

# ESSA Notes



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## ESSA Update to State Board of Education Available

At the January 10, 2017 meeting of the State Board of Education (SBE), Deputy Superintendent Venessa Keesler presented updated information regarding Michigan’s plan to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Keesler summarized the ESSA planning process to date and provided SBE members with a white paper that outlines key areas of stakeholder agreement around specific elements of Michigan’s plan. The paper also describes areas where decisions are still being made and the steps the MDE is taking to seek consensus where possible.

Both the [PowerPoint presentation](#) and [white paper](#) are posted on the ESSA website at [www.michigan.gov/essa](http://www.michigan.gov/essa). Click “State Plan Development” to access these two new resources, along with many earlier ESSA planning documents.

## ESSA Stakeholder Feedback to Shape Plan

Hundreds of educators, parents, community members, and others have responded to a call for ESSA planning feedback by the Michigan Department of Education (see the [January 4, 2017 ESSA Notes](#)). Respondents have weighed in on recommended elements of Michigan’s draft plan related to five broad areas required by ESSA:

- Accountability
- Assessment
- Supports to Students and Schools
- Supports for Special Populations of Students
- Teacher and Leader Quality

MDE staff and action teams currently are reviewing survey data with a goal of incorporating participant priorities and feedback into the final recommendations that will shape Michigan’s ESSA Plan. That plan is expected to be drafted in January; it will be available this

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## ESSA FACTS . . . . .

State Title III plans (which guide services for English learners) should include how local education agencies (LEAs) will use a high-quality, effective instructional curriculum and how the State education agency (SEA) will assist an LEA if such strategies for educating English Learners are not effective § 3113(8)(B).

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February for another round of public feedback before being finalized and submitted to the U.S. Department of Education in early April.

## Surveys Open Through January 23, 2017

There's still time to add your voice! The current surveys remain open through Monday, January 23, 2017. After that, interested contributors to Michigan's plan can submit their ideas through an online comment portal and dedicated email address. You'll find all available feedback options under the **Get Involved** tab on the [ESSA web page](http://www.michigan.gov/essa) ([www.michigan.gov/essa](http://www.michigan.gov/essa)).

## MDE Partner to Conduct Virtual Focus Groups with Teachers, Paraprofessionals, Parents

Public Policy Associates, Inc. will be conducting online focus groups with pre-registered parents, teachers, and paraprofessionals on behalf of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). Participants in the groups will include focus group volunteers from each sector who earlier signed up via the ESSA webpage. Each virtual engagement will be open for two days in January to allow participants to respond at their leisure.

After completion of the group sessions, Public Policy Associates will provide the MDE a summary of the group feedback, along with a transcript of the focus group conversations. The virtual focus groups are made possible through a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and the generous contribution of time by the focus group participants. We appreciate their interest and support in informing Michigan's ESSA planning.

## Plans for 2017-18 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Formula Grants

While the MDE continues to move forward on developing its ESSA plan, it is anticipated that the grant programs will undergo changes for the 2017-18 school year. The plan is to hold the essential grant processes as stable as

possible for the 2017-18 school year while implementing any federally required changes. The MDE will require an additional year to make more substantive changes, and these will be implemented in the 2018-19 school year. [A memo from Deputy Superintendent Venessa Keesler](#) on January 12, 2017, provides an outline of the key changes for the 2017-18 school year, so districts, public school academies, and schools can begin planning.

## New Federal Guidance Provides Clarity on State Plans, Report Cards, Graduation Rates

The U.S. Department of Education has released a series of resources to support states in their transition to the ESSA. The guidance listed below provide additional clarity on the role of states, districts, and schools under the ESSA to ensure that all students receive a high-quality education and that they graduate high school prepared for success in college and career.

ESSA [Consolidated State Plan Guidance](#) is intended to support each state educational agency (SEA) in developing a consolidated state plan that meets all statutory and regulatory requirements with regard to improved student academic achievement and increased quality of instruction. Further, it will guide peer reviewers who will evaluate the degree to which each state plan meets those requirements and is likely to support a comprehensive and coherent set of improvements to support all students. The document includes both required components of the consolidated state plan, as well as considerations for both SEAs and peer reviewers to improve the quality of such plans.

ESSA [State and Local Report Cards Guidance](#) is intended to assist state education agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs) in implementing the report card requirements under Title I, Part A of the ESEA and implementing regulations in 34 C.F.R. §§ 200.30 through 200.37 beginning in the 2017-2018 school year. This ESSA provision represents an effort to increase transparency and inform students, educators, parents, and others invested in the success of our students and schools. The Elementary

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and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the ESSA, maintains requirements for SEAs and LEAs to prepare and disseminate report cards that provide information on SEA, LEA, and school performance and progress in an understandable and uniform format.

ESSA [High School Graduation Rate Guidance](#) provides states, LEAs, and schools with information about how to implement the graduation rate requirements in the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA and implementing regulations in 34 C.F.R. §§ 200.34. Student graduation from high school

with a regular high school diploma is an important indicator of school success and one of the most significant indicators of student college and career readiness. Under the ESEA, each state and LEA must calculate and report on its annual report card a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, disaggregated by subgroups. A uniform and accurate measure of the four-year high school graduation rate that is comparable across States and consistently reported over time is critical to understanding the successes and challenges for schools in ensuring that all students graduate from high school.

## Questions from the Field

### **Will charter schools be included in the accountability expectations and discussion?**

Yes. Charter schools (also called Public School Academies) are held to the same accountability requirements as traditional public schools under ESSA.

### **How are graduation rates calculated for students who leave the district? Who is responsible if they do not graduate with their cohort?**

The graduation rate calculation uses the cohort methodology, which has been used in Michigan for many years. CEPI has [comprehensive documentation here](#).

### **Participation Component of Accountability Rating – if a school has 92% participation, how does that affect their grade? (For example, is it no longer “credit for 95% or no credit at all”?)**

The proposed accountability system uses a partial credit index model. This means a school that has a 92% participation rate on state assessments will receive 92% of its participation points.

## What's Happening Now . . . . .

- MDE staff and action teams are reviewing survey data with a goal of incorporating participant priorities and feedback into final recommendations for Michigan’s ESSA Plan.
- Second-round feedback surveys remain open through Monday, January 23, 2017 (see article on page 1). Education stakeholders will have one more opportunity to provide feedback on the final plan when it’s completed.
- MDE staff continue to monitor the conversations being held in Washington, DC as the nation transitions to a new administration and Congress. Rules and regulations regarding ESSA implementation remain uncertain until we see how our newly elected federal leaders will move forward in early 2017.