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Overview with recommendations for State Implementation of ESSA, Every Student Succeeds Act, signed into Law, December 2015

Please find information that provides a walk-through of important provisions for States and LEAs to consider when *planning* a State's blueprint guiding the implementation of ESSA. This information was prepared for different audiences, but highlights specific areas that must be considered as part of any "blueprint" on ESSA.

Topics discussed, include:

School Improvement – new provisions and definitions in Title I and Title VIII, Review of Title II
Title I – Standards, Assessment and Accountability Provisions
Building an ESSA Plan – Facilitation Presentation for State Educator Coalitions
Early Education language found in ESSA
Four initial goals when planning

Overview of Changes/Opportunities and things not Not Changing from NCLB:

Changes/Opportunities

- *Accountability
- *Teacher (evaluation and other requirements)
- *School Improvement grants
- *Increased state and local authority to set
- *Title II Formula, new block
- *Parent Engagement
- *Evidenced-based Strategies
- *Early Childhood Education and coordinating services
- *Professional Development
- *Charters

Not Changing

- *Annual Assessment in Reading and Math
- *Subgroup Data Disaggregation
- *Maintenance of Effort
- *Supplement, not Supplant
- *Funding Formulas (Title I)
- *Public School Choice
- *Parent/Report Cards

Additional Topics in Title I

- Parental involvement and family engagement
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Rural education
- English learners – Title III & Title I
- Teachers
- Professional development (T's and P's)
 - Literacy
 - STEM

Changes from NCLB

- Increased state and local authority to set:

- *Challenging Academic Standards*
States must...
 - ❖ Adopt challenging academic content and achievement standards in mathematics, reading or language arts, and science – with not less than 3 levels of achievement.
 - ❖ Align them to entrance requirements for credit-bearing coursework in the state’s public higher education, and to career and technical education standards.
- *Differentiated accountability systems*
States must...
 - ❖ Develop an index system with measurements of interim progress of all students in all subgroups with the goals to improve:
 - ❖ Academic achievement on State assessments;
 - ❖ Graduation rates; and
 - ❖ Progress in achieving English language proficiency for English learners (ELL)
- *Assessments*
States must...
 - ❖ Adopt challenging academic content and achievement standards in mathematics, reading or language arts, and science – with not less than 3 levels of achievement.
 - ❖ Align them to entrance requirements for credit-bearing coursework in the state’s public higher education, and to career and technical education standards.
 - *Include the following indicators measured for all students/subgroups:
 - ❖ A measure of student growth or other statewide academic indicator for elementary and middle schools;
 - ❖ Graduation rates for high schools based on the State’s goals;
 - ❖ Progress in achieving English proficiency for English Language Learners; and
 - ❖ A measure of School Quality and Student Success.
- **What should superintendents and principals do:**
 - ❖ Weigh in on n= size and indicators.
 - ❖ Identify the best measures of school quality, student success, educator engagement, or other school climate and safety metrics.
- *School improvement and interventions*
 - ❖ Elimination of school improvement grants
 - ❖ However, current grantees may continue to receive funds under SIG if there are additional years left to their grant
 - ❖ Additional funds dedicated to State-Set Aside (Increase from 5% to 7%) for districts to administer school improvement and support for the bottom 5% of schools
Of that 7% state set-aside:
 - 95% must be either:

- Distributed to districts OR
- With LEA approval, the state can use those funds to provide direct services.
Funds must be used “to serve schools implementing
- comprehensive support or improvement activities or
- targeted support or improvement activities”
- The State may retain 5% for administration and monitoring.
- States may “directly provide for these activities or arrange for their provision through other entities such as . . . nonprofit or for-profit external providers with expertise in using EVIDENCE-BASED strategies to improve student achievement, instruction, and schools”

School Improvement: Distribution of Funds

- The state can distribute these funds on a formula or competitive basis.
- Priority must be given to LEAs that:
 - serve high numbers of schools implementing improvement plans;
 - demonstrate greatest need, AND
 - demonstrate strongest commitment to using the funds.
- Subgrants can cover no more than 4 years and can include a planning year.
- Schools and LEAs that are identified as in need of improvement or as priority and focus schools shall continue to implement current interventions until the state plan is approved.
- LEAs must submit an application to the SEA.

