality professional development that takes its cue from a comprehensive distillation of the research on effective professional development[ii] and then *developing*, *curating* or *certifying* models of quality professional development designed to support classroom teachers' success in implementing the CCSS.

States going above and beyond in the *exemplary* category roll out professional development in ways that ensure teachers—ideally working in school-based teams—have rich opportunities to apply the CCSS to their work, by engaging in tasks such as grading student work against the CCSS and selecting aligned instructional materials. These states also ensure that teachers have access to professional development modules and tools on demand, so they can be used in real time as needed during the school year. Finally, exemplary states take steps to ensure that within the state education agency itself there are collaborations across departments and divisions so that a shared vision for aligned, high-quality teacher professional development is evident in subject-specific materials and resources.

Box 1. What Leading PARCC States Are Doing to Ensure High-Quality, Aligned Teacher Professional Development		
The **Kentucky** Department of Education (KDE) is working to ensure district-level and school-based administrators receive coherent and consistent support to implement the CCSS with fidelity. Content and Instructional Support Leadership Networks—teams of educators, school-based administrators, district leaders and postsecondary faculty—follow a KDE-developed month-by-month curriculum, meet regularly to problem-solve and design instructional practices and share their learnings with colleagues in their home districts. In 2010-11, the curriculum highlighted the alignment and new expectations of the CCSS. In 2011-12, the curriculum plan affords opportunities for teachers and building-level leaders to design congruent learning experiences for students. KDE is also offering a variety of online professional learning and self-paced modules. All teachers can access these through its online clearinghouse (the Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System) the Kentucky Learning Depot or iTunesU. As part of Senate Bill 1, Kentucky's higher education institutions have created individual professional development plans focused on integrating the CCSS into teacher preparation course instruction and ensuring a seamless transition from high school to college. To support full implementation of the CCSS and aligned assessments, the state legislature has committed financial resources and the state has foundation funding. Additionally, state and federal funding have been redirected to address the needs of all young people as the CCSS are implemented. Sources: Kentucky's Approved ESEA Flexibility Request; Kentucky's EPE survey response, fall 2011; Achieve interviews and analysis, fall 2011	The **New Jersey** Department of Education (NJDOE) plans to provide professional development sessions designed to prepare and support teachers and principals in fully implementing the CCSS. NJDOE staff, as well as Regional Achievement Center staff trained by NDJOE staff, will conduct CCSS-aligned trainings for teacher teams that focus on several areas including scaffolded student learning objectives, formative assessments and protocols for reviewing formative assessment data to inform classroom instruction to better meet student needs. The state will make funding available through its Race to the Top grant to support the involvement of RTTT-participating districts. Regional Achievement Centers will focus their support on Priority and Focus Schools, in addition to the districts with schools identified as either Priority or Focus Schools. All staff in Priority and Focus Schools will participate in these training sessions, as will two to four leads from the districts. Other districts will be asked to send two to four leads in each content area to be trained by NJDOE curriculum/special education/ELL experts and prepared for training teachers in their district. To ensure that future professional development sessions address what teachers feel they need to be successful, NJDOE will be engaging in significant follow-up with teachers who have participated in professional development sessions, using online surveys. Sources: New Jersey's Approved ESEA Flexibility Request; New Jersey's RTTT Phase 3 Application	**New Mexico** plans to align district, regional and statewide resources—including those from higher education institutions—to implement its detailed professional development plan. The state's plan highlights several priority focus areas, including capacities of the literate individual, connecting mathematical practices and mathematical content, shifts in ELA/Literacy instruction, and shifts in mathematics instruction. To ensure the quality of professional development, the state department of education plans to establish a vetting process for professional development service providers. New Mexico's plans for educator engagement include asking districts to designate teacher leaders as a cadre of trainers to develop teacher content and pedagogical knowledge in support of CCSS curriculum, instruction and assessment including online professional development, instructional units with exemplary lessons and understanding effective standards-based teaching and learning. Source: New Mexico CCSS Implementation Plan

Definitions

In the rubric that follows, we rely on the following definitions:

- *Professional development* may take any number of forms, including model materials, events, tools and/or online resources. Whatever the form, it is designed to promote teacher learning that facilitates student mastery of the CCSS.
- *Aligned* professional development emphasizes the knowledge and skills teachers need to successfully deliver the CCSS, starting with the "instructional shifts" in ELA/Literacy (including teachers of career technical education, history, science and many other subjects where literacy and use of text is central) and mathematics. Attention to these shifts is particularly important in the transition to CCSS and aligned assessments over the next few years.
- *Resources* states provide for professional development include both funding and time. States provide funding by redirecting/reallocating or tightening the eligible uses of existing state/federal dollars to support aligned professional development, committing new, targeted funding or a combination of the two. States provide time for teachers to engage in professional development with policy actions like requiring a certain number of professional development days, extending the school year and/or issuing waivers to districts to enable participation in training opportunities and time for building-specific teams to work together on lesson planning, assessing student work and other job-embedded tasks.
- *High-quality* professional development should be comprehensively defined by the state and be grounded in the research on effective professional learning for teachers. While a comprehensive definition is beyond the scope of this tool, to identify strong or exemplary state plans, we looked for these quality markers:
    - *Scaffolded.* Teacher professional learning around the CCSS begins with conveying basic concepts like "instructional shifts," and then progresses to ongoing engagement delving into the deeper content demands and pedagogy strategies associated with the standards.
    - *Grounded in needs of diverse learners.* Teacher professional development is focused on developing teacher skill in differentiating CCSS-aligned instruction for students at a range of levels, with a variety of learning styles and among special populations of students (e.g., English language learners, special education students, gifted and talented students).
    - *Engages and supports teachers.* To build working relationships and maintain instructional time, teacher professional development aligned to the CCSS meaningfully engages educators—including teachers of record, instructional coaches and teacher leaders—in their buildings and districts in using CCSS-aligned professional development. *(For additional resources on how to engage teachers effectively, see the Achieve-Education First Educator Engagement Tool found here.)*

