



Date: October 9, 2017
To: Patrick Rooney, Deborah Spitz, and Donald Peasley (OESE/ED)
From: Lillian Pace (KnowledgeWorks), Maria Worthen (iNACOL), Scott Marion and Susan Lyons (Center for Assessment), and Gene Wilhoit and Paul Leather (Center for Innovation in Education)
RE: Application and Selection Criteria for the Innovative Accountability and Assessment Demonstration Authority (ESSA Section 1204)

Purpose of the Memo

Maria Worthen of iNACOL and Lillian Pace of KnowledgeWorks recently met with your team to discuss the application and peer review processes for the Innovative Accountability and Assessment Demonstration Authority in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). We agreed to follow up with additional input on the following questions:

1. How should ED address the application requirements from Section 1204 to ensure quality proposals from interested states?
2. What considerations should ED keep in mind as it seeks to identify high quality applications that align to the selection criteria for the Demonstration Authority? Should ED choose to apply weights to these criteria, and if so, how should ED go about doing so?
3. Do you have any recommendations for how ED should provide technical assistance to states interested in this opportunity? Could outside groups assist ED with state capacity building?
4. Can you recommend experts in the field of personalized, competency-based education working in innovative assessment that could serve as peer reviewers for the Demonstration Authority?

In an effort to respond to these questions in a clear and substantive way, we collaborated with our partners, Scott Marion and Susan Lyons from the Center for Assessment and Gene Wilhoit and Paul Leather from the Center for Innovation and Education. Their extensive expertise in assessment design was instrumental to the development of this memo. The enclosed information addresses the

first two questions regarding the application requirements and the selection criteria for the Demonstration Authority. We will collectively respond with strategies for building state capacity and recommending peer reviewers in a separate communication(s).

Structure of the Memo

This memo is structured in two tables that comprehensively address the application requirements and selection criteria included in statute and federal regulations. The two tables include the following information:

- **Table One: Application Requirements.** This table provides guidance for ED on specific application criteria outlined in the federal regulations for Section 1204 intended to ensure states implement high-quality innovative assessment systems. Specifically, this guidance provides examples of the type of evidence states should provide to demonstrate a high-quality plan for implementation of a new assessment system.
- **Table Two: Selection Criteria.** This table provides guidance for ED on the selection criteria outlined in the federal regulations for Section 1204. Specifically, this guidance provides insight on the relative importance of each criterion to the overall determination of a high-quality plan for implementation of an innovative assessment system as well as a description of high-quality evidence for each criterion.

We hope this guidance is helpful in drafting the application for the Demonstration Authority. We appreciate your leadership and expertise in the implementation of this program. Our collective groups stand ready to assist with any further questions or issues.

Considerations for Innovative Assessment Pilot Application Requirements, Selection Criteria, and Peer Review

Application Requirements

The following table provides guidance for ED on specific application criteria for Section 1204 intended to ensure states implement high quality innovative assessment systems. Specifically, this guidance provides examples of the type of evidence states should provide to demonstrate a high-quality plan for implementation of a new assessment system.

| Issue | Application Requirements (from Federal Regulations) | High-Quality Evidence |
|---------------------|---|--|
| <i>Consultation</i> | <p>a) Consultation. Evidence that the SEA or consortium has developed an innovative assessment system in collaboration with—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Experts in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of innovative assessment systems, which may include external partners; and (2) Affected stakeholders in the State, or in each State in the consortium, including— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Those representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, and other subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act; (ii) Teachers, principals, and other school leaders; (iii) LEAs; (iv) Representatives of Indian tribes located in the State; (v) Students and parents, including parents of children described in paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section; and (vi) Civil rights organizations. | <p>In addition to the stakeholder engagement that has already occurred in the development of the innovative assessment system, the state should specify how its relationships with these key partners will continue throughout the pilot in order to ensure continued buy-in, fidelity of implementation, and improvement.</p> |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| <p><i>Technical quality</i></p> | <p>(b) Innovative assessment system. A demonstration that the innovative assessment system does or will—</p> <p>(1) Meet the requirements of section 1111(b)(2)(B) of the Act, except that an innovative assessment—</p> <p>(i) Need not be the same assessment administered to all public elementary and secondary school students in the State during the demonstration authority period described in § 200.104(b)(2) or extension period described in § 200.108 and prior to statewide use consistent with § 200.107, if the innovative assessment system will be administered initially to all students in participating schools within a participating LEA, provided that the statewide academic assessments under § 200.2(a)(1) and section 1111(b)(2) of the Act are administered to all students in any non-participating LEA or any non-participating school within a participating LEA; and</p> <p>(ii) Need not be administered annually in each of grades 3–8 and at least once in grades 9–12 in the case of reading/language arts and mathematics assessments, and at least once in grades 3–5, 6–9, and 10–12 in the case of science assessments, so long as the statewide academic assessments under § 200.2(a)(1) and section 1111(b)(2) of the Act are administered in any required grade and subject under § 200.5(a)(1) in which the SEA does not choose to implement an innovative assessment;</p> | <p>States and participating districts should have a comprehensive strategy for collecting and evaluating validity evidence to support the system of assessments that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assessment design processes using research-based and best practice approaches. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If educators are responsible for developing and/or administering the assessments, states should include plans for training and building the assessment skills of local educators. ○ If educators are to be scoring the assessments, plans for monitoring the within-district interrater reliability evidence and the cross-district calibration and consistency. ● Approaches for promoting the fairness and accessibility of assessments for all students. ● Monitoring assessment quality including qualitative review of items/assessments and psychometric analyses when applicable. ● Planned validity studies supporting the interpretation and use of test scores for their intended purposes. |
|---------------------------------|---|--|

