



Continuously Improving State Systems of Accountability and Supports:

A Roadmap for State Leadership under the *Every Student Succeeds Act* to Advance College and Career Ready Outcomes for All Students

I. Introduction and Purpose

We are at a critical moment of transition for education across the nation. We have a strong nationwide consensus that the goal of our education systems must be to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college, career, and life. State leaders have made significant advancements toward that goal, including working to design and implement college and career ready standards, assessments, and systems of accountability and supports, and to continuously improve them over time. Through these efforts, our learning continues to evolve, and states have demonstrated a strong commitment to continuing to move this work forward.

The December 2015 passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) presents a clear opportunity for states and districts to further advance policies and practices that can achieve the goal of every student ready for college, career, and life. The new law maintains the basic architecture of standards-based reform from the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in that it requires states to establish standards, aligned assessments, accountability systems, and systems of support for low-performing schools. However, **ESSA codifies in federal law the goal of college and career readiness to guide these systems, and then vests more authority back in states for designing the systems to achieve that goal.**

In particular, the changes in ESSA give each state an opportunity to take a step back and reflect on its current accountability system, look forward toward its overarching goals for the coming years, and consider what if any changes it wants to make to ensure it has a system in place that can best advance college and career ready teaching, learning, and outcomes for all students, and particularly help close achievement gaps in that regard. States will likely determine that some elements of their current systems of school accountability and supports are working well and that there are other areas where they may want to make improvements.

This is also an opportunity for state education leaders to reframe the narrative about the purpose and use of accountability systems. Accountability systems are not intended to be punitive; they are intended to help us focus on what matters most, better understand what is working well, and determine where we need to make improvements so we can better help all students succeed. Every element of our education system, including our expectations for students, how we understand if students are meeting those expectations, and how we are working with and supporting teachers and leaders, must be reflective and work together toward the goal of making sure our students are prepared for their next steps on graduation day. Accountability is one element of that system.

Importantly, this is also an opportunity to refocus the way in which we systematically engage with educators and other key stakeholders in an inclusive, ongoing manner about the purpose of this work. Engaging stakeholders in discussions about the design and implementation of accountability and supports systems will help to make them more effective. We need to implement learning processes through which we regularly work with stakeholders on the design, implementation, review, and continuous improvement of accountability, assessment, and support systems to improve college and career readiness for all students.

The purpose of this document is to provide an initial, draft roadmap for state leaders to use as a guide as they review and improve their state systems of school accountability and supports to best advance college and career ready teaching and learning for all students, and to leverage and meet new ESSA requirements in that regard. This is a *working draft* designed to guide initial state and national discussions, and we will learn from those interactions and revise this tool appropriately over time.

II. Background – A Brief History of State Leadership on Accountability

For the last two decades, school accountability has been a major driver of education reform. The aims have been several fold: to focus education systems on student outcomes as the driver of education; to set clear, meaningful goals related to improving student achievement and closing achievement gaps; to hold schools and districts accountable for achieving their goals; to provide stakeholders with transparent, regular, actionable data and information with regard to school performance; and to inform school improvement efforts toward significantly better strategies and outcomes over time.

As states and districts move forward to promote college and career ready standards (including but not limited to the Common Core), it is vital that state systems of accountability and supports reinforce this commitment to achieve college and career ready outcomes for all students – building on and moving beyond the basic requirements of NCLB and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) (“accountability 1.0”).

Recognizing this need for leadership in accountability, states came together in 2011 through the auspices of CCSSO to establish a set of principles to guide the development of new, improved state systems of accountability and supports. These CCSSO [Principles and Processes for State Leadership on Next-Generation Accountability Systems](#), endorsed by 45 states, were meant to build upon and move beyond NCLB and begin to create systems of accountability and supports that could better promote CCR outcomes for all students. According to these principles, state accountability systems will include:

1. Alignment of performance goals to college- and career-ready standards
2. Annual determinations for each school and district
3. A focus on student outcomes
4. Continued commitment to disaggregation
5. Reporting of timely, actionable, and accessible data
6. Deeper diagnostic reviews
7. Building school and district capacity
8. Targeting lowest performing schools
9. Innovation, evaluation, and continuous improvement

These principles were examined and reaffirmed by CCSSO as recently as October 2015. See CCSSO, *States’ Continued Commitment to Next-Generation Accountability Systems*¹.

Based in part on these state principles (and the first ESEA waiver proposal, which was developed by Kentucky in parallel), President Obama and Secretary Duncan launched in September 2011 the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility initiative. Since then, more than forty states proposed and received federal approval for ESEA waivers that established an array of accountability models (“accountability 2.0”). And other states developed new, improved state accountability models in the absence of waivers. These models have raised the bar on AYP in several ways: They often include, for example, an express goal of college- and career-ready outcomes for all students; multiple measures for accountability; rigorous growth models; and improved data reporting and diagnostic reviews – as well as continued commitment to critical elements of AYP, such as disaggregation of data, subgroup accountability, and an emphasis on meaningful graduation rates.