Rubric

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
State has no role requiring, providing or certifying *aligned* teacher professional development	State requires, provides or certifies *aligned* teacher professional development	State requires, provides or certifies *aligned* teacher professional development State provides resources—funding (reallocating existing funding, providing new, targeted funding or a combination of the two) and time—to support state/regional/local provision of only *aligned* professional development State has system in place to target support, track progress of professional development efforts and hold itself and others accountable for continuous improvement based on feedback State defines <u>and</u> either provides or certifies models and exemplars of *high-quality, aligned* teacher professional development	State requires, provides or certifies *aligned* teacher professional development State provides resources—funding (reallocating existing funding, providing new, targeted funding or a combination of the two) and time—to support only aligned state/regional/local provision of only *aligned* professional development State has system in place to target support, track progress of professional development efforts and hold itself and others accountable for continuous improvement based on feedback State defines <u>and</u> either provides or certifies models and exemplars of *high-quality, aligned* teacher professional development	**Reviewing System Capacity**[iii] ▪ Does the system have clear strategies to train educators on the scope, sequence and expectations of the CCSS? ▪ How will mathematics, ELA/Literacy receive this training? How will other teachers be trained to ensure the CCSS's focus on reading and writing across the curriculum is realized? ▪ What information and feedback loops will be used to monitor whether instructional practice changes? **Developing Routines to Monitor Performance and Solve Problems**[iv] ▪ Does the system have set routines to track progress of professional development efforts? Do these routines identify the actions needed to stay on track or get back on track? ▪ Does analysis uncover key issues, anticipate problems with quality and delivery of professional development and prioritize them for resolution? Do you have processes in place to solve such problems quickly and effectively? ▪ Do you have a plan for sustaining a consistent focus on professional development for teachers around the CCSS? **Striving for a Strong State Role** ▪ What evidence does the state have that it is paying close attention to *alignment, quality, accountability* and *scale* in its teacher professional development efforts? ▪ Has the state conducted a high-quality crosswalk of its previous standards and the CCSS (i.e., an analysis examining the strength of the matches, differences in content and performance expectations as well as the way the progression of standards maps to specific grades)? Has the state factored this information into its plans for teacher professional development? ▪ To what extent is professional development for teachers explicitly designed to focus on the "instructional shifts" of the CCSS? How would you know, and how could the state ensure this focus? ▪ What strategies can state leaders use to ensure teachers have a basic understanding of "instructional shifts" as a foundation and then are provided increasing deep

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
			State requires or provides opportunities for teachers and teacher teams to practice applying the CCSS to instructional tasks (*e.g., selection of instructional materials, lesson planning, grading student work*) State requires, provides or certifies on-demand, *high-quality* and *aligned* tools (*e.g., self-paced modules, written and video exemplars*) State intentionally coordinates professional development activities across divisions/ departments within the state education agency	engagement of CCSS content and instruction? ▪ What federal and state funding sources can be tapped to augment local resources for CCSS-aligned professional development? Has your state considered issuing updated guidance on the use of federal Title II dollars to support this kind of teacher professional development and to ensure dollars are *not* used ineffectively? ▪ Do you know how ready your teacher workforce is to make the "instructional shifts" demanded by the CCSS? If not, how can you use an existing/build a statewide gap analysis to find out? ▪ Have you focused your efforts on defining and modeling quality professional development materials and tools for classroom teachers? How are you working to ensure professional development is aligned *and* grounded in the research on effective teacher learning?

Curricular Resources and Instructional Materials

A Strong State Role

Educators need access to *high-quality*, *aligned classroom materials* to support CCSS-focused instruction, such as textbooks and instructional software, formative assessment tasks, lesson plans, scope and sequence maps, open education resources and the like. Coupled with sustained, high-quality professional development, access to and knowledge of how to use these materials is paramount to supporting teachers in making the CCSS "instructional shifts" a reality in their classrooms.

What should states do to ensure teachers have access to such materials and know how to use them effectively? Box 2 describes what a few leading PARCC states are doing. Due to differences in state authority and tradition, as well as the wide range of materials teachers use in instruction, states are taking many different approaches. Nonetheless, while allowing for local innovation and a diversity of materials, a *strong* state role shares some common features.

States with a *strong* transition plan provide at least an aligned *model curriculum framework* to guide curriculum development at the local level, and, in many instances, they provide much more—aligned instructional units, lesson plans, formative assessment tools, for example. Strong state plans provide a mechanism and support for educators to be engaged in the process of identifying or selecting high-quality classroom tools aligned to CCSS—that is, the expertise of teachers is meaningfully tapped. To take maximum advantage of the existence of high-quality tools, teachers can work to evaluate and select from existing materials in use in other states or districts. In cases where there may be gaps, teacher groups can also collaborate to create new materials. Whether to develop new materials to address gaps or select high-quality existing tools is intentionally decided. Additionally, states need feedback loops in place that consistently monitor the extent to which all building administrators and teachers have access to high-quality, aligned classroom materials and make necessary course corrections based on that feedback from the field. Finally, these states provide protocols or vetting tools for administrators and educators to use to assess alignment across the full array classroom materials.

To meet our standard for an *exemplary* role in ensuring high-quality, aligned classroom materials, states would go the extra mile in one of several possible ways. A state could require that districts only adopt textbooks and other purchased materials that are aligned to the CCSS. States with textbook quality control mechanisms in place could themselves approve only aligned textbooks and purchased materials. A third option for "local control" states or places where textbooks are featured less prominently is for states to provide supports for administrators and educators to ensure the consistent application of tools for evaluating classroom materials—such as providing rubrics to assess alignment, training opportunities and/or access to annotated materials of aligned and unaligned instructional practices. Finally, states could engage in regular reviews or audits of a sampling of districts to look for evidence that classroom materials are aligned to CCSS.