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| <p><i>Alignment to Standards</i></p> | <p>(2)(i) Align with the challenging State academic content standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act, including the depth and breadth of such standards, for the grade in which a student is enrolled; and</p> <p>(ii) May measure a student's academic proficiency and growth using items above or below the student's grade level so long as, for purposes of meeting the requirements for reporting and school accountability under sections 1111(c) and 1111(h) of the Act and paragraphs (b)(3) and (b)(7)–(9) of this section, the State measures each student's academic proficiency based on the challenging State academic standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled;</p> | <p>The system of assessments as a whole must be aligned to the academic content standards. This does not mean that each assessment within the system must individually be aligned to the full depth and breadth of the standards, but that all of the assessment information used to inform the annual determination, must, as a whole, adequately address the content standards. If all standards are not assessed by the system of assessments as a whole, the sampling plan of the content standards must be clearly communicated along with an accompanying rationale as to why the set of sampled standards is appropriate for making valid annual determinations about students' grade-level proficiency.</p> <p>Importantly, the innovative assessment system need not be aligned to the same sample of content standards as the statewide assessment, but may have a different methodology and rationale for sampling the content.</p> <p>Traditional alignment methodologies may not be appropriate for innovative assessment systems and ED must be flexible in considering the type of evidence that can be used to support claims of alignment. For example, evidence can come from both qualitative studies such as the collection and review of samples of local assessments and curriculum maps linking the assessments given to their aligned standards, and from quantitative studies such as correlations with other assessments.</p> |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p><i>Differentiate Student Performance</i></p> | <p>(3) Express student results or competencies consistent with the challenging State academic achievement standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act and identify which students are not making sufficient progress toward, and attaining, grade-level proficiency on such standards;</p> | <p>States must have a clear plan for providing each student with an annual determination regarding their level of achievement on the state content standards. Detailed plans should include how the assessment system will provide information to allow educators to intervene to ensure that students make sufficient progress toward rigorous graduation standards.</p> |
| <p><i>Comparability of Assessment Results</i></p> | <p>(4)(i) Generate results, including annual summative determinations as defined in paragraph (b)(7) of this section, that are valid, reliable, and comparable for all students and for each subgroup of students described in § 200.2(b)(11)(i)(A)–(I) and sections 1111(b)(2)(B)(xi) and 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Act, to the results generated by the State academic assessments described in § 200.2(a)(1) and section 1111(b)(2) of the Act for such students. Consistent with the SEA’s or consortium’s evaluation plan under § 200.106(e), the SEA must plan to annually determine comparability during each year of its demonstration authority period in one of the following ways:</p> <p>(A) Administering full assessments from both the innovative and statewide assessment systems to all students enrolled in participating schools, such that at least once in any grade span (<i>i.e.</i>, 3–5, 6–8, or 9–12) and subject for which there is an innovative assessment, a statewide assessment in the same subject would also be administered to all such students. As part of this determination, the innovative assessment and statewide assessment need not be administered to an individual student in the same school year.</p> <p>(B) Administering full assessments from both the innovative and statewide assessment systems to a demographically representative sample of all students and subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act, from among those students enrolled in participating schools, such that at least once in any grade span (<i>i.e.</i>, 3–5, 6–8, or 9–12) and subject for which there is an innovative assessment, a statewide assessment in the same subject would also be administered in the same school year to all students included in the sample.