



The Every Student Succeeds Act

Michael J. Petrilli

Thomas B. Fordham Institute

@michaelpetrilli

(Alternative Title)

**ESSA:
Education
Secretary:
Stay
Away!**

“With great power comes great responsibility” – Uncle Ben



What Indiana *Must* Do—and What Indiana *Can* Do—Under ESSA*

- Standards and Tests
 - School Ratings
- Interventions in Low Performing Schools
- ~~Teacher Evaluations~~

* Special thanks to EdWeek & EdTrust for much of this information

Standards

- Statewide standards that apply to all students in at least math, ELA, and science
- No authority for feds to mandate/incentivize/etc. the Common Core or any other set of standards
- Standards must be aligned to
 - a) Entrance requirements (without remediation) for the state's system of public higher education; and
 - b) Relevant career and technical education standards

Tests

- Annual statewide assessments in reading and math in 3rd – 8th grade and once in high school; science assessments once each in elementary, middle, and high school.
- Assessments must be **aligned with state standards** and provide information on whether a student is performing at grade level (though computer-adaptive tests are OK).
- No more than 1 percent of all students in the state can take an alternate assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

What about Opt-Outers?

- States or localities may create their own laws on assessment participation, and districts are required to notify parents about those, but participation requirements still exist
- States have to explain how they will factor the 95 percent participation requirement, overall and for each group, into their systems; and
- Most students who are not tested will automatically count as not proficient.

High School Tests

- **High School Assessment:** An option for states or districts to use a nationally-recognized assessment (e.g. SAT or ACT) at the high school level in place of the state test.
 - These assessments must be aligned to the state standards, provide results that can be used for accountability, and meet all the technical requirements that apply to statewide tests. They also have to be peer reviewed. District-selected assessments must be approved by the state.

Innovative Assessment Pilot

- Allows the Secretary to set up a pilot for states that want to experiment with other assessment formats, such as competency-based, or performance-based assessments.
 - States may pilot new assessments in a subset of districts, but must scale up to statewide implementation if pilot is successful, or discontinue if it is not.
- Pilot includes extensive quality criteria and safeguards, such as alignment requirements, and eventual statewide implementation.
- Option to expand to more states over time.

School Ratings

1. **Academic Achievement**

- a. Proficiency on annual assessments
- b. May include growth for high schools

2. **Other Academic Indicator**

- a. For high schools – graduation rate, as measured against gap-closing goals
- b. For non-high schools – growth or another valid, reliable, statewide academic indicator

3. **Progress toward English language proficiency** for English learners

4. Other valid, reliable, comparable and statewide **measure of school quality**

#1-3 must count significantly more than #4. All indicators must be disaggregated by student group.

Questions on School Ratings

- Must states literally look at “proficiency” for “academic achievement”? Or can they give partial credit for lower levels and extra credit for advanced?
- Can states make the ELL indicator count more for schools with lots of ELL students?
- What will be allowed for “other indicators of student success or school quality?” How strict will the Department be wrt/ the requirement that they be reportable by subgroup?

SHAMELESS SELF PROMOTION

Fordham's ESSA Accountability Design Competition

**What should state
accountability
look like under
ESSA?**



Ideas from Fordham's ESSA Design Competition

Academic Achievement

- Develop an index that gives extra credit for getting kids to advanced
- Look at scale scores instead of achievement levels
- Whatever you do: Don't repeat the "bubble kids" problem

Ideas from Fordham's ESSA Design Competition

Academic Growth

- Use the growth percentile model (“Colorado Growth Model”)
- Use the Sanders “value added” model
- Use a two-step Value Added Model (no, not a country music thing)
- *Don't just focus on the growth of low achievers!*

Ideas from Fordham's ESSA Design Competition

Other Indicators of Student Success or School Quality

- School inspections
- Chronic absenteeism
- Student or teacher engagement (though be careful)
- Opportunity for well rounded curriculum
- Let districts add indicators or mix-and-match

Interventions

Action/intervention is required in at least the following types of schools:

- **Comprehensive Support and Improvement:**
 - The lowest performing 5 percent of Title I schools and all high schools with graduation rates below 67 percent. Districts have the initial responsibility for improvement activity. If schools don't improve within four years, states have to intervene.
- **Targeted Support and Improvement:**
 - Schools where any group of students is consistently underperforming. Schools work with districts on improvement activity. If schools don't improve, the district has to ensure more rigorous intervention.

School Improvement

- ~~School Improvement Grants Program~~
- In its place is a new provision that allows STATES to set aside 7% of their Title I funds for school improvement activities.

Teacher Evaluations & “Highly Qualified Teachers”

- ~~Teacher Evaluations~~
- ~~Highly Qualified Teachers~~

Timeline

- **August-ish:** U.S. Department of Education releases draft regulations; a big food fight starts if they overstep their bounds.
- **January-ish:** Final regulations to be released. Except...that's in the middle of a presidential transition!
- **Spring of 2017:** States put accountability plans together, submit them to the Department (if anyone is there to read them)
- **Fall of 2017:** New law goes into effect



The Every Student Succeeds Act

Michael J. Petrilli

Thomas B. Fordham Institute

@michaelpetrilli