Box 2. What Leading PARCC States Are Doing to Ensure High-Quality, Aligned Curricular Resources and Instructional Materials		
Colorado state law (SB 08-212) requires districts to design and adopt curricula aligned to state standards. To help districts implement the CCSS in all content areas while not infringing on local control of curriculum, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is actively building an online toolkit of resources, including aligned curriculum development tools and model instructional units. The CDE plans expand the toolkit to include: curriculum exemplars; video resources for teaching, examples of student mastery of the new standards and resources to develop student growth measures for all tested and non-tested content areas. The CDE also has been working with curriculum leaders from across the state to develop optional curriculum development tools that districts may employ when designing their local curriculum. To assist districts in purchasing or designing rigorous and standards-focused interim assessments for all grades and content areas, the CDE plans to develop a vetting process and rubrics. Additionally, the CDE will facilitate Content Collaboratives that engage educators in the creation and dissemination of standards-based assessment and instructional materials for use in the classroom. The Content Collaboratives also are intended to serve as a sustainable professional learning community for Colorado educators. Sources: Colorado's RTTT Phase 3 Application; Achieve interviews and analysis, fall 2011	**Florida** plans to make available a variety of CCSS-aligned instructional resources to educators, including a standards-based digital curriculum available to educators on Florida's Virtual Curriculum Marketplace. The state also has a web portal, FloridaStandards.org, where teachers can access the standards and teaching resources aligned to each standard. To engage teachers in identifying high-quality tools, Florida is developing a Standards Instructional Teacher Tool, to which teachers will be able to submit lessons that will be vetted by a panel of experts and rated by users. Florida employs a formal process used to approve instructional materials submitted by vendors and develop a statewide list of materials approved for district purchase. The state has a detailed list of specifications required of materials to ensure they are aligned with the CCSS. Florida also requires that districts utilize a minimum of 50 percent of their state-appropriated instructional materials funding to purchase materials on the state-adopted list. What's more: Florida's review process is completely digital and guarantees public access to reviewers' comments for all adopted materials. Sources: Florida's Approved ESEA Flexibility Request, Florida's EPE Survey Response, fall 2011; Achieve interviews and analysis, fall 2011	**The Indiana** Department of Education (IDOE) has started to provide a variety of curricular and instructional resources to districts, beginning with curricular map resources—created with help from teams of Indiana teachers, content specialists and university professors—and Instructional Frameworks for Reading and Disciplinary Literacy. IDOE has developed individual videos for mathematics and ELA, as well as for several other content areas, that explain the CCSS instructional shifts and identify resources schools can use to better understand and implement these changes. Grade-by-grade Instructional Transition Guidance Documents have been developed in ELA and mathematics to assist districts in reviewing and aligning existing curriculum to the CCSS. Indiana's engagement of educators in the process of developing materials extends beyond the curriculum mapping effort. An IDOE-convened "curriculum council" vetted many of the materials the department distributed on the transition to the CCSS, and that helped determine priorities for IDOE-developed materials aligned to CCSS. IDOE also worked with Indiana teachers and the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin to evaluate the quality and alignment of mathematics textbooks and curricular materials to the CCSS. IDOE made these reviews publicly available, and they have been widely used by districts. The state is engaged in a parallel process for the analysis of reading materials (to be completed by March 2012), and plans to conduct a similar review for ELA during the summer of 2012. Sources: Indiana's Approved ESEA Flexibility Request; Achieve interviews and analysis, fall 2011

Definitions

In the rubric, we rely on the following definitions:

- *Curricular and instructional resources* include *materials* like textbooks, instructional software and other purchased materials, model courses of study and model curriculum frameworks, etc., and *tools* such as student work that meets standards, instructional units, lesson plans, scope and sequence models, formative assessment tasks or item banks, open education resources and tasks, etc.
- *Aligned classroom materials* are those *materials* and *tools* that meet clear, statewide alignment criteria, such as the Common Core Publisher's Criteria, PARCC Content Frameworks, the forthcoming PARCC Tri-State rubric or other criteria determined by the state and closely tied to the instructional shifts in the CCSS (e.g., texts are at the appropriate level of complexity).

We use the catch-all term *classroom materials* in the rubric below to refer to all such curricular resources and instructional materials.

Rubric

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
State does not require or provide any *aligned* classroom materials beyond the CCSS themselves and/or crosswalks	State provides at least an *aligned* model curriculum framework (*i.e., guidance to districts on how to develop CCSS-aligned curriculum*)	State provides at least an *aligned* model curriculum framework State engages educators directly or provides tools and/or resources for districts to engage educators in development, identification and/or piloting of *aligned* materials State develops and makes widely available tools (e.g., *criteria or rubrics*) that administrators and educators can use to evaluate the *alignment* of classroom materials State has system in place to track administrator and teacher access to and use	State provides at least an *aligned* model curriculum framework State engages educators directly or provides tools and/or resources for districts to engage educators in development, identification and/or piloting of *aligned* materials State develops and makes widely available tools *(e.g., criteria or rubrics)* that administrators and educators can use to evaluate the *alignment* of classroom materials State has system in place to track administrator and teacher access to and use	**Reviewing System Capacity**[v] ▪ Does the system have clear strategies to ensure that high-quality instructional materials are aligned to the CCSS? ▪ How will all mathematics and English language arts teachers receive these materials? ▪ What information and feedback loops will be used to monitor whether instructional practice changes? **Developing Routines to Monitor Performance and Solve Problems**[vi] ▪ Does the system have set routines to track progress of the quality and use of classroom materials? Do these routines identify the actions needed to stay on track or get back on track? ▪ Does analysis uncover key issues, anticipate problems with quality and use of classroom materials and prioritize them for resolution? Do you have processes in place to solve such problems quickly and effectively? ▪ Do you have a plan for sustaining a consistent focus on classroom materials for teachers around the CCSS? **Striving for a Strong State Role** ▪ What evidence does the state have that it is paying close attention to *alignment, quality, accountability* and *scale* in its work focused on curricular resources and instructional materials?

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
		of *high-quality, aligned* materials and to address problems based on feedback	of *high-quality, aligned* materials and to address problems based on feedback To ensure educators have access to *high-quality* and *aligned* classroom materials, the state does one of the following: ▪ Requires LEAs to adopts only *aligned* textbooks/ instructional software/purchased materials *OR* ▪ Adopts only aligned textbooks/ instructional software/purchased materials *OR* ▪ Provides training/examples of how to apply evaluation tools (*e.g., criteria or rubrics*) to a range of classroom materials *OR* ▪ Regularly reviews or audits a sampling of district materials for evidence of alignment to CCSS	▪ Has the state conducted a high-quality crosswalk of its previous standards and the CCSS (i.e., an analysis examining the strength of the matches, differences in content and performance expectations as well as the way the progression of standards maps to specific grades)? Has the state factored this information into its plans for curricular resources and instructional materials? ▪ Does the state have a clear definition or criteria for quality and alignment of classroom tools? How is the state ensuring that all teachers have access to high-quality and CCSS-aligned classroom materials across the range of subjects and grades? ▪ What feedback loops are in place to monitor the use and satisfaction of CCSS-aligned classroom materials and to strengthen state action in light of this feedback? ▪ Are there mechanisms in place for teachers and administrators to participate and to widely share in the identification and evaluation of high-quality, aligned classroom materials? ▪ Is the state coordinating with other states and/or facilitating cross-district coordination to identify, curate, select, pilot and/or create high-quality CCSS-aligned instructional materials?

Teacher Evaluation Systems

A Strong State Role

The majority of states are revamping teacher evaluation so that all educators will be evaluated annually on multiple measures of effectiveness, including student learning growth against academic standards and observations of teacher instructional practices. These new evaluation systems should be aligned to research on effective teaching, state-adopted model teaching standards and the CCSS.[vii] Most importantly, the new systems need to drive help and support to teachers throughout the school year and when the final evaluation ratings are available.

Understandably, as states to date have been focused on the difficult challenges of designing new teacher evaluation systems, many states have not yet coordinated their capacity-building and training for educators on CCSS with teacher evaluation roll-out. Yet, classroom educators will be expected to implement both major policy initiatives concurrently.