In particular, states participating in the CCSSO Innovation Lab Network (ILN) have led efforts to build systems of assessment and accountability that more meaningfully capture the full breadth of “deeper learning” knowledge, skills, and dispositions,ⁱⁱ which better align with the shift toward student-centered, competency-based teaching and learning, and empower local decision-making and continuous improvement. Building on the work of leading states and the publication of *Accountability for College and Career Readiness: Developing a New Paradigm* (Linda Darling Hammond, Gene Wilhoit & Linda Pittenger, 2014), more than a dozen states have been deeply exploring key dimensions of improved models of assessment and accountability, aligned with the CCSSO principles, that result in systems more responsive to the needs of every learner. This work has produced a set of recommendations to guide the design of accountability systems,ⁱⁱⁱ as well as a decision framework to guide states in evolving their education systems more broadly.^{iv} Most recently, CCSSO has gathered ILN states and others in learning communities that have been exploring specific strategies aimed toward these outcomes, including use of multiple measures (including multiple forms of assessment, some of which may be locally-determined), data dashboards, and diagnostic reviews to promote school improvement.

Also, CCSSO has focused on strengthening systems of supports for low-performing schools, including a working group of state and national leaders that produced *From the Bottom Up: Recommendations for Strengthening Statewide Systems of Supports in Underperforming Schools* (2013)^v, which presents several powerful findings to guide future state accountability systems, including that such systems “must begin with a clear sense of the attributes of effective schools and school improvement that can advance college and career ready outcomes for all students.”

III. Accountability under ESSA – An Overview of Key Elements

For the first time, ESSA in effect requires that state standards (and thereby the systems that flow from them) be aligned with college and career ready outcomes for all students – including entrance to credit-bearing course work in public higher education and career/technical standards. At the same time, ESSA moves authority from the federal government back toward states and districts to take evidence-based actions, in consultation with key stakeholders, to design their standards-based education systems – building on and going beyond state flexibility inherent in ESEA waivers offered by USED. These two shifts constitute significant change from NCLB’s “loose-tight” model (where states set the bar for student success at any level but then federal law sought to more rigidly define how states get there) toward a potential “tight-loose” model (where there is shared agreement on a high-bar for all students, and states and locals have greater opportunity and responsibility to define efforts to achieve that bar).

In this way, ESSA presents a real opportunity for states and districts to innovate more fully in designing systems and supports that can best advance college and career ready outcomes for all students. This opportunity for innovation also creates a particular need to focus on equity and capacity-building in ESSA implementation across the states.

ESSA includes a continued focus on accountability, with many requirements that will entail interpretation and leadership by states as well as further federal regulation and guidance, as appropriate.

Specifically, ESSA requires all states to have in place systems of accountability and supports that include annual accountability determinations for all public schools based on multiple indicators – and interim progress toward long-term goals on those indicators – for the school overall and for each subgroup. These indicators include:

1. Annual assessments (which may include a measure of student growth);
2. Graduation rates for high schools;
3. Another statewide “academic” indicator for elementary and middle schools;
4. English language proficiency for English learners; and
5. At least one additional statewide indicator of school quality or student success (e.g. school climate/safety, student engagement, educator engagement, postsecondary readiness).

The required academic indicators 1-4 must each have "substantial weight," and together they must have "much greater weight" than the additional indicator(s) of student success and school quality in 5. These metrics, disaggregated by subgroup, are used to show status and progress on statewide indicators and gap closures over time.

States and districts must publicly report these indicators, and other data, in their annual report cards in a manner that is clear, concise, understandable, and widely accessible.

States and districts must also annually measure and report on the percentage of students taking the statewide assessments, disaggregated by subgroup, with a requirement that at least 95 percent of students participate annually. The state must determine how the participation rate requirement factors into the statewide accountability system.

Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, states must use their accountability system to differentiate among schools annually and, at least once every three years, identify the lowest performing schools in need of comprehensive support and improvement, including those Title I schools in the bottom 5% of performance on the indicators, those with graduation rates of 67% or below, and those with consistently underperforming subgroups over a substantial period. Schools with underperforming subgroups are identified for targeted support and improvement; and interventions increase, as determined by the state, if one or more subgroups consistently underperform over time.

School improvement plans must be developed and overseen for any schools identified for improvement under the accountability system. School districts have a leading role in developing these plans for schools in comprehensive support and improvement, and states must approve and monitor the plans. All school improvement plans must:

- Be informed by all indicators in the statewide accountability system;
- Include evidence-based interventions;
- Be approved and monitored by the school district (or in the case of comprehensive support and improvement, by the state); and
- Result in additional action for underperformance over a period of time.

States and districts must use a 7% set-aside of Title I funds for school improvement activities under these accountability sections, and they may use an additional 3% for direct student services such as personalization of learning, supports for AP/IB coursework, acceleration of coursework, and tutoring.

Finally, throughout development of state plans across the law, including state systems of accountability and supports, ESSA requires that states engage critical stakeholders, including other state leaders, district leaders, teacher, principals, staff, parents, and more. (States must also release their plans for a public comment period). ESSA also includes specific requirements that states periodically review and revise their plans, as appropriate, particularly with regard to school improvement efforts as well as other areas. Together, these requirements place an impetus on each state to consider its structures for diverse, meaningful stakeholder engagement and for continuous improvement over time.

IV. ESSA Implementation Process and Timeline

The changes in ESSA provide an opportunity for every state in the nation to review and revise its system of accountability and supports over the next 12-18 months, and submit them to USED for peer review and approval. States should start now, beginning with a self-assessment, consistent with the CCSSO principles, emerging best practices, and ESSA requirements – as reflected in the roadmap below. In this way, each state can identify what it considers its critical opportunities for the future of accountability and supports, and how it will meet ESSA requirements in that regard. Additionally, states and districts should now begin developing or refining their systemic mechanisms for stakeholder engagement, given that all major plans will require stakeholder input before being submitted for USED peer review and approval, and given that next generation accountability changes will likely require broad buy-in in order to be most effective at improving outcomes.

