

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