Our vision for what a *strong* state plan should strive for in this area emphasizes a few key leverage points: measures of student learning growth and tools to observe and support teacher practice. The first step is for states to commit to using PARCC or SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessment results in ELA/Literacy and mathematics as one factor in determining a teacher's contribution to her students' growth during the school year. Similarly, states should plan to connect the measures of teacher effectiveness for those in non-tested subjects and grades (NTSGs) to the CCSS, and to align formative tools for improving teaching practice (e.g., observation rubrics) with the CCSS as well. States also should ensure that individual teacher evaluation results are used to hone in on CCSS-aligned professional development opportunities, and develop systems to track the extent to which this is happening in the field.

Exemplary states also aggregate teacher evaluation results and use those data to inform large-scale teacher professional development.

The rubric is designed to provide guidance as states begin to align their CCSS and evaluation systems. Because this is a new area of focus for most states, the rubric is likely to evolve over time as our collective thinking is sharpened and more state examples emerge. Although we reviewed PARCC state plans to connect CCSS to teacher evaluation systems, at this point none exemplified the strong state role we envision here.

Definitions

In the rubric, teacher evaluation systems are *aligned* to the CCSS if:

- Statewide assessments, student learning objectives and other classroom assessment tools focus on the instructional shifts (e.g., for ELA/Literacy teachers: "Does the teacher consistently employ text-dependent questioning?")
- Teacher observation rubrics and model teaching standards clearly articulate the knowledge and skills with which teachers must become proficient to deliver instruction aligned to the CCSS
- Teacher evaluation reports and results (e.g., the formative information received throughout the year before and after observations and the summative rating a teacher receives annually) are framed in the language of CCSS
- Both formative and summative teacher evaluation results are used to direct targeted, individualized support to educators *and* to inform large-scale teacher professional development around the CCSS, with a focus on the instructional shifts

Rubric

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
State does not provide direction on how to align teacher evaluation to CCSS implementation, nor does it require districts to align the two initiatives	State connects CCSS implementation to teacher evaluation by describing plans to use PARCC or SBAC assessments in ELA/Literacy and mathematics as one factor in determining teachers' contributions to student learning growth State plans to connect the measures for teachers in NTSGs—such as student learning objectives, adapted classroom assessments or portfolios of student work—to the CCSS	State connects CCSS implementation to teacher evaluation by describing plans to use PARCC or SBAC assessments in ELA/Literacy and mathematics as one factor in determining teachers' contributions to student learning growth State plans to connect the measures for teachers in NTSGs—such as student learning objectives, adapted classroom assessments or portfolios of student work—to the CCSS State requires or provides guidance such that individual teacher evaluation results (both formative information provided throughout the year and summative annual ratings) are used to identify and target CCSS-based professional	State connects CCSS implementation to teacher evaluation by describing plans to use PARCC or SBAC assessments in ELA/Literacy and mathematics as one factor in determining teachers' contributions to student learning growth State plans to connect the measures for teachers in NTSGs—such as student learning objectives, adapted classroom assessments or portfolios of student work—to the CCSS State requires or provides guidance such that individual teacher evaluation results (both formative information provided throughout the year and summative annual ratings) are used to identify and target CCSS-based professional	**Developing Routines to Monitor Performance and Solve Problems**[viii] ▪ Does the system have set routines to track progress of how teacher evaluation connects to the CCSS? Do these routines identify the actions needed to stay on track or get back on track? ▪ Does analysis uncover key issues, anticipate problems with linking up these two reform efforts and prioritize them for solutions? Do you have processes in place to solve such problems quickly and effectively? ▪ Do you have a plan for sustaining a consistent focus on linking the CCSS to teacher evaluation systems and supports? **Striving for a Strong State Role** ▪ What evidence does the state have that it is paying close attention to *alignment, quality, accountability* and *scale* in linking teacher evaluation systems to CCSS implementation? ▪ Has the state conducted a high-quality crosswalk of its previous standards and the CCSS (i.e., an analysis examining the strength of the matches, differences in content and performance expectations as well as the way the progression of standards maps to specific grades)? Has the state factored this information into its plans for linking teacher evaluation results and supports to CCSS implementation? ▪ Do state guidelines, processes and materials for evaluation reinforce the CCSS instructional shifts? ▪ How are the planned measures for teachers in NTSGs—such as student learning objectives, adapted classroom assessments or portfolios of student work—connected explicitly to the CCSS? ▪ How do classroom observation rubrics and other instruments indicate which ELA/Literacy and mathematical concepts and practices should be

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
		development for individual teachers State provides *aligned* tools or requires that observation rubrics and other formative materials/tools designed to assess and improve instructional practice be clearly connected to CCSS State has mechanism to track and address gaps in the extent to which teachers are getting CCSS-aligned professional development linked to their individual teacher evaluation results	development for individual teachers State provides *aligned* tools or requires that observation rubrics and other formative materials/tools designed to assess and improve instructional practice be clearly connected to CCSS State has mechanism to track and address gaps in the extent to which teachers are getting CCSS-aligned professional development linked to their individual teacher evaluation results State requires, provides guidance or uses summative assessment data and evaluation results aggregated at the school/district/ regional/state level to inform state/regional/ local plans for large-scale teacher professional development aligned to CCSS	observed in particular? ▪ Do reports that teachers receive on their performance—either informal, through pre- and post-observation feedback conferences, or formal, through semester or annual evaluation ratings—clearly indicate how well the teachers' students are performing against CCSS? Do the reports indicate specific content/topic areas within CCSS on which teachers should focus their own instructional improvement? ▪ How are individual teacher professional development plans connected to CCSS?

Principal Instructional Leadership and Capacity

A Strong State Role

The role of building principals has been evolving over time to become more focused on instructional leadership, and that role has never been important than in this new age of CCSS and teacher effectiveness. Being instructional leaders now means, for example, that principals have the skills to introduce the new standards, identify school-wide professional development needs, support individual teachers and groups of teachers in unit and lesson planning, assist teachers to think about how the standards will be assessed and assist teachers to work backwards from the standards and assessments to map out instruction. School leaders also are being asked to serve as formal and informal evaluators and observers of teacher practice in the new evaluation system. And the performance of principals is receiving more scrutiny than before, as principals in the majority of states also will be evaluated themselves under new effectiveness systems.

Our vision for what a *strong* state plan should strive for in this area is focused on what the state can do to build capacity of principals as instructional leaders. It includes a focus on ensuring principals have deep understanding of both the standards and the evaluation systems, and that principals have access to *high-quality, aligned* classroom materials just as educators should, so that principals can ensure that ongoing, embedded, school-level professional development is aligned to CCSS. It also emphasizes the need for states to ensure the same resources it provides teachers for professional development—funding and time—are available to principals for this work. And feedback loops are in place to track progress and make course corrections.