As states are leading this work, USED will likely move quickly this year to publish new regulations on ESSA accountability provisions through notice and comment, and to set expectations for state plans. This may include a negotiated rulemaking process on the topics of state standards, assessments, and "supplement not supplant" provisions, and more traditional rulemaking on accountability, supports, and other matters. States will use their current accountability systems (under ESEA waivers or otherwise) for the 2015-16 accountability determinations, and will have the option of "holding harmless" schools and districts for 2016-17 determinations as they transition to new systems of accountability and supports. As states and districts continue to implement supports and interventions based on determinations from their current systems, they should start developing the key indicators of their next-generation accountability systems (within the parameters of the law) and developing the long-term and interim progress goals required under ESSA for 2017-18. Beginning in 2017-18, new state systems of accountability and supports will govern, and states will use them, among other things, to identify anew their lowest-performing schools for more significant support and interventions. (For a more detailed ESSA implementation timeline, please see Appendix A.)

V. The Roadmap: State Principles to Guide ESSA Implementation on Accountability and Supports

ESSA provides a forcing event for all states over the next 12-18 months to review and continuously improve their systems of accountability and supports to best advance college and career ready teaching and learning for all students. Further, CCSSO's principles of college and career ready accountability and supports continue to provide a powerful framework to guide state efforts, integrate best practices, build complete systems, and meet ESSA requirements, learning from CCSSO ILN and other leading state/local efforts.

The following roadmap is organized around those principles, which are grounded in several *overarching beliefs*:

- The principles are meant to **affirm (not undercut) the role of accountability** as an important strategy in promoting CCR outcomes for all schools and students.
- At the same time, the principles are meant to evidence **a clear shift in accountability from what has too often been a limited, punitive system of labeling and sorting toward a more balanced, complete system and theory of action** that can build capacity and advance the kinds of shifts in teaching, learning, and supports necessary for all students to succeed. In this sense, state systems of accountability and supports are best understood as a process rather than an event – done in alignment with a state's policies from early learning to K12 to higher education for a complete system of supports and improvement.
- Finally, it is the clear intent of CCSSO and the states, and consistent with ESSA, to focus particularly in this next phase on what would be necessary to **elevate equity** in educational opportunity and achievement through the state system of accountability and supports.

This roadmap outlines principles that can help states – step-by-step – build systems of college and career ready accountability and supports **in an integrated, coherent manner** – focusing on the principles and the tight connections among them – to promote a complete theory of action in each context and a process of continuous improvement toward college and career ready outcomes for all students. This roadmap is meant to serve as a tool that can guide considerations and design decisions throughout the development of these integrated and coherent systems. It identifies opportunities for state leadership (things each state COULD do); ESSA requirements (things each state MUST do within its broader leadership); key points for equity; resources and state examples; and deeper dive questions that merit additional national attention, specific state consideration, or both.

ⁱ Available at <http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/CCSSO%20Accountability%20Principles.pdf>

ⁱⁱ http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Publications/ILN_CCR_Framework.html

ⁱⁱⁱ http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Publications/Recommendations_from_the_CCSSO_Accountability_Advisory_Committee_A_Vision_for_Improved_Education_Accountability_Systems.html

^{iv} http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Publications/Evolving_Coherent_Systems_of_Accountability_for_Next_Generation_Learning__A_Decision_Framework.html

^v <http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/CCSSO-Accountability%20Advisory%20Committee%20Final%20for%20Website.pdf>

Principle 1: CCR Alignment	Main Point	State Quick Takes	
	Align accountability system goals with the broader goal of helping all students master the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college and career	Status	Priority
Opportunities for State Leadership <i>Each state COULD...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish college and career ready state standards, and align accountability system goals with college and career ready performance, such as reflected in the state’s standards. Define college and career readiness to include the full range of deeper learning knowledge, skills, and dispositions – academic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal – that evidence shows are necessary for success in college, career, and life (from early learning through K12) Use this robust definition of college and career readiness to create a clear “line of sight” for all state policies and practices including accountability and supports. 		
ESSA Requirements <i>Each state MUST...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set challenging state academic standards aligned with entrance requirements for credit-bearing coursework in the state’s system of public higher education and relevant career and technical education state standards. ESSA § 1111(b)(1)(D)(i). Use those standards to carry out systems of assessment, accountability, and school improvement (ESSA § 1111(b)(1)(A)), and base the state’s accountability system on those challenging standards. ESSA § 1111(c)(4). 		
Elevating Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a clear state definition and high standards for college and career readiness can set equitable, high expectations for all students. Including higher-order skills can ensure that the system focuses on developing a full range of college and career ready knowledge and skills for <i>all</i> students. 		
Resources/ Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCSSO, <i>Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions: The Innovation Lab Network State Framework for College, Career, and Citizenship Readiness, and Implications for State Policy</i>¹ State examples, such as ESEA waivers (e.g., OR, WA, NH); WV <i>College and Career Readiness</i> definition;² ME Learning Results³ and Guiding Principles⁴ 		
Sample Deep-Dive Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do we know about the range of knowledge and skills necessary for success in college and career (and how do they align from early learning through K12 education)? 		