</p> | <p>Evidence and documentation of comparability could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A coherent plan for establishing comparability throughout the innovative system of assessments so that annual determinations are comparable across pilot districts (e.g., within- and across-district calibration sessions, professional development related to scoring, establishing common interpretations of content standards). • A defensible plan for setting standards (cut scores) to produce annual determinations (e.g., proficiency determinations) that are comparable to the statewide assessment. This would likely include a plan for developing achievement level descriptors aligned with the statewide assessment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the innovative assessment system has fewer levels of performance than the statewide assessment system, the evidence of comparability should rest at the “proficiency” level. • A plan to evaluate claims of comparability both within the innovative pilot and across the assessment systems—the innovative pilot and the statewide assessment—using one or more auditing techniques (e.g., social moderation, inter-rater reliability analyses, checks on scoring accuracy, classification consistencies |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| | <p>(C) Including, as a significant portion of the innovative assessment system in each required grade and subject in which both an innovative and statewide assessment are administered, items or performance tasks from the statewide assessment system that, at a minimum, have been previously pilot tested or field tested for use in the statewide assessment system.</p> <p>(D) Including, as a significant portion of the statewide assessment system in each required grade and subject in which both an innovative and statewide assessment are administered, items or performance tasks from the innovative assessment system that, at a minimum, have been previously pilot tested or field tested for use in the innovative assessment system.</p> <p>(E) An alternative method for demonstrating comparability that an SEA can demonstrate will provide for an equally rigorous and statistically valid comparison between student performance on the innovative assessment and the statewide assessment, including for each subgroup of students described in § 200.2(b)(11)(i)(A)–(I) and sections 1111(b)(2)(B)(xi) and 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Act; and</p> <p>(ii) Generate results, including annual summative determinations as defined in paragraph (b)(7) of this section, that are valid, reliable, and comparable, for all students and for each subgroup of students described in § 200.2(b)(11)(i)(A)–(I) and sections 1111(b)(2)(B)(xi) and 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the Act, among participating schools and LEAs in the innovative assessment demonstration authority. Consistent with the SEA’s or consortium’s evaluation plan under § 200.106(e), the SEA must plan to annually determine comparability during each year of its demonstration authority period;</p> | <p>across assessment systems for all students and by subgroup).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For more information on comparability, see the Center for Assessment’s comments on the Section 1204 regulations (http://www.nciea.org/sites/default/files/pubs-tmp/Center%20for%20Assessment_Compability%20Recommendations%20for%20Section%201204_090716.pdf) for a table of possible alternate methodologies of evaluating comparability should states choose option (E). |
| <p><i>Student Participation</i></p> | <p>5)(i) Provide for the participation of all students, including children with disabilities and English learners;</p> <p>(ii) Be accessible to all students by incorporating the principles of universal design for learning, to the extent practicable, consistent with § 200.2(b)(2)(ii); and</p> <p>(iii) Provide appropriate accommodations consistent with § 200.6(b) and (f)(1)(i) and section 1111(b)(2)(B)(vii) of the Act;</p> | <p>The state should include information regarding how the innovative assessment system is designed to be accessible to all learners—except for those students working towards the alternate academic achievement standards. This should include the state’s plan for ensuring all students with IEPs are provided with appropriate assessment accommodations. Additionally, states should have a plan for evaluating the degree to which their</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | | assessments are free from bias and fair for all students (e.g., studies of differential item functioning, bias/sensitivity reviews). |
| <i>Accountability: Academic Achievement Indicator</i> | (6) For purposes of the State accountability system consistent with section 1111(c)(4)(E) of the Act, annually measure in each participating school progress on the Academic Achievement indicator under section 1111(c)(4)(B) of the Act of at least 95 percent of all students, and 95 percent of students in each subgroup of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act, who are required to take such assessments consistent with paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section; | <p>The level of reporting on the innovative assessment pilot should be consistent with the information required to support the state accountability system. If the state's accountability system relies on scale scores for the academic achievement indicator, the level of reporting and evidence of comparability for the innovative assessment system should be at the scale score level. However, most states rely on achievement levels for accountability determinations (e.g., percent proficient) so that should be the target for comparability.</p> <p>If academic growth is included in the state accountability system, the state should also articulate a plan for how it will produce growth scores/results from the innovative assessment system that can be used alongside the growth information produced from the statewide assessment to ensure fairness and comparability within the accountability system.</p> |