Because this is a new area of focus for most states, the rubric is likely to evolve over time as our collective thinking is sharpened and more state examples emerge.

Rubric

ELEMENT	INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY
Principal Instructional Leadership and Capacity	State has no role in providing, requiring or certifying *aligned* principal professional development focused on instructional leadership for CCSS	State provides, requires or certifies *aligned* principal professional development focused on instructional leadership for CCSS State provides resources—funding (reallocating existing funding, providing new, targeted funding or a combination of the two) and time—to support state/regional/local provision of only aligned professional development	State provides, requires or certifies *high-quality, aligned* principal professional development focused on instructional leadership for CCSS State provides resources—funding (reallocating existing funding, providing new, targeted funding or a combination of the two) and time—to support state/regional/local provision of only aligned professional development	State provides, requires or certifies *high-quality, aligned* principal professional development focused on instructional leadership for CCSS State provides resources—funding (reallocating existing funding, providing new, targeted funding or a combination of the two) and time—to support state/regional/local provision of only aligned professional development

ELEMENT	INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY
			State requires districts to annually evaluate all principals' performance, with the principal's success as an instructional leader for CCSS as a key evaluation criterion State has system in place to target support, track progress of principal professional development efforts focused on instructional leadership for CCSS and hold itself and others accountable for continuous improvement based on feedback	State requires districts to annually evaluate all principals' performance, with the principal's success as an instructional leader for CCSS as a key evaluation criterion State has system in place to target support, track progress of principal professional development efforts focused on instructional leadership for CCSS and hold itself and others accountable for continuous improvement based on feedback State directly provides training on use of teacher observation rubrics and other aligned classroom materials to principals/assistant principals that is focused on the instructional shifts in CCSS, not just the procedures required to implement revamped evaluation systems State directly provides training on use of observation rubrics and other formative teacher assessment tools to inform ongoing professional coaching of teachers grounded in the "instructional shifts"

Additional Educator Supports

ELEMENT	INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY
Formative Assessment	State has no role in funding, development, providing guidance or use of formative assessment tools *(such as CCSS-aligned formative assessment item banks, performance tasks, rubrics and student work exemplars)* and processes to support CCSS-aligned teacher instruction	State plans to use only those formative assessment tools developed by PARCC or SBAC to support CCSS-aligned teacher instruction	State plans to fund, develop *(e.g., by vetting potential vendors and the quality/alignment to CCSS or creating research repository on assessment systems),* share or promote use of formative assessment tools	State plans to fund, develop *(e.g., by vetting potential vendors and the quality/alignment to CCSS or creating research repository on assessment systems)*, share or promote use of formative assessment tools State develops professional development/supports to help educators use formative assessment tools effectively *(e.g., training on data-driven instruction, using or constructing their own formative assessment tools, assessment literacy, provision of site-based coaches)*
Teacher Preparation and Advancement	State has no role or partnership with teacher preparation institutions/programs/ alternative providers to ensure new teachers are prepared to teach CCSS	State has partnership with or requirements for teacher preparation institutions/ programs/alternative providers to align coursework and other graduation requirements to CCSS expectations for student learning	State has partnership with or requirements for teacher preparation institutions/ programs/alternative providers to align coursework and other requirements to CCSS expectations for student learning State plans to align accreditation standards for institutions/ programs/alternative providers to CCSS State has plan for ongoing engagement with Arts & Sciences and Education faculty/alternative providers in CCSS implementation	State has partnership with or requirements for teacher preparation institutions/ programs/alternative providers to align coursework and other requirements to CCSS expectations for student learning State plans to align accreditation standards for institutions/ programs/alternative providers to CCSS State has plan for ongoing engagement with Arts & Sciences and Education faculty/alternative providers in CCSS implementation

ELEMENT	INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY
			State publicly reports on the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs, including measures that link student growth on CCSS-aligned assessments to program graduates as one factor in determining program effectiveness	States publicly report on the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs, including measures that link student growth on CCSS-aligned assessments to program graduates as one factor in determining program effectiveness State plans to align individual teacher licensure/certification/ endorsement standards to CCSS State has plan for when and how career milestones such as tenure, classroom/school assignment and re-licensure decisions will be made in light of new CCSS-aligned licensure/certification standards

STUDENT SUPPORTS

To support *all* students' mastery of the CCSS, states will need to provide guidance to districts and regional service providers to target interventions and funding effectively. This aspect of implementation is a crucial area of work ahead for states, yet it is the least well-developed in the field at large.[ix]

Targeted Interventions

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
State does not provide guidance or support to districts/regional service providers to identify students struggling to meet CCSS expectations, to provide supports for special populations (*e.g., special education students, English language learners, gifted and talented*) and to target interventions according to need	State supports districts/regional service providers in identifying struggling students, providing supports for special populations and targeting interventions by providing guidance on *some* of the following: ▪ How to use state data to identify and monitor common gaps in instruction and student learning in the CCSS ▪ How to ensure use of evidence-based strategies for prevention and intervention target resources according to student need (*e.g., Response to Intervention or RTI*) ▪ How to ensure use of evidence-based strategies are implemented as	State supports districts/regional service providers in identifying struggling students, providing supports for special populations and targeting interventions by providing guidance on *all* of the following: ▪ How to use state data to identify and monitor common gaps in instruction and student learning in the CCSS ▪ How to ensure use of evidence-based strategies for prevention and intervention target resources according to student need (*e.g., Response to Intervention or RTI*) ▪ How to ensure use of evidence-based strategies are implemented as	State supports districts/regional service providers in identifying struggling students, providing supports for special populations and targeting interventions by providing guidance on *all* of the following: ▪ How to use state data to identify and monitor common gaps in instruction and student learning in the CCSS ▪ How to ensure use of evidence-based strategies for prevention and intervention target resources according to student need (*e.g., Response to Intervention or RTI*) ▪ How to ensure use of evidence-based strategies are implemented as	**Striving for a Strong State Role** ▪ What evidence does the state have that it is paying close attention to *alignment, quality, accountability* and *scale* in its efforts to provide guidance to districts on student supports? ▪ Has the state conducted a high-quality crosswalk of its previous standards and the CCSS (i.e., an analysis examining the strength of the matches, differences in content and performance expectations as well as the way the progression of standards maps to specific grades)? Has the state factored this information into its guidance to districts on student supports? ▪ Does the state have the capacity to provide guidance, tools and training focused on targeted student interventions to every district in the state? ▪ Does the state have a coordinated strategy to support district efforts to assist all students as they transition to CCSS learning expectations (e.g., students with disabilities, English language learners, students farthest behind reaching CCSS learning expectations, gifted and talented students)? ▪ Has the state reviewed and streamlined relevant federal and state funding sources and worked to minimize/streamline compliance reporting to help districts focus their efforts on performance and target their resources to diverse learners?

