

Fact Sheet: **What is the “Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)” and what is NH’s Consolidated State Plan?**

Mary D. 10/25/17

ESSA (the Every Student Succeeds Act) is the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, first passed in 1965. That was reauthorized in 2002 as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). ESSA became law at the end of 2015 and allows for more flexibility to states in reports, goal setting and identifying struggling schools. No Child Left Behind was criticized as being unrealistic in its goals. ESSA is only a small part of what the NH Department of Education does but the ESSA plan is required for NH to receive federal funding. School curriculum is not part of ESSA.

**PREPARING THE STATE PLAN** Stakeholder advisory teams met throughout 2016 and 2017 to develop New Hampshire’s plan. Regional listening sessions on the vision for the NH educational system were held in fall 2016. Public comments on the draft plan were accepted through June 23, 2017. Revisions were made and the final draft reviewed by the Commissioner of Education and the Governor before submission to the U.S. Department of Education in September 2017.

**THE VISION** is to ensure that public funds in NH are well spent, that high quality schools are promoted across the state and that teachers and school leaders are supported in their work. The vision looks to assure that NH students are college- and career- ready when they graduate.

**ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS** are used to support the ESSA requirements for school accountability. These indicators are used to determine which schools will be identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) as well as Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI). These indicators will be reported for each school and for every subgroup of students within the schools.

The plan has five categories for accountability:

1. student achievement on math and English tests in grades 3-8 and 11(see plan for specific desired outcomes)
2. measures of student learning growth in elementary and secondary schools that are not high schools (use Student Growth Percentile model)
3. high school graduation rates (90.15% in 2018 and 93.96% in 2025)-adjusted cohort graduation rate
4. progress in achieving English language proficiency
5. additional indicators designed to emphasize competency-based learning and other measures of school quality and student success. Emphasis is on not letting students fall behind.

**REPORTING INDICATORS** more fully characterize the expectations for highlighting effective and well-functioning education programs leading to great educational outcomes. Reporting indicators focus at the level of education delivery. These will be reported to help better understand what works but will not factor into the state’s ESSA determination.

**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT** Accountability indicators will be used to identify schools for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI). These indicators will be reported for each school and every subgroup of students within the school. TSI schools are required to meet with district leadership to establish an improvement plan that sets strategies for improving the performance of underachieving schools and student sub-groups. States must identify and publicly report schools based on the accountability system:

1. Lowest performing 4% of the Title I schools;
2. High schools with less than a 57% graduation rate;
3. Schools with underperforming subgroups that do not improve after a state-determined number of years.

The approach for school improvement will be determined locally, without federal directive, using evidence-based practices.

**TEACHER AND LEADER QUALITY** ESSA authorizes new allowable federal funding for states to develop and implement ways to improve teacher and leader quality such as mentoring, developing a leadership pipeline, sharing best practices. Educator evaluations are not part of ESSA as they were of No Child Left Behind. The state of NH does require educator evaluations. There is an emphasis on having strong teachers/leaders and making sure students in targeted schools have good teachers.