| <i>Annual, Summative Determination of Student Achievement</i> | (7) Generate an annual summative determination of achievement, using the annual data from the innovative assessment, for each student in a participating school in the demonstration authority that describes— (i) The student's mastery of the challenging State academic standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act for the grade in which the student is enrolled; or (ii) In the case of a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities assessed with an alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards under section 1111(b)(1)(E) of the Act, the student's mastery of those standards; | States must have a clear plan for providing each student with an annual determination regarding their level of achievement on the state content standards. Detailed plans should include how the state is planning to set performance standards and how those performance standards will be validated. |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p><i>Comparable Measure of Student Performance for Long-Term Goals and Accountability Determinations</i></p> | <p>(9) Provide an unbiased, rational, and consistent determination of progress toward the State’s long-term goals for academic achievement under section 1111(c)(4)(A) of the Act for all students and each subgroup of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act and a comparable measure of student performance on the Academic Achievement indicator under section 1111(c)(4)(B) of the Act for participating schools relative to non-participating schools so that the SEA may validly and reliably aggregate data from the system for purposes of meeting requirements for—</p> <p>(i) Accountability under sections 1003 and 1111(c) and (d) of the Act, including how the SEA will identify participating and non-participating schools in a consistent manner for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement under section 1111(c)(4)(D) of the Act; and</p> <p>(ii) Reporting on State and LEA report cards under section 1111(h) of the Act.</p> | <p>Assuming the state is able to meet the requirements for the academic achievement indicator, then it should be able to meet the requirements for setting goals on that indicator.</p> |
| <p><i>Addresses all Selection Criteria</i></p> | <p>(c) <i>Selection criteria</i> Information that addresses each of the selection criteria under § 200.106.</p> | <p>See selection criteria section below.</p> |
| <p><i>Alternate Assessments</i></p> | <p>(2) Ensure that all students and each subgroup of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act in participating schools are held to the same challenging State academic standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act as all other students, except that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may be assessed with alternate assessments aligned with alternate academic achievement standards consistent with § 200.6 and section 1111(b)(1)(E) and (b)(2)(D) of the Act, and receive the instructional support needed to meet such standards;</p> | <p>The state should provide assurance that the students with the most significant cognitive disabilities will continue to receive the alternate assessment unless the innovative pilot is able to be used for this type of assessment.</p> |
| <p><i>Commitment to Inform Parents in Participating Districts</i></p> | <p>(4) Ensure that each participating LEA informs parents of all students in participating schools about the innovative assessment, including the grades and subjects in which the innovative assessment will be administered, and, consistent with section 1112(e)(2)(B) of the Act, at the beginning of each school</p> | <p>The state should provide a description of how it will engage parents and students in the creation and implementation of the innovative assessment system. Evidence of deep engagement could include:</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | <p>year during which an innovative assessment will be implemented. Such information must be—</p> <p>(i) In an understandable and uniform format;</p> <p>(ii) To the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, be orally translated for such parent; and</p> <p>(iii) Upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent; and</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The state’s theory of action should include engagement of parents and students in understanding the new assessment system.● A communication plan will include considerations for engaging parents and the community through outreach opportunities, such as community forums, parent advisory groups, involvement in the creation of grading or score reports so that information provided to parents is timely and easy to understand, and opportunities for parents and community members to witness student exhibitions that mirror tasks from the innovative assessments.● A plan for ensuring that student educational experiences are aligned to assessment expectations. State and district leaders will need to work together to develop plans and opportunities for students to participate in these activities prior to engaging in the innovative assessment system.● An explanation of how the state will support districts in the evaluation of parent and student understanding and satisfaction of the innovative assessment system as well as how the state will use that feedback to continuously improve implementation of the innovative assessment system. |
|--|---|---|

