



CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Overview of the Every Student Succeeds Act for Parents and Community Members

September 2016

Reauthorization of ESEA



Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), 1965



No Child Left Behind (NCLB), 2002



ESEA Flexibility Waiver, 2012



Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), 2015

Highlights of ESSA

- Maintains annual assessments for grades 3-8 and high school
- Increases state flexibility to design accountability systems, interventions and student supports
- Gives states flexibility to work with local stakeholders to develop educator evaluation and support systems
- Increases state and local flexibility in the use of federal funds



Standards

- ESSA reinforces state authority over standards, accountability, and other key education policies.
- States are required to adopt challenging academic standards.
- The U.S. Secretary of Education is prohibited from forcing or encouraging states to pick a particular set of standards.



Assessments

- Each state is required to have in place a set of high-quality student academic assessments in math, reading or language arts, and science.
- States will break out the test data for whole schools, plus different “subgroups” of students (e.g., English learners, students in special education, racial minorities, those in poverty).
- ESSA maintains the federal requirement for 95% participation in tests.



Accountability for Elementary and Middle School

- States need to incorporate at least four indicators into their accountability systems.
- States must include three academic indicators:
 - academic proficiency on state assessments;
 - English language proficiency; and
 - growth or another statewide academic indicator for K-8 schools.



Accountability for Elementary and Middle School

- States are required to add at least one **non-academic** indicator of school quality or student success.



Possibilities include:

- Student engagement
- Educator engagement
- Access to and completion of advanced coursework
- Postsecondary readiness
- School climate/safety



Accountability for High Schools

- High schools will be evaluated by mostly the same set of indicators as elementary/middle schools, except that graduation rates will have to be included.



School Improvement

Every 3 years, states must use the data from their accountability systems to identify those schools “in need of improvement.” These schools are:

- the lowest-performing 5% of all schools in the state;
- schools where one or more subgroups are underperforming; or
- high schools with graduation rates of less than 67%.



School Improvement

For schools that are at the bottom 5% and for high schools with high dropout rates:

- Districts will work with teachers and school staff to develop an evidence-based improvement plan.
- States will monitor the turnaround effort.
- If schools continue to struggle, after no more than 4 years, the state will be required to step in with its own plan.



School Improvement

For schools where subgroups are struggling:

- Schools will need to develop an evidence-based plan to help the particular group of students that are falling behind.
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- Districts must monitor these plans. If the school continues to struggle with the subgroups the district would step in.

Teacher and Leader Quality

- ESSA does not require teacher evaluation systems to be based in significant part on students' test scores.
- States receive funds to attract, prepare, support and retain effective teachers and leaders to serve high-poverty, minority students.



Transition Timeline

Now

- Familiarize stakeholders with the new law

August 2016

- ESEA Flexibility Waiver expires

School Year
2016-17

- Transition period to work with stakeholders and develop state plans

School Year
2017-18

- New state plans in compliance with ESSA will go into effect



ESSA Explained: Inside the New Federal K-12 Law



Where Can I Learn More?

- Read the Every Student Succeeds Act

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-114s1177enr/pdf/BILLS-114s1177enr.pdf>

- Connecticut's ESSA webpage

<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2683&Q=336396>

- U.S. Department of Education's ESSA webpage

<http://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn>

