

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the state ESSA plan. As the state network for out-of-school time and expanding learning we are anxious to be a supportive partner to our school communities as ESSA is adopted. Here are our thoughts on the current draft.

Notes on Arizona Plan:

1. Arizona's indicators of effective schools has two components- additional instructional time and engaging families and communities that are extremely well supported by afterschool programs
2. (pg. 20) Plan to require more comprehensive data on schools – recommend that this collection include access to out of school time activities and programs for a more complete picture
3. (pg. 26) Local needs assessments will be the foundation of support- recommend at the state level that certain basic needs are included in the assessment such as access to extra-curricular activities (especially as afterschool is an allowable use of Title I funds so parents, teachers and the school community should be assessed to see if it is a needed and or desired intervention)– For Example the [Virginia Comprehensive Needs Assessment](#) includes a place for reporting “Extended Learning Opportunities”
4. (pg.27) This includes a list of possible evidence based interventions- we would like to see afterschool opportunities included on this list and are happy to provide you with the appropriate data to show evidence of the effectiveness of afterschool.
5. (pg. 27) The Dept of Ed will be supporting local selection of evidence based interventions- as above, we would love to work with you to to show you the resource base around afterschool programs as effective interventions for many indicators of student success (ie attendance, behavior, engagement, coursework...)
6. (pg. 28) When the state must undertake in depth needs assessments of LEAs which have failed to improve, this process should include access to afterschool opportunities among the criteria evaluated to address gaps and as a possible intervention
7. (pg 29) The state is planning to partner with Regional Centers and “vetted strategic partners” for identified areas of improvement – we at the Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence has the ability to offer TA with quality standards and expertise for supporting students in out-of-school time
8. (pg. 30) Training of new educators requires that they have “ample opportunities for structured practice in a range of settings with diverse learners”. This could potentially be an opportunity to cross-train educators with afterschool programs – preparing educators can provide lessons in afterschool contexts and train afterschool staff- sharing PD funding. The [Fresno California Teaching Fellows](#) program offers one model for this type of collaboration.
9. (pg. 49) As earlier in the plan, but now at a local level, a list of Multi-tiered systems of supports (MTSS) should include access to quality afterschool programming among it in regards to providing a well-rounded education. Especially when considering that high income families now spend up to 7 times the amount of money on enrichment activities as low income families- this is a good way to close achievement and opportunity gaps.

10. (pg. 52) Arizona will be considering resource equity which includes “access to advanced coursework” and “availability of pre-school”. Love to see included afterschool programs which (1) help sustain the gains of high quality pre-school programs for low-income children and (2) provide them with the supports they need to keep up with academics that make them more likely to be able to engage in later advanced coursework

11. (pg 52) #4 – As mentioned previously, we are set up to provide technical assistance on everything from afterschool program management to SEL/non-cognitive skill development and would love to be a resource for our community.

12. (pg 62) #9 State Network is on the list of target audiences so I hope we can continue this conversation. Please know that I am always available as a resource and partner in your efforts.

Thank you,

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