# Frequently Used Terms:  U.S. Department of Education

**Achievement gap:** The difference in the performance between each ESEA subgroup (as defined in this document) within a participating LEA or school and the statewide average performance of the LEA's or State's highest achieving subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics as measured by the assessments required under the ESEA.

**Core educational assurance areas:**

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy;
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;
- Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and
- Turning around our lowest-achieving schools.

**Educators:** All education professionals and paraprofessionals working in participating schools (as defined in this document), including principals or other heads of a school, teachers, other professional instructional staff (e.g. staff involved in curriculum development, staff development, or operating library, media and computer centers), pupil support services staff (e.g. guidance counselors, nurses, speech pathologists, etc.), other administrators (e.g. assistant principals, discipline specialists.), and paraprofessionals (e.g. assistant teachers, instructional aides).

**Local educational agency (LEA):** As defined in ESEA, a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.

**School leadership team:** A team that is composed of the principal or other head of a school, teachers and other educators, and, as applicable, other school employees, parents, students, and other community members, and leads the implementation of improvement and other initiatives at the school. In cases where statute or local policy, including collective bargaining agreements, call for such a body, that body shall serve the school leadership team for the purpose of this program.

**Student survey:** Measures students' perspectives on teaching, learning, and related supports in their classrooms and schools. The surveys must be research-based, valid, and reliable. Over time these results should be predictive of rates of student growth.

**Student Growth:** The change in student achievement for an individual student between two or more points in time, defined as—

1.  For grades and subjects in which assessments are required under ESEA section 1111(b)(3): (1) a student's score on such assessments and (2) other measures of student learning, such as those described in the second bullet, provided they are rigorous and comparable across schools within an LEA.
2.  For grades and subjects in which assessments are not required under ESEA section 1111(b)(3): alternative measures of student learning and performance, such as student results on pre-tests, end-of-course tests, and objective performance-based assessments; performance against student learning objectives; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across schools within an LEA.

**Subgroup:** Each category of students identified under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II).

**Teacher evaluation system:** System that: (1) will be used for continual improvement of instruction; (2) meaningfully differentiates performance using at least three performance levels; (3) uses multiple valid measures in determining performance levels, including as a significant factor data on student growth (as defined in this document) for all students (including English learners and students with disabilities), and other measures of professional practice (which may be gathered through multiple formats and sources, such as observations based on rigorous teacher performance standards, teacher portfolios, and student and parent surveys); (4) evaluates teachers on a regular basis; (5) provide clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development; and (6) will be used to inform personnel decisions.