¹ http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Publications/ILN_CCR_Framework.html

² <https://wvde.state.wv.us/apps/tree/static/doc/college-career-readiness.pdf>

³ <http://www.maine.gov/doe/proficiency/standards/maine-learning-results.html>

⁴ <http://www.maine.gov/doe/proficiency/standards/guiding-principles.html>

State Notes	

Principle 2:	Main Point	Quick Takes	
Annual Determinations	Make annual accountability determinations for all public schools/districts based on clear goals to advance continuous improvement.	Status	Priority
<p>Opportunities for State Leadership</p> <p><i>Each state COULD...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a clear, shared <i>vision for the role of accountability</i> and how it connects – as a process – to meaningful supports and continuous improvement for all public schools/districts. ▪ Make and report on <i>annual accountability determinations</i> for all public schools and districts that are valid, meaningful, and understandable, including through index systems and/or data dashboard (as described in Principle 3), and consider how you will address school classifications (including lowest-performing as well as highest-performing and/or the full range of schools, as appropriate). ▪ Ensure meaningful <i>accountability goals</i> for performance and improvement for all public schools and subgroups, such that all students are on track to college and career readiness. 		
<p>ESSA Requirements</p> <p><i>Each state MUST...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a system for meaningfully differentiating on an annual basis all public schools in the state (based on accountability indicators, as described in Principle 3), ESSA § 1111(c)(4)(C), and identify for support and improvement the lowest-performing schools and subgroups (as described in Principles 7 and 8). ▪ Establish ambitious, state-defined long-term goals, including measurements of interim progress, on all required indicators and for all students and subgroups. ESSA § 1111(c)(4)(A) 		
<p>Elevating Equity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishing reasonable but ambitious goals for all schools and subgroups, based on multiple measures (as described in Principle 3) provides an opportunity to focus on closing achievement gaps. ▪ Making/reporting determinations for all public schools provides an opportunity to empower stakeholders and promote continuous improvement in all schools. 		
<p>Resources/ Examples</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>To come.</i> 		
<p>Sample Deep-Dive Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What could it mean to “meaningfully differentiate” schools across the full range of performance? What does that mean for classifications, and/or for data dashboard and/or index models (as discussed below) given the state’s vision? 		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What information is important for all purposes and stakeholders, and how do you distill that to be meaningful while not overwhelming?▪ What are options/models for setting long-term and interim goals?▪ How could state system best integrate early learning, K12, and higher education?▪
State Notes	

Principle 3: Focus on Outcomes	Main Point	Quick Takes	
	Base accountability determinations on multiple, high-quality measures that are aligned with advancing college and career ready goals.	Status	Priority
Opportunities for State Leadership <i>Each state COULD...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include multiple measures in the state’s accountability system to make initial accountability determinations (and as part of deeper data reporting and diagnostics, as described in Principle 6), including but not limited to high-quality assessments and accurate graduation rates, based on both status and growth in performance, as appropriate. ▪ Include all students as appropriate (and subgroups as described below). ▪ Ensure that all metrics are meaningful, measurable, and teachable and learnable with regard to the goal of improving CCR student outcomes and closing achievement gaps (connected by evidence and/or researched-based presumptions). ▪ Consider additional measures of the full range of CCR student outcomes, including the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that result in college, career, and civic readiness, such as additional CCR measures⁵ (e.g., advanced course taking, students “on track,” college credit, college entrance without remediation, workforce certificates); measures of engagement and/or higher-order/social-emotional skills; and those best measured through performance-based demonstrations of learning. ▪ Consider additional measures of school quality and equity, including for example, opportunity for student learning and access to critical resources (e.g., curriculum access, access to early learning, provision and distribution of high-quality teaching/leading, funding, staffing, facilities, and technology); and school climate/environment and conditions of learning (e.g. school discipline, attendance, etc.) ▪ Determine how to weigh measures and how to present measures for initial accountability determinations – whether as a data dashboard, index 		

⁵ Other possible measures include, for example, additional academic subjects beyond reading and math; successful completion of advanced coursework; college credit accumulation; college entry, remediation, and persistence rates; career preparedness as measured by industry certifications and other measures; performance on national or international assessments (e.g., NAEP or PISA); reading proficiency in the early grades; measures of students being “on track” at critical transition points (such as 9th grade); and measures of deeper learning/social-emotional skills (such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, and academic mindset).

	<p>system, or both, across multiple measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider the value of and mechanism for including a mix of state and local measures to spur innovation and authenticity, where there is sufficient validity, capacity, scale, etc. ▪ Consider efforts to improve quality and utility in the state’s system of assessments, including the number and mix of interim and summative assessments, the inclusion of performance-based assessments, and the number and mix of state and local assessments, so that essential diagnostic, instructional, and accountability purposes are met with the minimum number of assessments needed, assessments are clearly being used for their intended purposes, and assessments meet criteria of high-quality, individually and as a system.⁶ ▪ Consider how all accountability measures and their combination advance the shifts in teaching and learning necessary to advance CCR student outcomes (such as personalized, competency-based approaches) – for example by valuing student progress toward mastery of key knowledge and skills. ▪ Consider any unintended negative consequences of different indicators and/or accountability designs. 		
<p>ESSA Requirements</p> <p><i>Each state MUST...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each state’s accountability system must be based on multiple indicators and measure annual performance on those indicators (including status and/or growth as determined by the state). ▪ This includes (1) state assessments in math and reading/language arts (3-8 and once in high school), (2) one other indicator for elementary and middle schools, (3) graduation rates for high schools, (4) English proficiency for ELLs, and (5) at least one other indicator that is valid, reliable, comparable, and statewide (such as measures of student engagement, educator engagement, advanced coursework, postsecondary readiness, or school climate and safety). ESSA § 1111 (c)(4)(B). ▪ In making annual determinations, indicators 1-4 above must each be given “substantial weight” and “in the aggregate, much greater weight” than the other indicator(s) in 5. ESSA § 1111 (c)(4)(C). 		

