

# Connecting Goals to Accountability Workshop

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# What do you (dis)like about your current accountability system?

- ⌘ ESSA provides opportunity for state to shape the accountability system it wants
  - ❖ ESSA requirements for *assessment* quite similar to NCLB
  - ❖ ESSA requirements for *accountability* a little less prescribed than for NCLB or ESEA Waivers
    - ❖ What – ESSA specifies several “must do”; leaves some to state
    - ❖ How – ESSA provides more leeway on some key aspects, but prescribes several others—especially in the draft ESSA Accountability regulations

States with rigorous, proven accountability systems in place may seek waivers under 8401 of new accountability requirements that are inconsistent with their current approach to accountability and can demonstrate it will advance student achievement.

# Goals are central to accountability

⌘ Accountability systems are tools to help achieve some goal(s)

- Goals shape everything in accountability system
  - See *Roadmap, Principles; Key Elements for Accountability Systems; Measures that Matter*
  - State should have a Vision statement from chief policymakers that provides some key goals that will lead the accountability system

# CCSSO *Principles* provide examples of centrality of goals

- ⌘ Principle 1: Align performance goals to college- and career-ready standards
- ⌘ Principle 2: Make annual accountability determinations for all public schools/districts based on clear goals to advance continuous improvement
- ⌘ Principle 3: Base accountability determinations on multiple, high-quality measures that are aligned with advancing college and career ready goals
- ⌘ Principle 4: Continue commitment to disaggregation of data – for reporting and accountability – and to closing achievement gaps in education opportunity and outcomes

# What types of goals are there?

- ⌘ **Societal goal (Vision)** – What education is supposed to help bring about in the society and for members of the society. *Examples: better citizenship, economic prosperity, more just society, greater life satisfaction for individuals*
- ⌘ **Educational goal (Mission)** – What large educational outcome will help bring about the societal goals. *Example: having all students well-prepared for post-secondary living, e.g., college/career/citizenship-readiness*
- ⌘ **Educational Outcome Goal (Operational Outcome)** – How the educational goal is defined operationally. *Example: College-ready=qualified to be placed in credit-bearing (non-remedial) first college course in content area*
- ⌘ **Accountability Goal (Long-term Operational Accountability)** – What the accountability system is trying to achieve in the long-term
- ⌘ **Intermediate Goals (Shorter-term Operational Accountability)** – Acceptable intermediate performance
- ⌘ **Indicators and Metrics** – The specific ways the goals will be measured, evaluated, and reported

# What makes a good goal in general?

## ⌘ SMART

- ⌘ S – Specific – stakeholders agree scope is appropriate
  - ⌘ M – Measurable – stakeholders agree with how measured
  - ⌘ A – Assignable – stakeholders agree who are responsible
  - ⌘ R – Relevant – stakeholders agree goal worth working for
  - ⌘ R – Realistic – stakeholders agree goal is doable
  - ⌘ T – Time-bound – stakeholders agree timing makes sense
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- ⌘ Coherent – Set of goals should be work together

# Importance of “Realistic” and “Relevant”

- ⌘ With NCLB, many stakeholders in many states supported the overall goals and values of NCLB—increased academic proficiency and greater equity among subgroups
- ⌘ But eventually many stakeholders felt the NCLB specific accountability goals were **unrealistic** (“100% of students Proficient by 2014”)
- ⌘ And many stakeholders felt the NCLB accountability provisions were **unfair** and **irrelevant** (low performance by one subgroup would identify the entire school for sanctions that may not be connected to helping the students in that subgroup)

# ESSA Required Actions/Decisions and Goals

- ⌘ Evaluate school/subgroup performance on each **indicator** and report annually
- ⌘ Combine performances on indicators to “meaningfully differentiate” schools and give an **overall** rating annually
- ⌘ At least every three years identify schools in need of “**comprehensive** support and improvement”
- ⌘ Identify schools in need of “**targeted** support and improvement”
- ⌘ Identify schools that qualify to **exit** from comprehensive/targeted support and improvement
- ⌘ Identify schools who go from comprehensive to more intensive support and intervention
- ⌘ Each action/decision requires a goal/target