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
	part of broader instructional program for CCSS	part of broader instructional program for CCSS	part of broader instructional program for CCSS To accompany this guidance to districts/regional service providers, state provides training and tools (*e.g., coaches, connections with work underway to turn around low-performing schools*) State's plans for targeted student interventions are explicitly tied to helping all students learn the CCSS content and skills	▪ Does the state have feedback loops in place to regularly gauge the reach and usefulness of state supports to districts in this area, and to continuously improve state efforts in the service of building district capacity?

Funding for Student Supports

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY
State does not address how existing federal and state funding streams will be aligned to support student success on CCSS	State addresses how existing federal and state funding streams will be aligned to support student success on CCSS	State addresses how existing federal and state funding streams will be aligned to support student success on CCSS State is considering seeking additional funding for *tiered* strategies/interventions to support students in meeting CCSS when PARCC/SBAC summative assessments are in place	State addresses how existing federal and state funding streams will be aligned to support student success on CCSS State is considering seeking additional funding for *tiered* strategies/interventions to support students <u>before</u> rollout of PARCC/SBAC summative assessments State has provided guidance to districts/regional service providers on how to align and coordinate existing local, state and federal funding streams

SYSTEM ALIGNMENT

Together, state policy and system incentives are aligned with the CCSS. While this rubric and self-assessment tool intentionally places the building of educator capacity to teach the standards through high-quality, aligned professional development, curricular resources and instructional materials and evaluation systems as the highest priority for states, it's also essential that state plans address the timelines and transitions for the full suite of state policies in areas like assessments, accountability systems and transitions to higher education.

Summative Assessments

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
State does not have plan to align summative tests to CCSS	State is a member of the PARCC and/or SBAC assessment consortium State does not articulate any other plans to transition to CCSS-aligned summative assessments in the future	State is a member of the PARCC and/or SBAC assessment consortium State plan includes a timeline for adopting, funding and/or implementing CCSS-aligned assessments beginning in 2014-2015 and includes necessary professional development and communications activities State plan includes communications strategy around anticipated results on first year of common/CCSS-aligned assessments	State is a member of the PARCC and/or SBAC assessment consortium State plan includes a timeline for adopting, funding and/or implementing CCSS-aligned assessments, including necessary professional development and communications activities State plan includes communications strategy around anticipated results on first year of common/CCSS-aligned assessments State plan includes efforts to signal shifts in the CCSS on summative assessments, before transition to common assessments (*e.g., by including CCSS aligned items in operational or field test positions; adding writing tasks or multi-step mathematics tasks*). Plan includes	**Striving for a Strong State Role** ▪ What evidence does the state have that it is paying close attention to *alignment, quality, accountability* and *scale* in its work aligning summative assessments to the CCSS? ▪ Has the state conducted a high-quality crosswalk of its previous standards and the CCSS (i.e., an analysis examining the strength of the matches, differences in content and performance expectations as well as the way the progression of standards maps to specific grades)? Has the state factored this information into its plans for transitioning to CCSS-aligned summative assessments? ▪ Does the state have a detailed plan to transition to new assessments that includes timelines, key audiences,

			external verification that new items are CCSS-aligned State plan includes requirements to develop (or adopt consortium-developed) interim assessments, performance assessments, and/or online diagnostic assessment tools aligned to the CCSS and to CCSS-aligned summative assessments *OR* State plan includes guidance to districts about use of aligned interim, performance, and/or diagnostic assessment tools to replace existing district interim/benchmark/diagnostic tests	responsible parties and resources needed to adopt new CCSS-aligned assessments? ▪ Is the state prepared to build public understanding and awareness around the anticipated results on the first year of CCSS-aligned assessments in 2014-2015? What actions to communicate about the higher, internationally-benchmarked demands of the CCSS is the state already taking? ▪ Has the state considered how and when it could begin signaling to educators the shifts in the CCSS in its summative assessments for 2012-2013 and 2013-2014? ▪ What leadership is the state willing to provide to support educators with additional assessment tools such as interim assessments, performance tasks and/or online diagnostic assessment tools?

Accountability

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
State has no plan to revise its accountability system to align to new expectations in CCSS	The state has a plan that maps how its accountability system will be revised to align to the CCSS State plan includes full details on how it will incentivize districts, schools, educators and students to meet expectations for student mastery of CCSS	The state has a plan that maps how its accountability system will be revised to align to the CCSS State plan includes full details on how it will incentivize districts, schools, educators and students to meet expectations for student mastery of CCSS State plan maps how accountability system will identify goals and report progress towards new expectations for student outcomes in CCSS State plan includes an array of college and career ready indicators designed to report and incentivize progress along the continuum of readiness	The state has a plan that maps how its accountability system will be revised to align to the CCSS State plan includes full details on how it will incentivize districts, schools, educators and students to meet expectations for student mastery of CCSS State plan maps how accountability system will identify goals and report progress towards new expectations for student outcomes in CCSS State plan includes an array of college and career ready indicators designed to report and incentivize progress along the continuum of readiness State plan includes transition or interim steps towards full implementation of new college- and career- ready accountability system State plan includes process for identifying statutory or regulatory changes that need to be considered or made in light of the transitions underway	**Striving for a Strong State Role** ▪ What evidence does the state have that it is paying close attention *to alignment, quality, accountability* and *scale* in aligning its accountability system to CCSS? ▪ Has the state conducted a high-quality crosswalk of its previous standards and the CCSS (i.e., an analysis examining the strength of the matches, differences in content and performance expectations as well as the way the progression of standards maps to specific grades)? Has the state factored this information into its plans for aligning its accountability system to the CCSS? ▪ Does the state have a detailed plan to transition its accountability system to one that values college and career readiness and expects all students to master the CCSS? What incentives for students, educators, schools and districts does the plan include? ▪ What college and career ready indicators designed to report and incentivize progress along the continuum of readiness

				(from below standard to meeting college and career ready standard to exceeding college and career ready standard) are included? How will these indicators transition once new CCSS-aligned assessments are in place? ▪ What are the plans to adopt statutory or regulatory changes that need to be considered or made in light of the transitioning assessment and accountability policies?