⁶ <http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2013/CCSSO%20Assessment%20Quality%20Principles%2010-1-13%20FINAL.pdf>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Systems must annually measure at least 95% of all students (and students in each subgroup), and states shall determine how this factors into accountability. ESSA § 1111 (c)(4)(E). ▪ ESSA requires state high-quality assessments in reading/language arts and math in grades 3-8 and once in high school (and grade-span tests in science) and establishes a range of assessment pilots and programs, including a pilot for innovative assessment models (up to 7 states in the first 3 years) (see ESSA § 1204); providing for locally-selected, nationally-recognized high school assessments (see ESSA § 1111(b)(2)(H); and a use of funds to audit assessment systems (for quality and burden) (see ESSA § 1202). 		
<p>Elevating Equity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Including a range of measures aligned to CCR student outcomes provides an opportunity to prioritize efforts that will help promote equal opportunity and close achievement gaps, as well as raise achievement overall. ▪ Meaningfully including English proficiency for English learners provides an opportunity to elevate the importance of English proficiency for closing achievement gaps. 		
<p>Resources/ Examples</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current state/district models, such as CA LCFF/LCAP; CORE; KY ▪ International models including Alberta, Canada, and the United Kingdom 		
<p>Sample Deep-Dive Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do we know about the array of metrics that are meaningful, measurable, and able to be impacted with regard to advancing CCR teaching, learning, and student outcomes? What do educators and other stakeholders believe is most valuable? ▪ Within that, how are you specifically thinking about non-academic indicators related to school quality? ▪ What might be most important for accountability versus deeper data analysis and diagnostic review (as described below)? ▪ What are the implications and opportunities associated with incorporating English proficiency in school accountability systems? ▪ What are the viable options (including under ESSA) for data dashboard and/or index models for initial accountability determinations? Is there a distinction in what you would want to use to identify lowest-performing schools versus and what’s reported as part of your school/district report cards? ▪ How can states leverage ESSA assessment provisions to best advance a system of high-quality assessments for accountability and broader, deeper purposes? How should the state address “opt-out” issues in that regard? 		
<p>State Notes</p>			



Principle 4:	Main Point	Quick Takes	
Disaggregation	Continue commitment to disaggregation of data – for reporting and accountability – and to closing achievement gaps in education opportunity and outcomes.	Status	Priority
<p>Opportunities for State Leadership</p> <p><i>Each state COULD ...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to disaggregate data for each measure in the state’s accountability system (discussed above) and for additional data for improvement (discussed below) – by at least the subgroups including race, ethnicity, poverty, disability, and limited English proficiency. ▪ Use disaggregated data in school accountability determinations/ classifications and in targeting supports and interventions, as appropriate (including schools with lowest-performing subgroups and/or greatest gaps). ▪ Ensure that any “super” subgroups promote inclusion rather than masking certain subgroups. ▪ Establish a minimum number for subgroup reporting and accountability that is as inclusive as possible and appropriate given context, validity, need to protect student privacy, etc. ▪ Publicly report disaggregated data for all subgroups (as discussed below). 		
<p>ESSA Requirements</p> <p><i>Each state MUST...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESSA requires that each state set long-term and interim accountability goals disaggregated by subgroup. ESSA § 1111(c)(4)(A). ▪ ESSA requires that states annually measure and make accountability determinations for each school overall and for each subgroup. ESSA § 1111(c)(4)(B), (C). ▪ ESSA requires that each state/district annually report accountability data for each school overall and for each subgroup, as well as other data points. ESSA § 1111(h)(1)(C). ▪ ESSA requires that states set a statistically-sound “minimum number” for subgroup data reporting and accountability, in consultation with key stakeholders. ESSA § 1111(c)(3)(A). 		
<p>Elevating Equity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This focus on disaggregated data and subgroup accountability and public reporting is one of the strongest commitments to equity maintained from NCLB. ▪ The focus on consultation with stakeholders can also be a mechanism for elevating equity in the process. 		
<p>Resources/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>To come.</i> 		

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Examples	
Sample Deep-Dive Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How can states best incorporate subgroup performance into school accountability determinations?▪ What do we know about “super” subgroups and how they can promote inclusion versus exclusion? What factors do stakeholders feel are important with regard to determining a "minimum number" for subgroup size and with regard to "super" subgroups?▪ How will you disaggregate data by subgroup for your non-academic indicators?
State Notes	