# ESSA requirements for goals - 1

- ⌘ **Set “ambitious long-term goals” for at least five accountability system indicators** (Academic Achievement, Graduation Rate, Progress towards achieving English language proficiency; Academic Progress and/or Other Academic Indicator; School Quality/Student Success)
  - Long-term Goals should be established in terms of the Indicators [“Indicator Goals”] *and* in terms of selected Measures/Metrics [“Operational Goals”]
    - Example of Indicator Goal: *All students will be college ready, defined as qualified to be placed in a credit-bearing college-level first course in English and in mathematics*
    - Example of Operational Goal: *All high school students will score at least Level 3 on the state high school assessments in ELA and mathematics, or...*
- ⌘ **Long-term goals must have same multi-year “term” for all students/subgroups**
- ⌘ **Long-term goals must indicate significant progress in closing statewide proficiency and graduation rates gaps between subgroups**

# ESSA requirements for goals – 2

- ⌘ Set “**measurements of interim progress**” for each accountability **indicator** that reflect the long-term goals
- ⌘ Must establish measurements of interim progress for each **subgroup** consistent with long-term goals
- ⌘ Must **report** annually for schools and subgroups performance on each indicator in relation to measurements of interim progress
  - Draft accountability regulations stipulate that the state must establish at least performance levels for each indicator and use those performance levels in making accountability determinations
- ⌘ Hardest goal problem: how to **combine**—what is **overall performance goal**; what does it mean?

# ESSA requirements for goals – 3

- ⌘ The ESSA draft Accountability Regulations provide additional operational goals/targets and conditions.
- ⌘ A school will be designated as qualifying for “**comprehensive** support/improvement” if
  - Among the lowest-performing 5% of all Title I schools in the state
  - Any public high school in the state failing to graduate one-third or more of its students
  - “Chronically low” Title I schools with a “consistently underperforming subgroup” that has received targeted assistance and has not met exit criteria of improvement within three years

# ESSA requirements for goals – 4

⌘ A school will be designated as qualifying for “targeted support and improvement” if:

- School has at least one federally defined subgroup whose performance is at or below the summative performance of all students in any of the lowest-performing 5% of Title I schools in comprehensive support and improvement.
- School has a “consistently underperforming” subgroup, as defined by the state (state defines subgroup and criteria for “consistently underperforming”; identified annually based on no more than two years’ data)

# Coherent goals and accountability

⌘ Each goal should be formulated well

⌘ Set of goals must be coherent

- When intentionally combined to produce single ratings or decisions *and*
- When taken individually

# Monitoring & improving accountability goals

- ⌘ How will you check to see whether the system is working as intended, whether anything should be improved?
- ⌘ Do you have processes and the expectation from policymakers and other stakeholders that the system will be modified as needed over time?

# Some Issues and Questions to Consider

- ⌘ What are your state's "societal" and "educational goals," and how does accountability fit?
- ⌘ What is your state's theory of action, including accountability timelines and how supports and interventions fit?
- ⌘ What does your state like and dislike from its previous/current accountability systems? Do any of the goals need to be changed?
- ⌘ 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 given the state's vision?
- ⌘ 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?

# Some Possible Next Steps

- ⌘ Use the CCSSO resources from these Workshops to:
  - Develop/modify/reaffirm the state's theory of action, including how accountability fits with achieving educational goals
  - Determine qualitative statements of school performance quality for the intended accountability time schedule
  - Develop the metric-specific goals and criteria that reflect the qualitative statements
  - Determine if the state needs additional support specific to the state's plan and context.
- ⌘ Evaluate the coherence of the goals and system—conceptually and through empirical modeling—and tune as necessary
- ⌘ Determine if the state will apply for an accountability waiver under 8401.
- ⌘ Review the draft ESSA Accountability regulations (issued 5/31/16 in Federal Register) and send in any comments before 7/28/16.