

Alliance Districts

Presentation to State Board of Education

May 17, 2012

What are Alliance Districts?

- Using a district performance index, Alliance Districts are defined as the 30 lowest-achieving school districts.

Ansonia	Bloomfield	Bridgeport
Bristol	Danbury	Derby
East Hartford	East Haven	East Windsor
Hamden	Hartford	Killingly
Manchester	Meriden	Middletown
Naugatuck	New Britain	New Haven
New London	Norwalk	Norwich
Putnam	Stamford	Vernon
Waterbury	West Haven	Winchester
Windham	Windsor	Windsor Locks

Alliance Districts and ECS Funding

- SB 458 allocates to Alliance Districts approximately \$39.5 million in increased Education Cost Sharing (ECS) funding.
- This funding, unlike the rest of the ECS grant, will go directly to the school districts and not to municipalities.
- Each district's receipt of its designated allocation is conditioned upon its submission, and the Commissioner's approval, of an application that includes a plan for the expenditure of this new increment of conditional funds.
- The State Board of Education may adopt guidelines and criteria for the process.

Education Reform Plans: Initial Guidance to Districts

- Pursuant to our proposed ESEA waiver, each education reform plan must include strategies for differentiated, tiered support and interventions for districts' schools, with the most intensive interventions in the lowest performing schools.
- Within the submitted education reform plan, the substantial majority of conditional funding must be reserved for new reform efforts, or the extension of existing reform efforts, that are specifically designed to improve student achievement.

Education Reform Activities Included in Statute

- Ways to strengthen reading programs for students in the primary grades;
- Additional learning time, including extended school day or year programs;
- A talent strategy that includes teacher and school leader recruitment, retention and promotion;
- Training for school leaders and other staff on new teacher evaluation models;
- Aligning early childhood education programs with kindergarten;
- Wrap around services such as those in the community school models; and
- Any additional categories or goals as determined by the Commissioner, including long-term school redesign.

Additional Guidance

- Districts should think creatively to combine conditional funding with other resources, to leverage the attraction of additional resources, or to find innovative ways to use the conditional funds efficiently to design a comprehensive school reform agenda.
- SDE expects that this process will be cooperative and iterative.

Timeline (Anticipated)

- June 6, 2012 State Board of Education approves guidelines and criteria for the administration of the funding.
- Week of June 11, 2012 SDE hosts an information forum where the application will be distributed and discussed.
- Before August 15, 2012 Applications can be submitted for approval to SDE.
- As part of the SDE plan approval process, the Commissioner of Education may appoint a committee to review each of the thirty Alliance District plans.