



Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan

JANUARY 2017

Goal: State Board of Education Submits its ESSA State Plan to the US Department of Education (USED) for approval by the September 18, 2017, deadline.

Status: Draft of State's ESSA Plan is posted on NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) website for public comments at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/succeeds/draft-state-plan.pdf> . It includes a timeline for plan development and completion. As input from various stakeholders and policy makers is on-going, many decisions have not yet been made. Those decisions are highlighted in yellow in the document.

Current Legislation: The most pertinent state legislation affected by the ESSA federal law is School Performance Grades (G.S. 115C-83.15).

Recommendation(s):

1. Amend the School Performance Grades legislation to conform to the State Board of Education's State Plan for Accountability under ESSA.
2. No changes should be made to the School Performance Grades legislation until there is agreement from the State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Public Instruction (based on input from various stakeholder groups) as to the changes needed in state law.

Issue:

1. There is misalignment of the requirements for accountability for ESSA and the current components for the School Performance Grades. Below is a chart which illustrates the misalignment.

Main Points:

1. The NCDPI has conducted over 75 meetings with various stakeholder groups since January 2016 to discuss ESSA. These included six (6) regional public comment sessions in the spring and four (4) regional public comment sessions in the fall as well as two (2) External Stakeholder meetings of representatives from statewide organizations/associations. A list of the various ESSA meetings and a list of the organizations invited to the External Stakeholder meetings can be found in the appendices of the draft state plan cited above.
2. The NCDPI also has a software system called *Let's Talk* which is an online public comment software application whereby an individual can select a topic of interest (which includes ESSA) and submit comments and they are routed automatically to the appropriate person in NCDPI for a response. The system also keeps track of the comments. There have been over 100 comments submitted through the *Let's Talk* system regarding ESSA.
3. With a new President of the United States and a new Secretary of Education overseeing the USED, there is some uncertainty about the status of federal regulations issued by the previous administration. Therefore, it is prudent not to make changes to current state education laws for at least a few more months by which time there should be more direction from the USED.

Comparison of School Performance Grades (A–F) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

State A-F School Performance Grades		Federal ESSA Accountability
I. High School Indicators		
Percent Proficient on End-of-Course assessments (NC Math 1, English II and Biology)	=	Percent Proficient on End-of-Course assessments (NC Math 1 and English II)
School Accountability Growth (End-of-Course)	=	School Accountability Growth (End-of-Course)
High School Graduation (4-year only)	=	High School Graduation (4-year only)
ACT	≠	
ACT WorkKeys	≠	
Math Course Rigor	≠	
	≠	English Learners Progress
	≠	Indicator(s) of School Quality or Student Success*
II. Elementary and Middle Schools Indicators		
Percent Proficient on End-of-Grade assessments (Reading, Mathematics and Science)	=	Percent Proficient on End-of-Grade assessments (Reading and Mathematics)
School Accountability Growth (End-of-Grade)	=	School Accountability Growth (End-of-Grade)
	≠	English Learners Progress
	≠	Indicator(s) of School Quality or Student Success*

*An indicator of school quality or student success must be used in all schools in the state and must “meaningfully differentiate” between schools. States can include more than one indicator of school quality or student success if they choose. ESSA provides specific examples of possible measures—school climate and safety, student or educator engagement, access to advanced coursework, and postsecondary readiness—but specific ones are not mandated nor must it be chosen from the aforementioned list. Other examples of indicators that are being discussed by educators and advocates include chronic absenteeism, discipline referrals, dropout rates, and access to extracurricular and other enrichment opportunities.