Principle 5:	Main Point	Quick Takes	
Data Reporting	Report data in a manner that is rich, timely, accessible, and actionable to a range of critical stakeholders.	Status	Priority
<p>Opportunities for State Leadership</p> <p><i>Each state COULD...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Produce (at least) annual state and local report cards that present key accountability data and determinations, including disaggregated data as appropriate (as in the “data dashboard” discussed in Principle 3). ▪ Include as appropriate additional data beyond those used in initial accountability determinations to further inform data analysis and continuous school improvement, including other data related to, for example, social-emotional skills; school climate; and access to resources. ▪ Design report cards to be most useful to key stakeholders (including teachers, principals, parents, policymakers, etc) in terms of format, design, substance, and distribution. ▪ Consider aligning report cards with processes for continuous improvement by incorporating data gathered through diagnostic/school quality review processes (see Principle 6). 		
<p>ESSA Requirements</p> <p><i>Each state MUST...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESSA requires that each state and district produce annual report cards and report data – overall and by subgroup, as appropriate – with regard to accountability determinations, measures used in accountability systems, and other key variables (including at a minimum, for example, preschool enrollment, access to high-quality teachers and leaders, etc.). See, e.g., ESSA § 1111(h)(1)(C). ▪ ESSA requires that these report cards be clear, concise, understandable, accessible, and developed with input from stakeholders. See e.g., ESSA § 1111(h)(1)(B) 		
<p>Elevating Equity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Robust, timely data reporting is crucial for empowering stakeholders, focusing on equity, understanding and closing gaps in opportunity and achievement, etc. This is particularly true with regard to disaggregated data. ▪ States and stakeholders have an opportunity to work together on the design of state and district report cards to make them most meaningful, user-friendly, and useful to their purposes. 		
<p>Resources/ Examples</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>To come.</i> 		

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Sample Deep-Dive Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What accountability and other data are most important to advance excellence, equity, and continuous improvement?▪ What models of data reporting are most effective for the array of key stakeholders and purposes?▪ What impact do your decisions about data inclusion have on your data collection and reporting infrastructure?
State Notes	

Principle 6: Diagnostic Review	Main Point	Quick Takes	
	Include deeper diagnostic review to better connect accountability determinations and data analysis to a range of supports and interventions.	Status	Priority
Opportunities for State Leadership <i>Each state COULD...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include state systems of deeper data analyses and school diagnostic, quality reviews to help determine root causes, identify resource and capacity issues, develop strong plans for continuous improvement, and connect initial accountability determinations to the most appropriate supports and interventions. ▪ Consider a system that supports diagnostic reviews periodically for all schools, in addition to more regularly for low-performing schools/districts. ▪ Consider how to leverage accreditation to support evidence-based school quality reviews. ▪ Consider how results from deeper data analyses and diagnostic reviews might affect accountability determinations/classifications for supports and interventions. ▪ 		
ESSA Requirements <i>Each state MUST...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESSA requires for lowest-performing schools that there be a school-level needs assessment to inform plans for comprehensive support and improvement. ESSA § 1111(d)(1)(B)(iii). 		
Elevating Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ These deeper data analyses and diagnostic reviews can focus particularly on opportunity and achievement gaps, and enable greater analysis of access to key resources, school climate, and other variables that should be addressed to improve student outcomes, particularly in high-poverty, low-performing schools. ▪ These diagnostic reviews can include key stakeholders in this regard. 		
Resources/ Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State models of diagnostic review (e.g., KY, VT Education Quality Review⁷) ▪ UK inspectorate model 		
Sample Deep-Dive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What models exist for implementing deeper analyses and diagnostic reviews that connect to accountability determinations/classifications and related supports and interventions? 		

⁷ <http://education.vermont.gov/education-quality-review>

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Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What are models for engaging stakeholders meaningfully and productively in a school-level needs assessment and other periodic reviews?▪ What role will the state, district, and school play in developing and implementing these processes?
State Notes	

Principle 7:	Main Point	Quick Takes	
Systems for General Improvement	Build statewide systems of supports and capacity to promote continuous improvement across <i>all</i> schools and districts.	Status	Priority
<p>Opportunities for State Leadership</p> <p><i>Each state COULD...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build <i>statewide systems of supports</i> available to all schools and districts to enable evidence-based plans for continuous improvement. ▪ Consider requiring <i>annual plans for continuous improvement</i> for all public schools/districts. ▪ Build a <i>clear delivery system and strengthen capacity</i> (state, district, external) to help the full range of schools and districts, as appropriate. Consider networks in this regard. ▪ Consider how these systems can promote the kinds of <i>shifts in teaching, learning, and supports</i> necessary to help all students master CCR knowledge and skills – including shifts toward personalization, competency-based pathways, focus on “cognitive” and “noncognitive” skills, etc. and shifts to further build professional capacity and growth (e.g., high-quality professional development, teacher-leader career tracks and lattices, educator development plans). 		
<p>ESSA Requirements</p> <p><i>Each state MUST...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESSA provides states with <i>wide latitude</i> in how they will set accountability classifications and systems of improvement beyond lowest performing schools (discussed below). ▪ ESSA allows states to use up to 3% of Title I funds for "Direct Student Services" - with a priority on services in districts with high concentrations of schools identified for improvement. These direct student services could indirectly benefit all schools and students in these districts by building systems of supports. 		
<p>Elevating Equity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing a full system of supports can help connect accountability more fully to resources for evidence-based improvements, and can help address achievement gaps statewide, including within school, across schools, and across districts. 		
<p>Resources/ Examples</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>To come.</i> 		

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Sample Deep-Dive Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What are the most effective state roles in building these statewide systems of support? What do districts, schools, and stakeholders most need from statewide systems of support?▪ What do we know about and how can states best promote or facilitate evidence-based, comprehensive activities as part of these statewide systems of support (including through delivery systems, use of intermediaries, strengthening the market, etc.)?
State Notes	