Selection Criteria

The following table provides guidance for ED on the selection criteria outlined in the federal regulations for Section 1204. Specifically, this guidance provides insight on the relative importance of each criterion to the overall determination of a high-quality plan for implementation of an innovative assessment system. [Note: the percentages are not meant to be an exact recommendation, but serve as our recommended prioritization]

| Selection Criteria (from Federal Regulations) | Importance | High Quality Evidence |
|--|----------------------------------|---|
| <p>a) <i>Project narrative.</i> The quality of the SEA’s or consortium’s plan for implementing the innovative assessment demonstration authority. In determining the quality of the plan, the Secretary considers—</p> <p>(1) The rationale for developing or selecting the particular innovative assessment system to be implemented under the demonstration authority, including—</p> <p>(i) The distinct purpose of each assessment that is part of the innovative assessment system and how the system will advance the design and delivery of large-scale, statewide academic assessments in innovative ways; and</p> <p>(ii) The extent to which the innovative assessment system as a whole will promote high-quality instruction, mastery of challenging State academic standards, and improved student outcomes, including for each subgroup of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act;</p> <p>(2) The plan the SEA or consortium, in consultation with any external partners, if applicable, has to—</p> <p>(i) Develop and use standardized and calibrated tools, rubrics, methods, or other strategies for scoring innovative assessments throughout the demonstration authority period, consistent with relevant nationally recognized professional and technical standards, to ensure inter-rater reliability and comparability of innovative assessment results consistent with § 200.105(b)(4)(ii), which may include evidence of inter-rater reliability; and</p> | <p>High importance (25%)</p> | <p>(1) Investing time and resources into developing and implementing an innovative system of assessments is a critical component for the peer reviewers to consider in selecting SEAs for the Demonstration Authority. States should have a clear vision for what they hope to accomplish through the innovative system of assessments and a theory of action outlined for achieving that goal. The work of designing and successfully implementing an innovative system of assessments is only possible with a well-articulated statement of purpose and a clear plan for designing state and local processes to support the intended outcomes.</p> <p>(2) The supports and analyses in place to ensure high quality scoring is only one part of technical quality of the resulting annual determinations. Reviewers should be encouraged to consider the full suite of validity evidence offered under the “Technical Quality” requirement of the application.</p> <p>(3) States will have to develop a strategy for moving beyond the initial set of pilot districts. States should approach scalability very deliberately and provide a clear plan for ensuring that all districts are able to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for implementing the instructional and assessment system envisioned in the pilot. Scalability of any major reform effort is challenging and susceptible to failure. States’ plans for scaling the pilot should be well-informed by the research literature on school and organizational change.</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>(ii) Train evaluators to use such strategies, if applicable; and</p> <p>(3) If the system will initially be administered in a subset of schools or LEAs in a State—</p> <p>(i) The strategies the SEA, including each SEA in a consortium, will use to scale the innovative assessment to all schools statewide, with a rationale for selecting those strategies;</p> <p>(ii) The strength of the SEA’s or consortium’s criteria that will be used to determine LEAs and schools that will initially participate and when to approve additional LEAs and schools, if applicable, to participate during the requested demonstration authority period; and</p> <p>(iii) The SEA’s plan, including each SEA in a consortium, for how it will ensure that, during the demonstration authority period, the inclusion of additional LEAs and schools continues to reflect high-quality and consistent implementation across demographically diverse LEAs and schools, or contributes to progress toward achieving such implementation across demographically diverse LEAs and schools, including diversity based on enrollment of subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the Act and student achievement. The plan must also include annual benchmarks toward achieving high-quality and consistent implementation across participating schools that are, as a group, demographically similar to the State as a whole during the demonstration authority period, using the demographics of initially participating schools as a baseline.</p> | | <p>The statewide sustainability plan must include a mechanism for assessing district readiness to join the innovative assessment and accountability system and approving district entry into that system. A high quality and thoughtful state sustainability plan will build in the allowance for re-evaluation and course correction at key junctures throughout the timeframe. Giving states the freedom to reconsider their plans for scaling the system after they have had the benefit of experience with pilot districts will be crucial for the success of the innovation.</p> |
|--|--|---|