K-12 and Higher Education Alignment with CCSS

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
State has no role in aligning K-12 and higher education policies and practices based on CCSS	State K-12 and higher education leaders meet regularly to review, provide input and monitor progress on policy changes to support alignment based on CCSS State has plan to increase awareness and understanding of the CCSS among higher education Arts & Sciences and Education faculty	State K-12 and higher education leaders meet regularly to review, provide input and monitor progress on policy changes to support alignment based on CCSS State has plan to increase awareness and understanding of the CCSS among higher education Arts & Sciences and Education faculty Higher education officials have plan to use PARCC/SBAC college-ready cut score as one factor in decisions about placement into first-year credit-bearing courses	State K-12 and higher education leaders meet regularly to review, provide input and monitor progress on policy changes to support alignment based on CCSS State has plan to increase awareness and understanding of the CCSS among higher education Arts & Sciences and Education faculty Higher education officials have plan to use PARCC/SBAC college-ready cut score as one factor in decisions about placement into first-year credit-bearing courses State has plan for public two-year and four-year colleges and universities to review and align first-year, credit-bearing courses to the CCSS State has plan to review and align focus, content and delivery of developmental education to the CCSS	**Striving for a Strong State Role** ▪ What evidence does the state have that it is paying close attention to *alignment, quality, accountability* and *scale* in its efforts to align the K-12 and postsecondary systems around the CCSS? ▪ Has the state conducted a high-quality crosswalk of its previous standards and the CCSS (i.e., an analysis examining the strength of the matches, differences in content and performance expectations as well as the way the progression of standards maps to specific grades)? Has the state factored this information into its plans for aligning K-12 and postsecondary systems and policies based on the CSSS? ▪ Does your state have the infrastructure and relationships to facilitate deep and regular K-12 and postsecondary leader collaboration and decision-making to support policy change aligned with the CCSS? Are mathematics and ELA faculty involved? ▪ Does the system have clear strategies to train postsecondary faculty on the scope, sequence and expectations of the CCSS? ▪ How will postsecondary faculty who instruct first-year credit-bearing courses and developmental courses in mathematics and English language arts receive this training? ▪ Does the state have a shared plan among public colleges and universities to transition toward using college and career ready cut scores of PARCC/SBAC as a factor in placement decisions?

High School Graduation Requirements

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY
State has no minimum high school graduation requirements that expect all students to take four years of English and at least three years of mathematics covering all of the CCSS high school standards (or state does not require districts to have graduation requirements that meet this minimum standard)	State has statewide minimum high school graduation requirements that expect all students to take four years of English and at least three years of mathematics covering all of the CCSS high school standards indicated for all students	State has statewide minimum high school graduation requirements that expect all students to take four years of English and at least three years of mathematics covering all of the CCSS high school standards indicated for all students At the high school level, the state has organized the CCSS standards into model core courses and pathways, or state has provided sample model core courses and pathways to districts and schools State has processes, protocols, guidance and/or exemplars showing strong alignment among the CCSS and career and technical education expectations and pathways	State has statewide minimum high school graduation requirements that expect all students to take four years of English and at least three years of mathematics covering all of the CCSS high school standards indicated for all students At the high school level, the state has organized the CCSS standards into model core courses and pathways, or state has provided sample model core courses and pathways to districts and schools State has processes, protocols, guidance and/or exemplars showing strong alignment among the CCSS and career and technical education expectations and pathways State has additional academic and non-academic requirements and learning opportunities, such as dual enrollment and access to AP/IB courses, designed to provide opportunity for students to go above and beyond the CCSS State high school graduation course requirements align with course-based admissions requirements at the state's four-year universities

INFRASTRUCTURE

Technology Infrastructure

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
State plan does not include efforts to assess or upgrade/ enhance infrastructure to support PARCC/SBAC online assessments	State plan provides for analysis of district infrastructure, including physical accommodations, network capacity, devices and software licenses, and staff/personnel knowledge to support administration of PARCC/SBAC online assessments State plan includes efforts to upgrade/enhance infrastructure to support CCSS, including PARCC/SBAC online assessments	State plan provides for analysis of district infrastructure, including physical accommodations, network capacity, devices and software licenses, and staff/personnel knowledge to support administration of PARCC/SBAC online assessments State plan includes efforts to upgrade/enhance infrastructure to support CCSS, including PARCC/SBAC online assessments, and provisions for training regional/district and school staff to administer the online assessments State plan includes timeline for any necessary integration/migration of online systems and for upgrading/enhancing infrastructure to support CCSS and PARCC/SBAC online assessments; plan addresses funding and other resource capacity necessary to execute transitions	State plans to facilitate analysis of district infrastructure, including physical accommodations, network capacity, devices and software licenses, and staff/personnel knowledge to support administration of PARCC/SBAC online assessments State plan includes efforts to upgrade/enhance infrastructure to support CCSS, including PARCC/SBAC online assessments, and provisions for training regional/district and school staff to administer the online assessments State plan includes timeline for any necessary integration/migration of online systems and for upgrading/enhancing infrastructure to support CCSS and PARCC/SBAC online assessments; plan addresses funding and other resource capacity necessary to execute transitions	**Delivery Chain**[x] ▪ How will you ensure that every school is ready to administer the new computer-based assessments and how will you help meet the needs of each school? ▪ Starting from the intent of state leaders to fill these gaps and ending with readiness on the front line, how–and through whom–will the transition support actually happen? **Striving for a Strong State Role** ▪ What evidence does the state have that it is paying close attention to *alignment, quality, accountability* and *scale* in its efforts around technology enhancements? ▪ Has the state conducted a high-quality crosswalk of its previous standards and the CCSS (i.e., an analysis examining the strength of the matches, differences in content and performance expectations as well as the way the progression of standards maps to specific grades)? Has the state factored this information into its technology enhancement plans? ▪ Does the state's technology migration plan include efforts to migrate more instructional activity to the same medium/platform? ▪ Is the state conducting a full review of district readiness to support the transition to online assessments and

			State plan includes development/support for technology-enabled tools that help building-level staff assess specific gaps in student mastery of CCSS (*e.g., data dashboards*) State plan is coordinated with or includes other plans for migration of critical activities and systems (*e.g., classroom instruction, IT, data*) to online platform to prepare for new interface	aligned instructional supports? Does this readiness review include attention to the staff capacity that will be required to support the transition?

State Funding Alignment

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY
State has no plans to reallocate/realign state funding streams to support implementation of CCSS	State has plan to reallocate/ realign state funding streams to support implementation of CCSS in *some* of the following areas: curricular resources and instructional materials; assessments; and teacher professional development	State has plan to reallocate/ realign state funding streams to support implementation of CCSS in *all* of the following areas: curricular resources and instructional materials; assessments; and teacher professional development	State has plan to reallocate/realign state funding streams to support implementation of CCSS in *all* of the following areas: curricular resources and instructional materials; assessments; and teacher professional development State plan includes provisions for sustaining support beyond the end of current grant funding, including aligning state and local dollars to support CCSS implementation

OUTREACH

Communicating and collaborating with stakeholders is a central part of a state's implementation and transition strategy. For further reading on how to develop comprehensive and effective communication and stakeholder engagement strategies, see Chapter 4 of the Achieve-Education Delivery Institute CCSS Implementation Workbook.

