

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell
Commissioner of Education

DATE: October 5, 2016

SUBJECT: Update on Connecticut’s Transition to the Every Student Succeeds Act

Executive Summary

Introduction

The purpose of this summary is to provide the State Board of Education with working knowledge of the key changes found in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and an update on our process of stakeholder input and engagement, consultation with key stakeholders and other state programs, and our timeline for developing Connecticut’s consolidated state plan.

History/Background

In December 2015, President Obama signed into law the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The title of the reauthorized legislation, which replaced the No Child Left Behind Act, is the ESSA. The 2016-17 school year is a transition period, with full implementation of Connecticut’s state plan under ESSA beginning in the 2017-18 school year.

Significant Changes

ESSA requires that states develop plans that address standards, assessments, school and district accountability, special help for struggling schools, supports for English Learners (ELs), and greater state flexibility in using funds to support teachers and leaders.

Connecticut is well positioned for several of these changes, particularly in the areas of college and career standards, student assessment, and the use of a multifactor, holistic accountability system. Our Alliance District and Commissioner Network programs provide many of the required structures/supports called for under ESSA.

Unfortunately, however, due to changes in the federal funding formula for Title II, Connecticut will lose approximately 5 million dollars in funding over the next six years. Title II of ESSA focuses on “Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, and Other School Leaders” and has historically been passed on to districts to fund professional development activities at the local level. It has also funded teacher quality competitive grants out of the Office of Higher Education, which will now be discontinued.

Other changes found in ESSA or draft regulations include:

- State Education Agencies (SEAs) must develop long term goals in key areas, such as improved academic achievement, graduation rates, and English language proficiency for ELs and requires states to develop a performance management plan with interim measures/progress checks toward those long term goals;
- Title I state plans must describe how the state will ensure that “low-income and minority children enrolled in Title I schools are not served at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field and inexperienced” educators;
- Comprehensive Support and Improvement Plans are required for the lowest-performing 5% of Title I schools on the state accountability index, high schools with <67% graduation rates, and schools with underperforming subgroups that do not improve after a state-determined number of years; and
- Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must develop school improvement plans using “evidence-based practices” for all Title I schools after conducting a school-based needs assessment, and identifying resource inequities between title and non-title schools. LEAs must also develop procedures for monitoring and periodic review of their plans.

ESSA Timeline:

December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESEA reauthorized as ESSA
January 2016 – present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly Progress Check Calls with USED Office of State Supports • ESSA review by CSDE leadership and staff (statute review, webinars, workshops, USED and professional organizations’ publications, proposed rule making comments, etc.)
June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSDE begins ESSA Superintendents’ Webinar Series (<i>see attached flyer</i>) Webinar #1: ESSA Overview and the 2016 Regulatory Process
July 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Board of Education Five-Year Comprehensive Plan adopted July 6, 2016
August 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSDE Senior Leadership Retreat on ESSA • ESSA web page created on the CSDE Website (<i>see home page</i>)
August - September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder Engagement Planning with RESC Alliance and SERC
September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of School Year Meetings- ESSA updates provided by Chiefs and Education Consultant Staff
September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESSA Superintendents’ Webinar #2: Accountability, Assessment, and Data Collection and Reporting • Quarterly Progress Check Call with USED Office of State Supports
October 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESSA Superintendents’ Webinar #3: Title I – Improving Basic Programs, Education of Migratory Children, Prevention/Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk (includes Foster Care) • Commissioner’s State Board Plan/ESSA Roundtables • Leadership Council – ESSA Update • State Board of Education Update on ESSA

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSDE Staff Update on ESSA
October – December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESSA Superintendents’ Webinar #4: Title II and III Under ESSA • Stakeholder Focus Groups and Stakeholder Survey (RESC Alliance and SERC)
December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalized federal regulations expected specific to academics, assessment, accountability, state plans, and “supplement, not supplant” provisions. • Synthesis of stakeholder input • SBE Update on ESSA • Begin drafting Connecticut’s ESSA Consolidated State Plan • Quarterly Progress Check Call with USED Office of State Supports • Present draft plan to Education Committee of CGA
January - March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft the Consolidated State Plan for ESSA • Present draft plan to SBE Legislation and Policy Development Committee • Present draft of ESSA Consolidated State Plan for approval by State Board of Education • Governor reviews draft plan
April – May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Comment Period (30 days) • Plan Revision period (if needed)
June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioner sign off • Governor sign off
July 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecticut submits the Consolidated State Plan

Prepared by: _____
 Ellen E. Cohn
 Deputy Commissioner

Approved by: _____
 Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell
 Commissioner of Education