PA’s ESSA Plan: CSI and A-TSI Schools

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Background
More information on Pennsylvania’s ESSA plan, including Advisories from the Association’s Education Services Division, is available at www.psea.org/essa.

- Congress’ reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015 presented Pennsylvania with a once-in-a-decade opportunity to reshape public education.
- On Jan. 17, 2018 PA’s ESSA plan was accepted by the U.S. Department of Education.
- The ESSA plan takes an important step in the right direction for our students and members because Gov. Wolf and pro-public education legislators listened to PSEA members who spend every day in classrooms.

The Purpose and Focuses of ESSA
- Equity: ESSA is a civil rights law to support students most in need.
- Transparency: ESSA continues the emphasis on data transparency as reported in Pennsylvania through the Future Ready PA Index.
- Stakeholder engagement: ESSA promotes the importance of stakeholder engagement through the school improvement process.
- Multiple measures of accountability: ESSA uses multiple measures rather than merely state standardized test scores.
- Accountability for schools: ESSA changes the point of accountability from districts to schools.
- State control: ESSA moves control back to the states and away from the federal government.

ESSA Requirements for States
- Have college and career ready standards.
- Assess students in math, language arts, and science.
- Disaggregate student data by subgroup.
- Report data with transparency.
- Identify lower-performing schools in need of support and improvement.

PA’s Indicators under ESSA
- Academic: Growth; Proficiency; Graduation rates; English Language Proficiency
  - Achievement: percent proficient in math and ELA on state assessments
  - Growth: percent making progress toward English language proficiency and adjusted cohort graduation rate
- School Quality: Chronic Absenteeism and Career Readiness
PA defines **chronic absenteeism** as the number of students who miss more than 10 percent of school days across the academic year for any reason. Students must be enrolled for 60 or more days. A student is absent if they are not physically participating in instruction or instruction-related activities or on school grounds or at an approved off-grounds location for at least half the school day.

- **Career Readiness**: reflects the number of students in grades 5, 8, and 11 who demonstrate evidence that they have met PA's Career Education and Work Standards (CEW).

### Categories of Accountability Designations

- **Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)**
  - Lowest performing 5 percent of Title I schools
  - Any high school with graduation rate at or below 67 percent

- **Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (A-TSI)**
  - Any school with one or more subgroups performing as the bottom 5 percent of Title I schools

### PA’s Process to Designate Schools

- **Step 1**: Preliminary designation based on low academic achievement and low growth
- **Step 2**: Evaluation of performance for following indicators:
  - Substantially Weighted Indicators (one or both)
    - High school graduation rate
    - Progress in ELP
  - School Quality Indicators (both)
    - Career readiness
    - Chronic absenteeism
- **Step 3**: Designate additional high schools with graduation rate at or below 67 percent (all high schools, not just Title I).

### Timeline for Designated Schools

- **Year One**
  - Create/establish School Improvement Committee.
  - Conduct school-level needs assessment.
  - Write improvement plan.

- **Years Two through Four**
  - Execute improvement plan.
  - Utilize PDE’s Statewide System of District and School Improvement.
  - Demonstrate commitment to a cycle of continuous improvement.

- **Year Three**
  - Since designation must occur every three years, schools will be able to exit CSI and A-TSI designation in the third year if they meet the following criteria:
    - Exceed accountability determination standards for the next designation cycle.
    - Demonstrate measurable improvement on achievement and other indicators that were the basis of the initial accountability determination.
    - Partner in department-provided technical assistance activities.