

Planning for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Assessment

On December 10, 2015, the president signed into law the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), which reauthorizes the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*. The table below, and the related questions that follow it, highlight key ESSA assessment-related requirements for states, specifically, those requirements for which the Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation (CSAI) can provide implementation support.

What ESSA says	What support CSAI provides	
<p>State assessments may be administered in a single summative assessment or as assessments that are given throughout the school year (that result in a summative score) to provide more frequent information on student achievement and growth.</p>	<p>Guidance and resources on state assessments, specifically related to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • composition of the assessment system • alignment (including computer-adaptive testing [CAT] alignment and alternate assessment alignment) • development process (including application of Universal Design for Learning [UDL]) • quality improvement • national scans of state assessment practices • early childhood assessments • ELP assessments • alternate assessments • application of interim assessments • grade 8 mathematics assessments • building coherent assessment 	
<p>States may include assessments measuring student academic growth and assessments that are partially delivered in the form of portfolios, projects, or extended performance tasks.</p>		
<p>States will need to demonstrate, in consultation with LEAs, that they have implemented assessments that are of high quality and are aligned to the state standards.</p>		
<p>“Innovative assessment systems” may be piloted by a limited number of states to experiment with their own locally designed competency-based and/or performance-based assessments.</p>	<p>Serving as a thought partner to states as they consider innovative assessment systems.</p>	<p>Information on what federal funds can be used for piloting assessments.</p>

What ESSA says

What support CSAI provides

Funds from certain ESEA programs may be used by States and districts to conduct assessment audits, improve the quality of assessments, and develop systems to support the use of assessment results to improve teaching and learning during the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years.

Technical assistance regarding the testing audit process (e.g., examining relevance of tests, how well tests reflect and measure learning standards, how coherent tests are within the same system).

Beginning with FY 17 funds, section 1202 of the ESSA provides for state grants, and for states to make sub-grants to districts, to

- ❖ conduct state and district audits (that include such things as schedule, purpose, and feedback on the tests from stakeholders); and
- ❖ develop state plans to improve and streamline the State assessment system, such as
 - * eliminating unnecessary tests;
 - * disseminating best practices; and
 - * supporting district efforts to streamline assessments and regularly review assessments.

States may administer locally selected, nationally recognized high school academic assessments in lieu of state assessments, provided they meet peer review requirements.

Guidance on connecting high school assessments with college and career pathways/career preparation and technical assistance regarding peer review.

States submit their assessments for peer review based on the guidance that was released by USED in October 2015.

Guidance on appropriate documentation and evidence to meet peer review requirements.

Related Questions for State Education Agency Leadership

- ❖ How do the components (state and local assessments) of the state’s comprehensive assessment system align to our current standards?
- ❖ Is there an interest in, or need for, revising the assessment system to include innovative assessments that can be used to demonstrate student mastery or proficiency?
- ❖ Will we choose to exempt from the regular state assessment any 8th graders who take advanced mathematics in middle school?
- ❖ How will we provide additional oversight for LEAs that administer alternative assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities if those LEAs are assessing more than 1 percent of their total student population via these assessments?
- ❖ Should we consider making nationally recognized high school assessments available for selection by LEAs? If so, what is our plan for establishing the technical criteria needed to determine if any such assessments meet peer review requirements?

Related Questions for State Education Agency Leadership (continued)

- ❖ Should we set a limit on the amount of time devoted to the administration of assessments for each grade?
- ❖ Should we conduct an assessment audit (i.e., an assessment inventory) to determine what local assessments are being utilized and the amount of student time spent on assessments?
- ❖ Do the current ELP assessments used in the state align with our ELP standards?
- ❖ What do we want the state comprehensive assessment system to look like in 5 years? 10 years?
- ❖ What is the role of summative assessment data in our accountability system?

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Implementation Timeline

DATE	EVENT
December 10, 2015	President Obama signs ESSA into law.
December 22, 2015	The U.S. Department of Education (USED) publishes first request for public advice and recommendations regarding Title I.
January 11, 2016	First public meeting held on Title I issues and provisions, in Washington, DC.
January 19, 2016	Second public meeting held on Title I issues and provisions, in Los Angeles, CA.
January 21, 2016	USED sets this deadline for public to submit advice and recommendations regarding Title I provisions.
March 4, 2016	Negotiated rulemaking committee is identified and named to address Title I standards, assessments, and supplement-not-supplant regulations.
March 21–23, 2016	First meeting of negotiated rulemaking committee is convened, in Washington, DC.
April 2016	Second, and possibly third, meeting of negotiated rulemaking committee is convened.
April 2016*	USED drafts negotiated rules and other proposed regulations for issues not covered in negotiated rulemaking for regulatory review.
April–May 2016*	Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) is reviewing negotiated rules and proposed regulations; USED will create draft of final language.
May 2016*	Regulatory language will be submitted to Congress for review; USED will make adjustments based on congressional comments.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Implementation Timeline (continued)

DATE	EVENT
May–June 2016*	USED will publish final Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the Federal Register, with 60 days given for public comments.
July–August 2016*	USED will review and respond to public comments. Final language will be reviewed by USED, OMB, and OIRA.
August 1, 2016	Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waivers will become null and void.
October 1, 2016	Changes to funding for ESSA competitive grant programs will go into effect.
October 1, 2016	Impact Aid will go into effect (currently funded in FY 17).
October 2016*	Final regulations will be published and go into effect.
2017–2018 SY	All other ESSA provisions will go into effect.

* Indicates that dates are estimates



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