School Improvement: State Plan Requirements

- Requires Consultation with:
 - Governor, State Legislature, State Board of Education, LEAs, Teachers, Principals, Other School Leaders, Specialized Instructional Support Personnel, Paraprofessionals, Administrators, Other Staff and Parents.
- Coordinated with other federal programs
- Plans must be publically available for 30 days prior to submission to the Secretary

School Improvement: LEA Application Requirements

Per ESSA, LEA applications must:

- Develop comprehensive support and improvement plans
- Supports school in developing plans’
- Monitor schools
- Use a rigorous review to recruit and select external providers
- Align funding sources
- Provide operational flexibility

School Improvement: LEA Comprehensive Support and Improvement Plan

- Addresses required indicators
- Includes EVIDENCE BASED INTERVENTIONS
- Based on SCHOOL LEVEL NEEDS ASSESSMENT
- Identifies resource inequities
- Approved by school, LEA and SEA
- Monitored and reviewed by SEA

School Improvement: Evidence-based

the term ‘evidence-based’, when used with respect to a State, local educational agency, or

- school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that—
- “(i) demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on—
 - “(I) strong evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented experimental study;
 - “(II) moderate evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or
 - “(III) promising evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias

Transition to ESSA:

Effective dates, timelines, and new regulations:

- July 1, 2016 – noncompetitive formula grants in effect
- August 1, 2016 – sec. 111(b)(2) standards set
- School year 2017-18 – sec. 1111(c) and (d) assessments and accountability systems
- August 31, 2016 – waivers no longer have impact
- October 1, 2016 – appropriations for competitive discretionary programs into effect



Maintain current practice through 2016-2017 School Year

Implications for States and Districts:

- Focus on transition (procedures), consultation, planning
- Use scarce resources in smarter ways
- Monitor LEA implementation

Opportunities: Title II, Part A Formula, “Supporting Effective Instruction”

A Statewide (and District-Aligned) Comprehensive System for Recruitment, Preparation, and On-going Support for Teachers and Principals

- State Activities: 21 use of funds (15-18 areas highlighted for principals)
- Align to areas of a “principal pipeline”:
 - Recruitment (supporting teacher leaders and leadership teams)
 - Preparation (prep programs or higher ed reforms, certification, licensure system)
 - Retention (support for early career, in-service mid-career, and incentives for career ladders and differential pay, highlights early ed role)
 - District Activities: 16 use of funds overall, sub-categories directing “how”
 - 15 specific use of funds that correspond to support for a “principal pipeline”
 - Emphasis on job-embedded professional learning opportunities
 - Addressing issues related to school conditions, such as bullying, helping with collaborative cultures, increasing coordination with mental health services
 - Highlights early childhood education leadership

Title II, Part B

- District Activities: 16 use of funds overall, sub-categories directing “how”
 - 15 specific use of funds that correspond to support for a “principal pipeline”
 - Emphasis on job-embedded professional learning opportunities
 - Addressing issues related to school conditions, such as bullying, helping

with collaborative cultures, increasing coordination with mental health services

- Highlights early childhood education leadership
- Supporting Effective Educator Development
- School Leader Recruitment and Support
- Technical Assistance and National Evaluation|
- STEM Master Teacher Corps

Definitions in ESSA that impact Title II:

- School Leader Residency
- School Leader
- Professional Development
- Evidence-based

ESSA: An Opportunity for Consultation and Planning to Create Capacity-Building Systems

- State and local districts required to submit plans.
- Plans (state and district) must be developed in “consultation” with stakeholders. Governors have new authority.
- Permissive use of funds from a variety of sections of the law to create or develop capacity-building systems for educators.

ESSA Implementation: State and Local Strategies

- 1) Audit existing systems working in collaboration.
- 2) Use existing research and evidence to determine what good support should look like for principals.
- 3) Worth repeating: Engage in meaningful consultation with principals and other school leaders.
- 4) Create a roadmap with goals and align to ESSA “target” opportunities to set a statewide system of support for principals.

