The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): PA’s Progress in Planning & Implementation

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**What is ESSA?**

- **ESEA goal throughout:** to promote equal educational opportunity for traditionally underserved children

- **Substantial federal funding** to states and schools to promote equal opportunities

- States are required to submit plans
No Child Left Behind vs. ESSA

What *hasn’t* changed from NCLB

- “Challenging” Academic Standards
- Annual statewide assessments
- States to measure school success
- Publicly report school performance data
  - Student data disaggregated by subgroup
    - Race/ethnicity
    - Low-income
    - English learners
    - Students with disabilities
- States must identify lowest performing schools and LEAs/schools develop improvement plans with state guidance
No Child Left Behind vs. ESSA

What *has* changed from NCLB

- Greater flexibility for states:
  - May identify their own measures of school success
  - May choose their own strategies to identify and provide support to lowest performing schools

- Greater flexibility for LEAs and schools:
  - Title I – Support for schools serving low-income students
  - Title II – Improve teachers and leaders
  - Title IV – Provide “well-rounded education”
Assessments

What ESSA Requires

• Continue the NCLB requirement of annual statewide testing: grades 3 through 8 and once in high school

• Alignment to state standards which must prepare students for postsecondary success

• LEAs required to ensure 95 percent participation rate in annual tests

• Every student must take the test (i.e., no sampling)
Assessments

Current Status in Pennsylvania

- PSSAs and Keystone Exams fully aligned to rigorous PA Core Academic Standards
- PASA assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities
- WIDA assessment to measure attainment of proficiency in English for English learners (ELs)
Assessments

What PDE is Considering

- Reducing the amount of time students spend on statewide PSSA testing (grades 3-8)
- Eliminating double testing for middle school Algebra I students
Accountability - Measures

What ESSA Requires

• Measure and publicly report school performance
  o Mandatory federal indicators
  o State flexibility to identify additional indicator(s)
  o Results disaggregated by subgroup

• States must identify lowest performing schools:
  o Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) Schools: Bottom five percent of Title I schools and high schools with grad rate below 67 percent
  o Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) Schools: Schools with low performing subgroups
Accountability - Measures

Current Status in Pennsylvania

- School Performance Profile (SPP) – public-facing school report card and Act 82 Building Score
- Identification of Focus and Priority Schools under NCLB Waiver:
  - **Focus:** Lowest 10 percent of Title I schools based on highest achievement gap for Historically Underperforming Subgroup OR grad rate below 60 percent
  - **Priority:** Lowest five percent of Title I schools based on aggregate math and ELA proficiency OR recipient of SIG grant
Accountability - Measures

What PDE is Considering

PDE has proposed the *Future Ready PA Index* as public-facing school report card:

- **State Assessment Measures**
  - Percent proficient/advanced
  - Meeting growth expectations
  - Moving students from Below Basic to Basic

- **On-Track Measures**
  - Gr 3 Reading/Gr 7 Math
  - Indicators of Success
  - English Language Proficiency
  - Attendance Rate/Chronic Absenteeism
  - Closing Achievement Gap(s)

- **College and Career Measures**
  - Career Standards Benchmark
  - Industry Credentials
  - Access to Advanced Coursework
  - Postsecondary Transition
Accountability - Measures

What ESSA Requires for School Accountability

- Replace NCLB Waiver indicators with ESSA indicators
- Indicators required by ESSA to identify CSI and TSI:
  - Proficiency on assessments
  - Another valid academic indicator (growth)
  - Graduation rate: four year cohort plus optional extended cohort(s)
  - EL proficiency in English
  - The “Fifth Indicator:” At least one state-identified “indicator of school quality or student success”
    - One or more of the new Future Ready PA Index indicators
Accountability - Intervention

What ESSA Requires

• Identification of CSI schools in 2018-19 based on 2017-18 data (required ESSA indicators plus PA’s Fifth Indicator(s))

• LEAs shall in partnership with local stakeholders “locally develop and implement a comprehensive school improvement plan” for each CSI school
  o Based on “school level needs assessment”
  o Include evidence based interventions

• TSI schools identified in 2019-20
PDE's Next Steps

- PDE has created an Office of School Improvement
- All school improvement functions will be assigned to this office
- Development of guidelines for the school level needs assessment for schools identified as CSI
- Development of inventory of evidence based strategies for school improvement
Educator Preparation and Evaluation

What ESSA Provides

- Title II provides more flexibility for states, LEAs and schools
  - To support educator preparation and support, professional development and alternative pathways to teacher certification
- Continues requirements for equitable access to excellent educators
- Eliminates federal requirement for states to connect student test scores to educator evaluation (still required in Pennsylvania by Act 82)
What PDE is Considering

- Identify the best strategies to ensure effective, diverse educators and school leaders for all students
- Make changes in teacher preparation/preservice practical experiences to improve the readiness of new teachers
- Promote alternative pathways to teacher certification
  - Troops to Teachers
  - Secondary School Career Pathways for Educators
Important Local Decisions

ESSA gives schools and districts new flexibility and responsibility in spending

• LEAs/schools may spend ESSA Title funds on a broad array of activities to meet student needs
• This multiplies the importance of local decision making and collaboration at the building and school board level
Important Local Decisions re Title Funding

- Title I - Activities to meet needs of low-income students

- Title II – Access to effective educators for students from low-income families and minority students

- Title IV - Student Support and Academic Enrichment in three categories:
  - Well-rounded educational opportunities
  - Improve conditions for learning
  - Effective use of technology

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Stakeholder Engagement

- Stakeholder workgroup sessions/recommendations
- Legislative engagement activities
- December/January listening tour
- ESSA section of PDE’s website
- Parent engagement activities
- Student engagement activities
- Engagement with specific constituencies
  - Special education advocates
  - Charter school leaders
  - School librarians
  - English learners
  - Arts advocates
  - Teachers/administrators
  - Parents/families
Important Dates

- February 10 – Secretary DeVos issues Dear Chiefs letter
- March 9 - Senate joins House Resolution of Disapproval of USDE Final Regulations issued on November 28, 2016; President expected to sign
- March 13 – USDE releases new plan template
- September 18 – Submit State Plan to USDE following 30 day public comment period
More Information

PDE's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) page

How to contact PDE with questions or comments:
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