

ESSA in PA: GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Accountability

The policies and procedures used by the state to meet federal requirements for determining how well students, and groups of students, are doing academically and compares that data with the state goals for academic progress. The framework includes how the state will measure and identify schools that are meeting the goals and those that need support and improvement.

Additional Targeted Support and Improvement Schools (A-TSI)

Schools identified in which one or more student groups performs below the CSI thresholds (*see CSI definition for more details*). These schools must design and implement a targeted support and improvement plan that is approved by the district and focused on improving student performance for the groups of students for which the school was identified. Identification is required to occur annually.

Assessment

The standardized annual test required under federal law in every grade between 3-8 and at least once in high school to measure student achievement in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science (*in PA they are the PSSAs and the Keystone Exams*). Only ELA and mathematics are used for accountability.

Career Readiness/Career Standards benchmark

PA will use the percent of students who demonstrate engagement in career exploration and preparation, with individualized career plans through specific measures by or before the end of grades 5, 8, and 11. Specifically, school entities must demonstrate that students have met the full continuum of career readiness expectations as defined for each grade span outlined in PA's Career Education and Work Academic Standards as mandated by Chapter 4 Regulations, and in accordance with District Comprehensive Plans and Chapter 339 K-12 Guidance Plans. The state data reporting will be the percent of students who have a total of 6 pieces by the end of 5th grade, 12 pieces by the end of 8th grade, and 20 pieces by the end of 11th grade.

Chronic Absenteeism

Evidence-based measure for how many students miss a certain number of school days for whatever reason (whether excused or unexcused). This is different from average daily attendance which is the percent of students in attendance throughout the year, which can mask absenteeism issues for specific students or groups of students. PA will use the percentage of students who have missed more than 10 percent of school days in the academic year, or approximately 18 days in a 180-day school year.

Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools (CSI)

ESSA requires states to determine a system to identify the bottom 5% of all Title I schools in the state, schools with graduation rates below 67%, and additional targeted support and

improvement schools that have not improved. Once identified, the schools are required to design and implement a comprehensive support and improvement plan designed to make progress on the indicators (academic and school quality) by which they were identified. Identification is required to occur every 3 years although identified schools have 4 year to meet exit criteria.

Consolidated State Plan

Plan submitted by each state education agency to the US Department of Education for approval describing how the state intends to do to comply with the requirements of the ESSA. PA's plan, approved January 2018, is available at www.education.pa.gov.

Disaggregated data/ Data by subgroups

Disaggregated data refers to data that is broken down to see information about different groups of students. Under ESSA, data must be disaggregated by 10 subgroups: race, ethnicity, family income, disability status, English learner status, gender, migrant status, status as a child in foster care, homelessness status, or military connected status. Using data about individual student groups helps identify the presence of barriers and point toward possible targeted remedies if appropriate.

English Learner

A student between the ages of 3-12 in elementary or secondary school whose native language is a language other than English. Identified English learners are entitled to civil rights protections and accommodations. Title III of ESSA provides funding to support English learners.

English Learner / English Language Proficiency (ELP)

The ability to speak, listen to, read, and write English accurately and quickly. Students who are learning English as a second language are typically called "English learners" until they attain proficiency. PA will use English Learner growth in scaled score toward attainment of English proficiency as measured by ACCESS for ELLs assessment. English learners in the United States for less than a year are not counted in the accountability system.

Equity

Equity is a measure of achievement, fairness, and opportunity in education. Recognizing that all students should have the resources necessary for high-quality educational opportunities, some students will require more resources in order to genuinely access those opportunities. Equity is a key theme throughout ESSA, which provides levers for stakeholders to identify and address disparities in providing meaningful educational opportunities to all students.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

ESSA is a bipartisan measure, signed into law on December 10, 2015, that reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the nation's landmark civil rights law enacted in 1965 focused on equal educational opportunity for all students.

Future Ready PA Index

The Future Ready PA Index is PA's public facing school report card, providing a one-stop location for comprehensive information about school success. The Index uses a dashboard model (versus a summative score like the SPP – School Performance Profile) to highlight how schools are performing and whether they are making progress on multiple indicators (*12 in total, including the 6 indicators used for federal accountability purposes*). The Index will be published annually to provide a comprehensive picture of school and student group progress.

Graduation rate

Percentage of students who graduate with a regular high school diploma within a designated number of years since the students first entered high school. PA will determine the rate based on an adjusted cohort calculation – i.e., the percentage of students who graduate with a high school diploma in four- and five-year cohort groups.

Indicators

Indicators are measures of different aspects of the education system to help gauge whether a school is effectively providing equitable learning opportunities for all students and meeting state academic standards. ESSA requires states to include certain academic indicators in its accountability system and at least one school quality indicator. PA will use 6 indicators – academic achievement; academic growth; graduation rate; English language proficiency; career readiness; and chronic absenteeism.

Keystone Exam (Keystones)

State standardized tests which all students take at least once in high school in Algebra I, Biology and Literature. Results are used for federal reporting and accountability.

N-size

The minimum number of students in a subgroup that must be present in a school to trigger specific reporting and accountability requirements under federal law. An n-size is necessary to ensure data are not reported on so few students as to make personal information identifiable. PA will use the N-size of 20 for federal reporting and accountability.

Participation rate

The percent of students who participated in the state's statewide annual assessment required under ESSA. The law requires that 95% of all students and of each subgroup of students be included in the assessment in order to prevent the exclusion of students who have been historically marginalized and to ensure sufficient data to evaluate the whole school. Should a school fall below 95%, those students will be counted as not proficient; this calculation, however, will not impact the building level data used for educator evaluation as required by Act 82.

PA State System of Assessments (PSSA)

State standardized tests given to all students in English and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and in science in grades 4 and 8. Results are used for federal reporting and accountability.

Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP)

ESSA references Specialized Instructional Support Personnel throughout the statute, including as a required stakeholder for state and local plan development. ESSA also defines the term to mean: *"(i) school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists; and "(ii) other qualified professional personnel, such as school nurses, speech language pathologists, and school librarians, involved in providing assessment, diagnosis, counseling, educational, therapeutic, and other necessary services (including related services as that term is defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401) as part of a comprehensive program to meet student needs."*

Stakeholder

ESSA identifies specific stakeholders and requires their participation at different levels of planning (state, local, etc). For example, ESSA requires that LEA plans *"must be developed with timely and meaningful consultation with teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals, specialized instructional support personnel, charter school leaders (in a local educational agency that has charter schools), administrators (including administrators of programs described in other parts of this title), other appropriate school personnel, and with parents of children in schools served under this part."*

Subgroup

A group of students identified by their race, ethnicity, family income, English proficiency, or disability status. Collecting and using this data about individual student groups helps identify where inequities for student learning and opportunities may exist. ESSA also requires data be gathered on homeless, children in foster care, and children with parents in the military although these subgroups are not used for the accountability system.

Support and Improvement Plan

The plan a school designs and implements to make progress on the indicators for which they were identified for either comprehensive or targeted support and improvement. ESSA requires the Plan to: 1) be informed by a needs assessment of the school; 2) be developed with the input of stakeholders specifically identified in ESSA; and 3) implement evidence-based strategies.

Titles (1-4) in ESSA:

- Title 1 contains most of the funding for schools and school districts – targeted to serve low-income students - as well as the majority of the accountability and reporting requirements.
- Title II provides funding and focuses on teacher quality and support for teachers.
- Title III provides funding and requirements related to English learners.
- Title IV provides funding and requirements for other areas of student support – extended learning, afterschool programs, supportive school climate, well-rounded education, charter schools, and magnet schools.