The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

What We Know Now

April 2016
Flexibility Waiver

• Valid until August 1, 2016

• High risk status because of disagreements about Principle 3 (Teacher and Principal Evaluation) is moot.
Possible Timeline

• January: US ED held public hearings and took comments
• March and April: Negotiated Rulemaking
• Ongoing: More limited guidance
• Summer-Fall: US ED issues proposed rules; public comment and revision cycle to follow
• Late 2016: Final federal rules, guidelines
• Early 2017: State Plan due
Standards

• States must have challenging academic standards

• Feds cannot incentivize specific standards

• SD remains committed to high quality standards

• DOE to begin standards revision and review in summer 2016; much educator and public input being sought
Assessment

• Still required to assess ELA and Math standards in 3 through 8, once at high school

• Still required to assess state Science standards once in grades 3-5, once in 6-9, once in 10-12

• Alternate assessments for students with most severe cognitive disabilities; participation not to exceed 1% of student population
Assessment

• Must provide accommodations as required in IEPs

• First year in country ELL ELA exception remains, plus possible additional flexibility

• Must provide English Language Proficiency assessment for students needing it

• States to work to provide assessments in native language for ELL students

• States may set limits on required testing time
Assessment

• 95% participation of all students, subgroups still required
  – More flexibility to determine how this impacts accountability
  – Nothing intended to limit states from setting law around parent refusals

• Districts may request to give a college entrance exam to all students in lieu of state assessments if they can show:
  – At least equal in rigor to existing state assessment
  – Full depth and breadth of state standards covered
  – Accommodations are available for all students

• Waiting on guidance for proof threshold for the college entrance exam piece
Assessment Audit

• Grants available to states to conduct in-depth audit of state and district assessment systems and design changes/improvements

• Expected guidance in June/July

• Funding for up to three years

• SD plans to apply and to start with state assessment systems
Accountability System

• Similar to current structure

• Elementary and Middle School:
  – Three academic indicators required
    • Student Achievement
    • Student Growth or other academic indicator
    • English Language Proficiency (new)
  – Additional indicator required
    • Attendance could be retained
Accountability System

• High School
  – Three academic indicators required
    • Student Achievement
    • High School Completion including a four-year cohort graduation rate
    • English Language Proficiency (new)
  – Additional indicator required
    • College and Career Readiness could be retained
Accountability System

• New categories for differentiation:
  – Comprehensive Support (similar to Priority Schools)
    • Any Title I school in the bottom 5%
    • Any public high school with a graduation rate < 67%
    • Any Title I school with a chronically underperforming subgroup
  – Targeted support
    • Any Title I school with at least one underperforming subgroup
• Waiting for guidelines on “underperforming” and “chronically underperforming”
• More freedom in supporting these schools
School Improvement

(Focus and Priority Schools)

• Recently designated Focus and Priority Schools remain classified as such.

• New classifications under ESSA beginning with the 2017-2018 school year.
Report Cards

• Maintain report cards for 2015-16 school year
• Current reporting maintained, new requirements added:
  – New subgroups:
    • Children of Active Duty Military
    • Foster Students
    • Homeless Students
  – State Plan, School Improvement, Title plans linked on website
  – Some Civil Rights, Perkins, financial reporting, college-going rates, dual credit and AP data, and Teacher Equity data, etc.
  – Highly Qualified goes away, replaced by reporting on properly state certified in all areas (not just core content)
Other Reporting

• Much separate reporting (Title II, Title III) gone; rolled into report cards

• Schools must provide online dates/rationale for all district-required testing; make available at the start of the school year; districts to post opt-out policy

• Assurances on educator background checks, work with homeless and foster youth required
Teacher and Principal Evaluation

• Federal waiver mandates go away August 2016
  – No more pressure to change to satisfy federal requirements

• State law still requires DOE to create model systems; training and support (including Teachscape) to continue

• Workgroup this spring to evaluate where more flexibility can be meaningfully incorporated into system
Funding

• Some language indicating new/ restructured grant programs to streamline funding buckets

• Can transfer some funds between federal programs for use at local level; waiting on guidance
Our Next Steps (Part I)

• ESSA Work Groups Meeting in spring, summer
  – Accountability
  – Educator Effectiveness
  – School Improvement
  – ELL Students

• Workgroup recommendations to inform state plan
Our Next Steps (Part I)

Accountability: Sample Decisions

• What do indicators and points look like at the Elementary and Middle, and High School Levels? How do those inform classifications?
• What goals are appropriate to set for each indicator?
• What details need adjusting? Full Academic Year, Participation, minimum n-size, Gap group?
• How to incorporate ESSA’s data reporting requirements?
• How do all the accountability pieces (including school improvement, English language proficiency) fit together?
Our Next Steps (Part I)

School Improvement: Sample Decisions

• What is our naming convention for schools that we now call Focus, Priority, and Watch List Schools?
• What does the duration of supports for schools in need of comprehensive and targeted supports look like?
• What does the improvement plan look like for schools identified as comprehensive or targeted?
Our Next Steps (Part I)

English Language Learners: Sample Decisions

- What does the cell size look like for ELs?
- How can we utilize the alternate ACCESS Assessment scores?
- What is the duration for not including ELs in the accountability for schools?
- What does the comprehensive support to be used by schools that aren’t making progress?
- Should we consider using progress as an indicator or growth?
Our Next Steps (Part I)

Educator Effectiveness: Sample Decisions

• Allow Teacher and Principal to choose SLO focus
• Minimum Professional Practice Components for Assistant Principals
• How often a principal needs to be evaluated
• Reporting requirements
Our Next Steps (Part II)

• Continue to share information as guidance available
• Continue to identify opportunities/requirements
• Workgroup recommendations to inform state plan
• Conduct statewide Assessment Audit