Principle 8:	Main Point	Quick Takes	
Lowest-Performing Schools	Ensure significant, sustained, evidence-based interventions in lowest-performing schools.	Status	Priority
<p>Opportunities for State Leadership</p> <p><i>Each state COULD...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Based on the state’s accountability system (above), identify and ensure significant, sustained, evidence-based interventions to dramatically improve school quality and outcomes in lowest-performing schools and schools with lowest-performing subgroups, and to do so on an ambitious though reasonable time frame. ▪ Consider how these school improvement plans/strategies will be informed by data analysis and deeper diagnostic review, stakeholder engagement, etc.; will address essential elements that research and evidence indicate are important; and will be subject to periodic review and continuous improvement (as described in Principle 9). 		
<p>ESSA Requirements</p> <p><i>Each state MUST...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESSA requires that states beginning in 2017-18 (and at least once every three years thereafter) identify for comprehensive support and improvement a group of lowest-performing schools based on the state’s accountability system (described in Principle 2), including at least the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools receiving Title I funds and all high schools graduating less than 67% of their students. ESSA § 1111(c)(4)(D). ▪ ESSA requires that, for these schools, districts develop, with stakeholders, a comprehensive support and improvement plan (based on all accountability indicators and a school-level needs assessment, identifying resource inequities, including evidence-based interventions, and approved by the state) for all lowest-performing schools, with the option of a one-year planning period. These districts may also provide public school choice to students in those schools. ESSA § 1111(d)(1). ▪ ESSA also requires that states beginning in 2017-18 identify for targeted support and improvement schools in which subgroups are “consistently underperforming” based on the state’s accountability system. ESSA § 1111(d)(2)(A). ▪ ESSA requires that such schools develop a targeted support and improvement plan, including evidence-based interventions, along with 		

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	district approval. ESSA § 1111(d)(2)(B).		
Elevating Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Both the focus on lowest-performing schools and lowest-performing subgroups can directly affect equity in closing gaps in opportunity and achievement. ▪ Focusing on evidence-based interventions can further support equity, such as efforts to address the effects of poverty and adversity, to equalize resources and access to great teaching, etc. 		
Resources/ Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>To come.</i> 		
Sample Deep-Dive Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do we know about the range of research/evidence-based strategies that should be included in systems of supports for lowest-performing schools and/or subgroups? ▪ What approval process will the state establish for comprehensive support and improvement schools? What will the monitoring process for these schools include? ▪ How will a school exit from the comprehensive support and improvement status? How long will a school have to work to improve before more rigorous interventions will be required? ▪ For purposes of targeted intervention schools, how will you define “consistently” and “underperforming?” ▪ How will the state determine that a targeted intervention school is not making sufficient progress such that it is identified as needing comprehensive support and improvement? 		
State Notes			

Principle 9: Continuous Improvement	Main Point	Quick Takes	
	Establish systems of periodic review and continuous improvement in the state’s system of accountability and supports itself, to best advance CCR teaching and learning.	Status	Priority
Opportunities for State Leadership <i>Each state COULD...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider how the state’s system of accountability and supports might best evolve and improve through this period of transition and over time (e.g., with regard to measures, data reporting, supports, etc.). ▪ Establish systems of periodic review and continuous improvement for the state’s system of accountability and supports (e.g., annually) based on information such as rapid-cycle feedback loops, data and evaluation, broader research, etc. ▪ In particular, ensure that systems of periodic review and continuous improvement are in place for supports to lowest-performing schools/ subgroups to best promote success and reinforce the need for learning systems. ▪ Promote systems of stakeholder engagement as part of initial plans (above) and cycles of continuous improvement. This could include diverse stakeholders such as other state leaders, local leaders, educators, parents, civil rights, business, etc. ▪ Consider how this can promote broader shifts toward learning systems and a culture of innovation, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement. 		
ESSA Requirements <i>Each state MUST...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESSA requires that states and districts periodically review and revise as appropriate their state and local plans under Title I. ESSA §§ 1111(a)(6)(A)(ii), 1112(a)(5). ▪ ESSA requires, for example, that plans for comprehensive supports and improvement for lowest- performing schools be periodically reviewed, that the state periodically review resource allocations for school improvement in schools receiving comprehensive and targeted supports, and that that more rigorous actions be taken if there is not sufficient improvement over time. See ESSA §(d)(1), (3). ▪ ESSA requires that state and local plans, as well as specific components of those plans related to assessment, accountability, and supports, be developed in consultation with an array of stakeholders. See, e.g., ESSA § 		

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	1111(a)(1)(A).		
Elevating Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishing systems of periodic review and continuous improvement can help ensure that accountability and support strategies have greater impact over time, including on equity. ▪ More broadly, this can help promote the kinds of learning systems that are likely necessary for the system to achieve success for all kids. ▪ Establishing systems of stakeholder engagement can help elevate diverse voices and advance equity in both process and substance. 		
Resources/ Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TBA 		
Sample Deep-Dive Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How can states establish systems of periodic review and continuous improvement that can help shift culture toward learning systems that can best advance CCR outcomes over time? ▪ What forms of evidence should those systems consider and on what cycles? ▪ How can states establish structures for productive, ongoing stakeholder engagement? What are the core strategies and models? ▪ 		
State Notes			

Appendix A: ESSA Implementation Timeline and Process

The following timeline includes the estimated sequence and estimated timing of activities at the federal and state/local levels in implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Activities that are certain under the law or within the process are presented in bold. **All non-bolded activities are only estimated and are subject to shifting over time**, depending on numerous factors, including but not limited to implementation by the U.S. Department of Education (USED) and to the appropriations process. Underlying these estimations is the assumption that USED will attempt to accomplish as much as possible, within existing capacity and subject to certain external restraints, in the final year of this Administration. More clarity and detail on the points within the timeline will become available as USED releases more information about transition and implementation of ESSA.