Communications

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
State does not pursue regular, sustained efforts to raise awareness and understanding of CCSS	State pursues regular, sustained efforts to raise awareness and understanding of CCSS	State pursues regular, sustained efforts to raise awareness and understanding of CCSS State CCSS communication effort is part of a broader communications strategy about education reform which articulates how initiatives, including CCSS, fit together State communications plan includes regular, sustained efforts to raise awareness and understanding of the way that CCSS will support student and educator success State communications plan identifies critical audiences *(e.g., parents, teachers, students,*	State pursues regular, sustained efforts to raise awareness and understanding of CCSS in partnership with third-party education advocacy organizations State CCSS communication effort is part of a broader communication strategy about education reform which articulates how initiatives, including CCSS, fit together State communications plan includes regular, sustained efforts to raise awareness and understanding of the way that CCSS will support student and educator success State communications plan identifies critical audiences *(e.g., parents, teachers, students, building*	**Striving for a Strong State Role** ▪ What evidence does the state have that it is paying close attention to *alignment, quality, accountability and* scale in its communications efforts? ▪ Has the state conducted a high-quality crosswalk of its previous standards and the CCSS (i.e., an analysis examining the strength of the matches, differences in content and performance expectations as well as the way the progression of standards maps to specific grades)? Has the state factored this information into its communications plans? ▪ Does the state have the necessary staff capacity to effectively develop and implement the communications and stakeholder engagement plans? If not, is there a plan in place and are the resources available to build that capacity? ▪ Does the state have an existing communications plan that can be enhanced to incorporate CCSS messaging? ▪ Does the state's communications strategy focus on the big milestones and roles and responsibilities of key partners (e.g., district superintendents/senior leaders, regional service provider staff, building administrators, classroom teachers, postsecondary institutions, professional associations, unions, external advocacy organizations) and stakeholders (e.g., students, parents, legislators, state board members) to

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
		building administrators, district and regional administrators, state legislators, state board members, advocacy organizations) and key messages about CCSS	*administrators, district and regional administrators, state legislators, state board members, advocacy organizations)* and key messages about CCSS State messages/materials/ social media/events have consistent CCSS messaging and are tailored to different audiences, with a focus on classroom teachers State plan includes communication strategies to ensure that educators know if and how their feedback is used State coordinates communication internally, by ensuring all relevant SEA departments and staff are provided common CCSS messaging and talking points	support successful implementation during the transition? ▪ Has the state developed key messages for target audiences and shared them widely with stakeholders all the way down to the school level? ▪ Is all SEA staff involved with implementation using common messaging and talking points?

Stakeholder Engagement

INADEQUATE	EMERGING	STRONG	EXEMPLARY	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
State plan does not include efforts to gain buy-in from stakeholders on need for CCSS, and to collaborate regularly with them on implementation	State plan includes efforts to gain buy-in from and to collaborate regularly with stakeholders, including higher education, unions, the private sector and professional organizations, and with a particular emphasis on engaging classroom teachers to work together on CCSS implementation	State plan includes sustained efforts to gain buy-in from and to collaborate regularly with stakeholders, including higher education, unions, the private sector and professional organizations, and with a particular emphasis on engaging classroom teachers to work together on CCSS implementation State plan includes strategy to engage policymakers and third-party advocacy organizations or champions external to the SEA to work together on CCSS implementation	State plan includes strategic, sustained efforts to gain buy-in from and to collaborate regularly with stakeholders, including higher education, unions, the private sector and professional organizations, and with a particular emphasis on engaging classroom teachers to work together on CCSS implementation, and state commits to adjust plans based on educator input and feedback State plan includes strategy to engage policymakers and third-party advocacy organizations or champions external to the SEA to work together on CCSS implementation State plan includes internal stakeholder engagement strategy that includes relevant departments across the SEA in preparing for and implementing CCSS and aligned assessments	**Striving for a Strong State Role** ▪ What evidence does the state have that it is paying close attention to *alignment, quality, accountability* and *scale* in its efforts to engage stakeholders? ▪ Has the state conducted a high-quality crosswalk of its previous standards and the CCSS (i.e., an analysis examining the strength of the matches, differences in content and performance expectations as well as the way the progression of standards maps to specific grades)? Has the state factored this information into its plans for stakeholder engagement? ▪ Does the state have the necessary staff capacity to effectively develop and implement the communications and stakeholder engagement plans? If not, is there a plan in place and are the resources available to build that capacity? ▪ Does the state regularly engage with a core group of external stakeholders? If so, is this the right group of stakeholders to build support for the implementation of the CCSS? If not, who else should be added to this group, and is there a plan in place to engage them? ▪ What strategies will the state use to generate feedback? Does the state currently have feedback loops in place? If so, are they effective? How do you know? When were they last reviewed and improved? ▪ How will the feedback be used? ▪ How will respondents know if their feedback has informed improvements to the state's implementation plan?

APPENDIX A: REFERENCES CONSULTED

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ENDNOTES

[i] See page 6.6 of the Achieve-U.S. Education Delivery Institute Common Core Implementation Workbook for a discussion of how to envision the state role in professional development when the state is not involved in direct provision of training.

[ii] There are several resources available to state leaders in defining high quality professional development. See, for example, an important compilation of research edited by Linda Darling-Hammond and Gary Sykes (*The heart of the matter: Teaching as the learning profession* [1999]. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco); research and tools from the National Staff Development Council (http://www.learningforward.org/standfor/definition.cfm); and recent research from Horizon Research on specific lessons around professional development for mathematics and science teachers (http://www.pdmathsci.net/findings/report/32).

[iii] Adapted from Chapter 6 of the Achieve-U.S. Education Delivery Institute Common Core Implementation Workbook

[iv] Adapted from Chapter 11 of the Achieve-U.S. Education Delivery Institute Common Core Implementation Workbook

[v] Adapted from Chapter 6 of the Achieve-U.S. Education Delivery Institute Common Core Implementation Workbook

[vi] Adapted from Chapter 11 of the Achieve-U.S. Education Delivery Institute Common Core Implementation Workbook

[vii] See Stephanie Hirsh of Learning Forward's recent *Education Week* article "Common-Core Work Must include Teacher Development" on this topic

[viii] Adapted from Chapter 11 of the Achieve-U.S. Education Delivery Institute Common Core Implementation Workbook

[ix] The National Center on Educational Options has some useful guidance for what state education agencies can do in this area, and we drew on their work to develop questions to consider in this section. See http://movingyournumbers.org/matters/agencies.cfm.

[x] Adapted from new technology chapter of Achieve-U.S. Education Delivery Institute Common Core Implementation Workbook