

Every Student Succeeds Act **in Iowa**

Iowa Department of Education Fact Sheet

What is ESSA?

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. This update, which received bipartisan support in Congress and was signed by the President in 2015, replaces the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). ESSA restores a more reasonable balance between the role of states and the federal government in accountability for the success of all children.

While the more prescriptive NCLB brought focus to equity for all students, transparency, and accountability in K-12 schools, ESSA maintains this focus while providing more state and local control. Under ESSA, the federal government sets expectations, and states determine how schools will reach them.

What does ESSA do?

- Maintains annual assessments
- Increases state flexibility to design school accountability systems, school interventions and student supports
- Removes federal mandates related to educator evaluation
- Increases state and local flexibility in the use of federal funds
- Limits authority of the U.S. Secretary of Education to issue mandates

What will ESSA mean for Iowa?

Iowa will maintain rigorous standards and assessments that measure how students are meeting the standards, and the state will be required to identify the lowest 5 percent of schools based on performance. However, the federal government no longer sets annual targets for schools to reach, prescribed labels for sanctions, or prescribed models for turning around schools.

The Iowa Department of Education will develop the state's ESSA plan to create a cohesive system of accountability and support for the success of students. The Department will consider stakeholder input throughout the development of the plan.

Programs under NCLB remain in effect for the 2016-17 school year. For states such as Iowa that operate without a NCLB waiver, ESSA provides flexibility in school interventions and supports. Accordingly:

- Iowa has frozen the Adequate Yearly Progress status of all districts and schools, which will continue to implement the same interventions developed in the 2015-16 school year.
- Iowa school districts are no longer required to offer parents the option of choosing a different school (school choice) or contracting with an external vendor for free tutoring/support (supplemental education services). Iowa developed a transition plan for ensuring alternative supports to students in high-need schools: www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/every-student-succeeds-act



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ESSA Timeline for Iowa

August

Convene state advisory committee.

September-November

Engage stakeholder groups and hold nine public input meetings across Iowa.

November-January

Develop plans for each component of ESSA.
Complete initial draft of state ESSA plan for public feedback.

February

Vet ESSA draft plan with advisory committee and stakeholder groups and hold additional public input meetings.

March-July

Post revised draft plan publicly and submit it to the U.S. Department of Education.

What has Iowa done on education policy in recent years?

- 2008:** Iowa Legislature adopted statewide standards for what students in kindergarten through 12th grade should know and be able to do in mathematics, English-language arts, science, social studies, and 21st century skills, such as financial literacy.
- 2011:** Executive Order 74, issued by Governor Branstad, created a Governor's STEM Advisory Council with the goal of increasing student interest and achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
- 2012:** Legislation created a comprehensive early literacy initiative that provides intervention to struggling readers in kindergarten through third grade and aims to make sure students reach reading proficiency by the end of third grade.
- 2013:** An education reform package adopted by the Legislature and signed by Governor Branstad created a statewide teacher leadership system that taps into the expertise of teachers to improve classroom instruction and raise student achievement.
- 2014:** Executive Order 83, issued by Governor Branstad, created an ongoing review process for Iowa's academic standards, including public comment, to identify areas for improvement. Through this process, the State Board of Education adopted new science standards in 2015.
- 2015:** The Branstad-Reynolds Administration launched the Future Ready Iowa initiative, designed to build Iowa's talent pipeline by ensuring citizens have access to the education and training required for in-demand jobs in the state.
- 2015:** The State Board of Education adopted administrative rules implementing a new state assessment, which Iowa students will take for the first time in the 2017-18 school year.
- 2016:** Legislation was adopted to modernize career and technical education programs statewide and to provide Iowa students equitable access to high-quality programs.

How can Iowans stay involved in ESSA?

- For developments, go to the Iowa Department of Education's ESSA webpage: www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/every-student-succeeds-act
- Ask questions or submit comments in writing to ESSA@iowa.gov.