Quarter/ School Year	Federal	State/Local
Q1: January –March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 11th and 19th – USED hosts two in-person Regional Meetings for input from stakeholders • January 21st – Comments due to USED on recommendations for regulations and guidance. • USED internal efforts moving toward launch of formal Rulemaking and Negotiated Rulemaking (Neg. Reg.) (participants in Neg. Reg. will be chosen from those that submitted comments by Jan. 21st). NOTE: Neg. Reg. is required on issues related to state standards, state assessments, and supplement not supplant provisions. • January 29, 2016 – Deadline for each state implementing ESEA flexibility to notify USED of which of the two available options it has selected related to priority and focus schools • March 1, 2016 – Deadline for states choosing to update priority and focus school lists for 2016-17 school year to submit lists to USED. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States begin planning the development of their Title I state plans, including standards aligned to entrance requirements for credit-bearing coursework in the system of public higher education in the state and career and technical state standards; high quality systems of assessment; and next generation accountability systems • States begin planning for stakeholder engagement in state and local plans under the main ESSA programs and funding streams • January 29, 2016 – Deadline for each state implementing ESEA flexibility to notify USED of whether it will (1)"freeze" priority and focus school lists for improvement as of December 10, 2015 and continue to implement interventions at least through 2016-17, OR (2) exit schools that met the exit criteria and identify new schools that will implement interventions through the 2016-17 school year • March 1, 2016 – Deadline for states that selected second option above to submit updated lists of priority and focus schools to USED
Q2: April-June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USED possibly publishes in Federal Register proposed regulations on all topics not subject to Neg. Reg. • USED reviews public comments and commences revisions to proposed ESSA regulations on all topics not subject to Neg. Reg. • Title I assessment peer review commences (April and June 2016) • Neg. Reg. process possibly convenes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States continue process of developing their plans and conducting stakeholder engagement • States and districts continue to administer assessments under ESEA and report on performance on statewide assessments, including by subgroup, for the 2015-16 school year (without required reporting on AMOs) • States continue to publish annual report cards under ESEA (but are not required to report on performance against AMO's for 2014-15 or 2015-16)

Quarter/ School Year	Federal	State/Local
Q3: July-Sept 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 1, 2016 - USED transitions to award funding for formula grants authorized under ESSA • USED reviews public comments and revises proposed ESSA regulations in areas not subject to Neg. Reg. • 8/1 – ESEA Flexibility Waivers expire (educator evaluation no longer required;) • Neg. Reg. process likely continues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States continue process of developing their state plans and conducting stakeholder engagement • States continue to publish annual report cards under ESEA (but are not required to report on performance against AMO's for 2014-15 or 2015-16) • 8/1 – ESEA Flexibility Waivers expire (note educator evaluation no longer required)
Q4: Oct-Dec 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 1, 2016 - USED transitions to award funding for competitive grants authorized under ESSA • USED possibly finalizes ESSA regulations in areas not subject to Neg. Reg. and publishes in Federal Register • USED potentially publishes in Federal Register proposed regulations subject to Neg. Reg. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States are in transition year from ESEA Waivers to ESSA • States possibly release their state plans for 30-day comment period • Districts begin developing their local Title I plans for submission to States
Prior to the end of the Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USED potentially finalizes and publishes regulations on all topics not subject to Neg. Reg. • USED potentially publishes proposed regulations subject to Neg. Reg. 	
Q1-Q2 2017: Remainder of 2016-2017 School Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USED possibly finalizes regulations subject to Neg. Reg • Jan. 2017 – Incoming Administration commences • States submit state plans (whether consolidated or specific to ESSA titles), and USED conducts peer review process of the plans. • USED continues process of awarding funding to states for assessment audits for the 2017-18 school year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States are in transition year from ESEA Waivers to ESSA • Priority and focus schools continue to implement interventions through the end of 2016-17 (and potentially 2017-18, pending clarification from USED) before transition to ESSA school improvement process • States submit state plans (whether consolidated or specific to ESSA titles) to USED for review and approval, including participating in peer review process • Districts continue to develop local plans consistent with State plans • States will possibly begin to conduct assessment audits
2017-18 School Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USED provides ongoing technical assistance, guidance, and monitoring of ESSA implementation, including developing new monitoring questions and FAQs based on the statute, possibly new regulations, and addressing other issues needing clarity • USED continues processes for grant competitions and pilot/demonstration programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States fully implement new state plans, including new accountability systems with new determinations to be made potentially at end of school year. • Under new state accountability system, states identify new cohort of low-performing schools in need of support (timing of supports and interventions TBA) • States commence process of awarding funds to LEAs for support and improvement activities in identified schools (timing and process – competitive or formula – will be

Quarter/ School Year	Federal	State/Local
		state-determined; awards for up to four years, which may include a planning year) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States likely conduct assessment audits
2018-19 School Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USED provides ongoing technical assistance, guidance, and monitoring of ESSA implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAs develop and submit applications to SEAs for funding to implement support and improvement activities for identified schools (process and timing of application TBD by each state) • Schools identified in need of improvement potentially begin planning year • Potentially Y1 of funding for school improvement activities in first cohort of identified schools (may be a planning year for LEAs, as determined by states)
2019-20 School Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USED provides ongoing technical assistance, guidance, and monitoring of ESSA implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially Y2 of funding for first cohort of school improvement activities (may be first year of implementation in states that allowed for planning year)