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| <p>(b) Prior experience, capacity, and stakeholder support.</p> <p>(1) The extent and depth of prior experience that the SEA, including each SEA in a consortium, and its LEAs have in developing and implementing the components of the innovative assessment system. An SEA may also describe the prior experience of any external partners that will be participating in or supporting its demonstration authority in implementing those components. In evaluating the extent and depth of prior experience, the Secretary considers—</p> <p>(i) The success and track record of efforts to implement innovative assessments or innovative assessment items aligned to the challenging State academic standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act in LEAs planning to participate; and</p> <p>(ii) The SEA’s or LEA’s development or use of—</p> <p>(A) Effective supports and appropriate accommodations consistent with § 200.6(b) and (f)(1)(i) and section 1111(b)(2)(B)(vii) of the Act for administering innovative assessments to all students, including English learners and children with disabilities, which must include professional development for school staff on providing such accommodations;</p> <p>(B) Effective and high-quality supports for school staff to implement innovative assessments and innovative assessment items, including professional development; and</p> <p>(C) Standardized and calibrated tools, rubrics, methods, or other strategies for scoring innovative assessments, with documented evidence of the validity, reliability, and comparability of annual summative determinations of achievement, consistent with § 200.105(b)(4) and (7).</p> <p>(2) The extent and depth of SEA, including each SEA in a consortium, and LEA capacity to implement the innovative assessment system considering the availability of technological infrastructure; State and local laws; dedicated and sufficient staff, expertise, and resources; and other relevant factors. An SEA or consortium may also describe how it plans to enhance its capacity by collaborating with external partners that will be participating in or supporting</p> | <p>Moderate Importance (15%)</p> | <p>Even though turnover is high in SEAs, prior experience of the key personnel in successfully implementing reforms may be an indicator of potential success in 1204. A strong, committed leader that has the ability to attract and retain capacity within the SEA, connect with the right partners, and build stakeholder support should also be considered. Finally, ED must consider that if the reform is truly “innovative,” there is likely little direct experience at the scale intended.</p> |
|---|----------------------------------|--|

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| <p>its demonstration authority. In evaluating the extent and depth of capacity, the Secretary considers—</p> <p>(i) The SEA’s analysis of how capacity influenced the success of prior efforts to develop and implement innovative assessments or innovative assessment items; and</p> <p>(ii) The strategies the SEA is using, or will use, to mitigate risks, including those identified in its analysis, and support successful implementation of the innovative assessment.</p> <p>(3) The extent and depth of State and local support for the application for demonstration authority in each SEA, including each SEA in a consortium, as demonstrated by signatures from the following:</p> <p>(i) Superintendents (or equivalent) of LEAs, including participating LEAs in the first year of the demonstration authority period.</p> <p>(ii) Presidents of local school boards (or equivalent, where applicable), including within participating LEAs in the first year of the demonstration authority.</p> <p>(iii) Local teacher organizations (including labor organizations, where applicable), including within participating LEAs in the first year of the demonstration authority.</p> <p>(iv) Other affected stakeholders, such as parent organizations, civil rights organizations, and business organizations.</p> | | |
| <p>(c) <i>Timeline and budget.</i> The quality of the SEA’s or consortium’s timeline and budget for implementing the innovative assessment demonstration authority. In</p> | <p>Moderate importance (15%)</p> | <p>The state will need to provide evidence of a feasible timeline for building and scaling an innovative assessment system within the statutory requirements. This evidence should include a description of:</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>determining the quality of the timeline and budget, the Secretary considers—</p> <p>(1) The extent to which the timeline reasonably demonstrates that each SEA will implement the system statewide by the end of the requested demonstration authority period, including a description of—</p> <p>(i) The activities to occur in each year of the requested demonstration authority period;</p> <p>(ii) The parties responsible for each activity; and</p> <p>(iii) If applicable, how a consortium’s member SEAs will implement activities at different paces and how the consortium will implement interdependent activities, so long as each non-affiliate member SEA begins using the innovative assessment in the same school year consistent with § 200.104(b)(2); and</p> <p>(2) The adequacy of the project budget for the duration of the requested demonstration authority period, including Federal, State, local, and non- public sources of funds to support and sustain, as applicable, the activities in the timeline under paragraph (c)(1) of this section, including—</p> <p>(i) How the budget will be sufficient to meet the expected costs at each phase of the SEA’s planned expansion of its innovative assessment system; and</p> <p>(ii) The degree to which funding in the project budget is contingent upon future appropriations at the State or local level or additional commitments from non-public sources of funds.</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An advisory committee or other entity with the authority to develop the timeline and monitor progress throughout. ● The key phases of work, the critical activities that will occur in each phase, and the responsible party. Examples of phases of work may include: Pre-planning, Planning and System Design, Engagement and Public Will Building, Capacity Building, Implementation, and Evaluation. ● The standards that districts must meet for participation in the innovative assessment pilot as well as the quality signals that indicate readiness for transition to the next phase of the work. <p>The state will also need to provide a detailed budget and narrative that identifies the federal, state, local, and non-public sources of funding to support each of the activities outlined in the timeline. The state should provide compelling evidence that it will have sufficient funding to implement the innovative assessment system at scale. The budget should include evidence of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A description of the major budget categories for design and implementation of an innovative assessment system along with the expected funding sources for each expense. ● An explanation of how the state will reallocate federal and state resources to support the Demonstration Authority. ● A description of how local stakeholders were engaged in the development of the budget to ensure buy-in and alignment to the state’s vision for the innovative assessment system. ● Cost savings strategies such as streamlining existing programs, leveraging the capacity of external partners, and centralizing core operational tasks. ● A description of national, state, and local partners the state will leverage to increase financial |
|---|--|--|

