



April 2018: News from the BCSB PR/Research Project – ESSA!

What is ESSA?

“Every Student Succeeds Act” is the overhaul of federal education law. Replacing the No Child Left Behind Act, ESSA represents a shift from broad federal oversight of primary and secondary education to greater flexibility and decision-making at the state and local levels.

This federal law provides greater authority to states, it also includes specific requirements at the state and federal levels, including:

Content standards

- Requires at least three performance levels
- Prohibits the USDOE from mandating or incentivizing states to adopt or maintain a specific set of standards (like Common Core)

Assessments

- Retains current testing requirements by grade level and subject area: math and English language arts in grades 3-8 and once in high school; science once each in the elementary, middle and high school grades
- Maintains the requirement for results reported by student subgroups
- Maintains the requirement that 95 percent of students participate in state assessments and requires states to report participation

Accountability/Report cards

- Requires states to develop and implement accountability plans
- Report cards must contain at least four measures including achievement, graduation and at least one other measure, may be a growth measure
- Requires short- and long-term goals to close achievement and graduation gaps

English language learners (ELL)

- Retains states’ inclusion of ELL test scores after being in the U.S. one year
- Permits states to include ELL scores on English language arts and math assessments for the first year in the U.S. in schools’ ratings
- Requires a growth measure for ELL in year two (and beyond) in the U.S.

School improvement

- States must identify schools for “comprehensive support and improvement” and annually notify districts which schools require “targeted support and improvement”
- Districts must develop (approved) comprehensive support and improvement plans for identified schools



- At a minimum, states must identify schools in the lowest 5 percent of performance, high schools with graduation rates below 67 percent, and schools with persistently poor performance by subgroups at least every three years

Teacher quality

- Eliminates the Highly Qualified Teacher status requirement
- Federal requirement for educator evaluations is eliminated, but states must implement equity plans to ensure economically disadvantaged and minority students are not disproportionately served by ineffective, out-of-field or inexperienced teachers, principals and other school leaders
- Parents must be notified of their rights to request and receive information regarding the professional qualifications of their children's classroom teachers

Title program funding

- Title I: Schools with less than 40 percent poverty may operate school-wide programs with state waiver
- Title II: Permits greater flexibility in funds for professional development, capacity building, mentoring programs; provides greater flexibility in the use of funds to include library/media, early childhood, arts, STEM, etc.
- Maintains public charter schools as a separate program with changes to accountability (generally the same as traditional public school accountability with the notable exception of a special report card for schools with dropout recovery and prevention programs)

Ohio's plan is more than 100 pages, and includes the new A-F state report cards. It's been approved by the USDOE, which means federal dollars will continue to support Ohio's K-12 public education system.