Goal 1: Strengthen Teacher and Principal Recruitment

- Look at high need schools and educational contexts (Urban, Rural Contextual Challenges).
- Build capacity of district structures to support teacher and principal continuum.
- Prioritize diversity and equity (including “equitable distribution” of well-prepared and profession-ready principals).

Goal 2: Make Sure Principals are Well-prepared and Profession-Ready

- Every principal must have an advanced degree and demonstrated record of success as a teacher.
- Every principal should demonstrate leadership competencies prior to entry into a principal preparation and certification program that includes partnerships between districts and local preparation and support programs.
- Every principal should participate in residency programs (1 yr), and receive coaching and mentoring from an accomplished principal through hands-on instructional leadership experiences in public Pre-K-12 schools (up to three years).

Goal 3: Continuous Professional Growth and Learning for Educators

- Base job-embedded professional learning opportunities, like mentoring and other

collaborative activities, based on current teacher and principal standards, competencies and focus on achieving successful outcomes related to domains of effective schools.

- Set capacity-building principal evaluation systems by aligning professional learning opportunities that are established in collaboration with practitioners and are based on the domains of effective instructional leadership, see *Rethinking Principal Evaluation*, NAESP and NASSP, as well as, Professional Standards for Educational Leaders <http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2015/ProfessionalStandardsforEducationalLeaders2015forNPBEAFINAL.pdf>
- Systems must consider: a school's context along with the individual principal's experience and grade-level responsibilities.
- Tied to a personalized professional growth plan.

Goal 4: Ensure Sustainable Efforts for a Robust Teacher and Principal Pipeline

- Develop leadership capacity through job-embedded, on-going leadership learning, and offer tiers of learning for leadership roles and responsibilities for teacher leaders, assistant principals, early career principals and veteran principals alike. Align to leadership standards (PSEL) and focus on the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to be the "lead learner".
- Work in collaboration with Institutions of Higher Education to provide teachers and aspiring leaders the opportunity for a rigorous and relevant preparation program to prepare them with the necessary skills to be successful in meeting the comprehensive contextual complexities the job will require.

Work from the Ground Up ~ Start with Local School Districts

- Work with districts first through an audit and needs assessment.
- Align state use of funds to Sec 2103 (states can help districts narrow over 15 use of funds, and work to meet contextualized needs).
- Identify a mix of formula and competitive opportunities to spur innovation within the system. (national activities, Title III, IV, etc.)
- Use NEW definitions to drive the "How" and the "What"
 - "Principal Residency"
 - "Professional Development"
 - "School Leader"
 - "Evidence-based"
 - "Effective" (State-developed)

Align Goals with ESSA Targets:

1) Recruitment (Goal #1)

- Sec 2101(c)(4)(B)(v)
- Sec 2243

2) Preparation (certification, recertification, licensure, prep program standards (NELP and PSEL-aligned) (Goal #2)

- Sec 2101(c)(4)(B)(i)(II)
- Sec 2101(c)(4)(B)(xi); Section 2101(c)(4)(B)(xv)

3) Set an aligned system of evaluation and support (Goal #3)

- Sec 2101(c)(4)(B)(ii); Sec 2101(c)(4)(B)(viii)

- Sec 2101(c)(4)(B)(vii)(III)(bb)
- 4) Retain a robust principal pipeline (Goal #4)
 - Sec 2101(c)(4)(B)(vii)(I) and (II)
 - Sec 2211; Sec 2212; Sec 2222

ESSA Implementation: Implications for School Leaders

- Accountability -- Systems and Index
 - Student growth measures
 - N= sizes
 - ELL subgroup “entry and exit” criteria
 - School Quality measure
- State and Local Determinations
 - Definitions, i.e. “Effectiveness”, “underperforming”,
 - Resource allocation and programmatic priorities
- Teacher Evaluation
 - Time, preparation as an evaluator

Fostering Professional Learning Communities for collaborative exchange and leadership teams

These areas are by no means the entirety of the bill, notably some of the big buckets like Title IV. However, I hope this information is at least helpful for a start of the planning phase which is critical before implementation can begin. Developing a plan can only be tackled after identifying the key issues the state wants to address “in consultation” with stakeholders and elected officials charged with the process. States need to build these coalitions and engage in the planning process right now.

Respectfully submitted by:

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“In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.”

--Dwight D. Eisenhower