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| | | support and in-kind contributions to support the Demonstration Authority. |
| <p>(d) Supports for educators, students, and parents. The quality of the SEA or consortium’s plan to provide supports that can be delivered consistently at scale to educators, students, and parents to enable successful implementation of the innovative assessment system and improve instruction and student outcomes. In determining the quality of supports, the Secretary considers—</p> <p>(1) The extent to which the SEA or consortium has developed, provided, and will continue to provide training to LEA and school staff, including teachers, principals, and other school leaders, that will familiarize them with the innovative assessment system and develop teacher capacity to implement instruction that is informed by the innovative assessment system and its results;</p> <p>(2) The strategies the SEA or consortium has developed and will use to familiarize students and parents with the innovative assessment system;</p> <p>(3) The strategies the SEA will use to ensure that all students and each subgroup of students under section 1111(c)(2) of the Act in participating schools receive the support, including appropriate accommodations consistent with § 200.6(b) and (f)(1)(i) and section 1111(b)(2)(B)(vii) of the Act, needed to meet the challenging State academic standards under section 1111(b)(1) of the Act; and</p> <p>(4) If the system includes assessment items that are locally developed or locally scored, the strategies and safeguards (e.g., test blueprints, item and task specifications, rubrics, scoring tools, documentation of quality control procedures, inter-rater reliability checks, audit plans) the SEA or consortium has developed, or plans to develop, to validly and reliably score such items, including how the strategies engage and support teachers and other staff in designing, developing, implementing, and validly and reliably scoring high-quality assessments; how the safeguards are sufficient</p> | <p>Highest Importance (30%)</p> | <p>Successful implementation of a truly innovative system of assessments will require a strong investment in capacity building at the local level to ensure the assessment system is being implemented with fidelity and to increase the likelihood that the innovative system will achieve its intended outcomes.</p> <p>Part (1) of this selection criterion is going to be crucial and reviewers should pay most attention to how states are supporting educators and leaders in implementing the kinds of changes that are necessary at the school level to support the innovation in the assessment system. The SEA should provide evidence that its approach to supporting increases in educator knowledge and skills is based on the most up-to-date research on adult learning and organizational change and not on outmoded and ineffective approaches to professional learning.</p> |

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|
| <p>to ensure unbiased, objective scoring of assessment items; and how the SEA will use effective professional development to aid in these efforts.</p> | | |
| <p>(e) Evaluation and continuous improvement. The quality of the SEA’s or consortium’s plan to annually evaluate its implementation of innovative assessment demonstration authority. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers—</p> <p>(1) The strength of the proposed evaluation of the innovative assessment system included in the application, including whether the evaluation will be conducted by an independent, experienced third party, and the likelihood that the evaluation will sufficiently determine the system’s validity, reliability, and comparability to the statewide assessment system consistent with the requirements of § 200.105(b)(4) and (9); and</p> <p>(2) The SEA’s or consortium’s plan for continuous improvement of the innovative assessment system, including its process for—</p> <p>(i) Using data, feedback, evaluation results, and other information from participating LEAs and schools to make changes to improve the quality of the innovative assessment; and</p> <p>(ii) Evaluating and monitoring implementation of the innovative assessment system in participating LEAs and schools annually.</p> | <p>Moderate Importance (15%)</p> | <p>High quality applications for 1204 will have a plan for contracting with a third-party to conduct an independent evaluation of the innovative assessment system. To inform continuous improvement. The evaluation should be formative in nature.</p> <p>Beyond the external evaluation, the SEA should have an internal system for regularly reflecting on the project’s activities and implementing continuous improvement activities.</p> <p>Additionally, states should be responsible for assembling a Technical Advisory Committee at least once annually to review the psychometric processes and results.</p> |