



# Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Overview and Implications for New Jersey

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# Objectives

- Understand the basics of ESSA and a brief history of the federal law
- Review expected timelines for changes
- Discuss impacts on 2016-17
- Understand NJDOE next steps



# Agenda

Background and Context

Expected Timelines & 2016-17

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ESSA State Planning Next Steps



# History of Federal Education Law

- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) enacted on April 11, 1965
  - Part of Lyndon Johnson's civil rights package
  - Created the federal role in education
  - Up for reauthorization every 5+ years
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) reauthorization of ESEA effective January 8, 2002
  - Focused on getting all students proficient in reading in math by 2014, with special attention to special populations
  - Up for reauthorization in 2007, which failed to make it through Congress until ESSA in 2015



# Race to the Top and Waivers

In the absence of reauthorization, two key levers impacted the federal role in education from 2009-2015:

## Race to the Top

- Initiated to provide funding to states in support of 4 key principals:
  - Rigorous standards/better assessment
  - Better data systems
  - Teacher & leader effectiveness
  - Support for lowest performing schools
- NJ received \$38M as part of Round Three (Dec 2011)

## ESEA Waivers

- Allowed states to seek relief from some of the provisions of NCLB
- NJ's ESEA waiver (approved in 2012) focused on:
  - College & career-ready expectations for all students (standards)
  - State-developed system of differentiated recognition, accountability and support (Priority and Focus Schools; RACs)
  - Supporting effective instruction & leadership (evaluation/support)



# Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- Enacted December 2015
- Grants flexibility and authority for states around:
  - Assessment systems
  - Accountability systems, interventions, and student supports
  - Educator evaluation and support systems
  - Use of federal funds
- Prohibits any U.S. Secretary of Education from requiring states to adopt specific standards, assessments, teacher evaluation methods, or other key policies



## ESSA: Academic Standards

- ESSA requires state standards aligned with college and career skills; defers to states on how to define such alignment
- NJ State academic standards (some currently under review) are in compliance with ESSA



## ESSA: Assessments

- ESSA requires states to implement high-quality academic assessments in math, reading or language arts, and science under same assessment timelines, and allows for states to allow:
  - District use of nationally-recognized high school academic assessment in lieu of state assessment if aligned to state standards and other requirements
  - Limit to amount of time devoted to assessment administration for each grade
  - Assessment pilot





## ESSA: Accountability

- ESSA requires statewide system and annual school report cards that will “meaningfully differentiate” schools using:
  1. Academic proficiency on state assessments
  2. Graduation rates for high school
  3. English Language Proficiency
  4. Growth or another statewide academic indicator for K-8 schools
  5. At least 1 other state-set indicator of school quality or student success
    - Academic indicators 1-4 must carry “substantial” weight and in the aggregate carry “much greater weight” than #5
  6. 95% assessment participation rate



# ESSA: School Improvement

- ESSA requires states use evidence-based interventions; specific improvement models no longer required
  - **“Comprehensive” support and improvement:**
    - Lowest-performing 5% of Title I schools on state accountability index
    - High schools with <67% graduation rates
    - Schools with underperforming subgroups that do not improve after a state-determined number of years
  - **“Targeted” support and improvement:**
    - Schools with consistently underperforming subgroups, as defined by NJ



# ESSA: Teacher and Leader Quality

- More flexibility granted to states and districts around spending Title II funds
- Does not require Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) designation nor specific educator evaluation measures or methods
  - Although the law removes HQT, it still requires teachers to be appropriately certified
  - Evaluation remains an allowable expense



## ESSA: Selected New Elements

- Title IV Part A added back into budget (first time since 2007)
  - Formerly: Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities
  - Now: Student Support and Academic Enrichment
- Additional set-aside options to consider
- Additional reporting requirements
- New pilot options to consider



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Expected Timelines & 2016-17

ESSA State Planning Project Structure and Next Steps



# Expected Timeline for ESSA Activities

Timeline	Action
Spring 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Negotiated rulemaking on certain provisions of ESSA</li></ul>
August 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NJ's ESEA waiver expires</li></ul>
School Year 2016-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NJ develops state plan in collaboration with stakeholders</li><li>• LEAs spend under NCLB rules/formulas and plan for 2017-18</li><li>• Priority/Focus school status remains the same as in 2015-16</li></ul>
October/Nov 2016 (expected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final regulations posted</li></ul>
Winter 2016-17 (expected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State plans due</li></ul>
School Year 2017-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New state plan goes into effect</li></ul>



## Impacts to Districts for 2016-17

- Most elements remain the same as in 2015-16, including funding formulas/usages, with a few notable exceptions:
  - No Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) or Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) required.
  - Freeze on Focus/Priority schools (no exits).
    - Note: USED required decision to freeze or create new lists by March 1, 2016; NJ did not have necessary data for evaluating list status by this time and thus had to freeze. The Department will evaluate status of Focus/Priority schools as data becomes available to ensure appropriate recognition and support during ESSA transition time.
  - No federal Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) requirement; however, NJ is currently determining HQT reporting requirements for Educator Equity plan until new plan(s) are put in place.
- NCLB monitoring and associated remediation plans will focus on areas that continue under ESSA.



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## Next Steps

- Continue reviewing the federal law, regulations, and guidance as provided by the US Department of Education to determine NJ implications.
- Outline and begin to execute clear stakeholder engagement and communications strategy.
- Continue state and national research to inform new state plans for consideration by stakeholders and officials.
- Coordinate with the state board strategic planning process.



Questions?