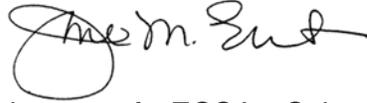




THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

**TO:** The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

**FROM:** Jhone M. Ebert 

**SUBJECT:** The Public Release of ESSA School and District Accountability Determinations, as required by Section 100.21 of the Commissioner's Regulations and the State's United States Department of Education (USDE) Approved Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan

**DATE:** February 1, 2019

**AUTHORIZATION(S):** 

### **SUMMARY**

#### **Issue for Discussion**

To provide the Board of Regents information on the January 17, 2019 public release of school and district accountability determinations, as required by Section 100.21 of the Commissioner's Regulations and New York State's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan that was approved by the United States Department of Education (USDE) in January 2018.

#### **Reason(s) for Consideration**

The release of the school and district accountability determinations is necessary to implement New York's USDE-approved ESSA plan and to comply with the provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015.

#### **Proposed Handling**

This item will come before the Full Board for discussion at the February meeting of the Board of Regents.

## **Background Information**

On December 10, 2015, ESSA was signed into law by President Obama. This bipartisan measure reauthorized the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which provides federal funds to improve elementary and secondary education in the nation's public schools and requires states and school districts, as a condition of funding, to take a variety of actions to ensure all children, regardless of race, income, background, or where they live, receive the education they need to prepare them for success in postsecondary education, careers, and citizenship. One requirement of ESSA is that states develop a system to differentiate school performance and provide support to those schools that most need extra assistance to improve student results. New York State receives approximately \$1.6 billion annually in funding through ESSA.

After an extensive, 18-month long public engagement process, the Department, with Board approval, submitted New York State's ESSA plan to the USDE for review on September 17, 2017. On January 17, 2018, the USDE approved the State's plan. In April 2018, the Board of Regents was provided with a detailed summary of the proposed regulatory amendments and additions and voted to post the proposed regulatory amendments and additions p for public comment. After publication of the regulations in the State Register, at its June 2018 meeting, the Board of Regents adopted revised regulations as an emergency measure at its June 2018 meeting, effective July 1, 2018. The emergency regulations were further revised by the Board of Regents at its September 2018 meeting. The emergency adoption of the regulations has been continued through March 2019, when it is expected that the Board of Regents will consider adoption of final regulations.

On January 17, 2019, the Department released the final school and district accountability determinations under the State's approved ESSA plan. For the first time this year, based on data for the 2017-18 school year, every district, public school, and charter school earns a level of 1 to 4, where 1 is the lowest and 4 is the highest, for each ESSA accountability indicator. Accountability indicators include: student achievement in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies; student growth in language arts and math; 4-, 5-, and 6-year graduation rates; student readiness for college, career, and participation in civic life; acquisition of English proficiency by English language learners; and chronic absenteeism.

Schools and districts earned a score for all students and for student subgroups. Such subgroups include members of racial and ethnic groups, low-income students, students with disabilities, and English language learners. These levels are used to determine whether a district is a Good Standing District or a Target District and whether a school is in Good Standing or identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) or Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI). Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools are identified every three years beginning in the 2018-19 school year, and TSI schools are identified annually. The list of Target Districts is also updated annually.

## **Overview of ESSA School and District Identifications**

On January 17, 2019, Commissioner MaryEllen Elia identified 106 school districts as Target Districts, 245 schools for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and 125 schools for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI). In addition, the Commissioner identified 26 schools to be newly placed into Receivership and 37 schools to be removed from Receivership at the end of the 2018-19 school year, including two schools scheduled to close. This will leave 43 schools in Receivership at the end of the 2018-19 school year.

Districts were notified of preliminary accountability statuses on November 30, 2018 and were given until December 14, 2018 to appeal the designations before they became final. The Department received 181 appeals, which were reviewed by Department staff and decided upon by the Commissioner.

Districts are identified as Target Districts if a school within that district was identified as CSI or TSI, and/or if the district was in Focus status during the 2017-18 school year and the district's All Students group met the criteria for CSI identification or a subgroup met the criteria for TSI identification. As a result of identification, Target Districts must develop an annual District Comprehensive Improvement Plan (DCIP) to identify and implement initiatives to improve student learning on the accountability measures for which the district and/or its schools have been identified.

As required by ESSA, a minimum of 5 percent of public schools are identified as CSI Schools. This year, 245 schools (including 7 charter schools) were identified as CSI Schools because they performed at level 1 on a combination of indicators, or for high schools, if the All Students four-year graduation rate was less than 67 percent and the All Students five-year or six-year graduation rate was not at least 67 percent.

Of the schools identified as CSI, 80 schools are in New York City, 48 schools are in average need school districts, 28 in high need rural school districts, 41 in high need urban/suburban school districts, and 41 in the large four city school districts (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers). Seven charter schools are identified for CSI, while one charter school is identified for TSI. The following is a breakdown of CSI schools across the state:

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of CSI Schools</b>	<b>Percentage of District's Schools</b>
New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE)	80	5% of all NYCDOE schools
Buffalo Public Schools (BPS)	8	15% of all BPS schools
Rochester City School District (RCSD)	21	44% of all RCSD schools
Syracuse City School District (SCSD)	10	32% of all SCSD schools
Yonkers Public Schools (YPS)	2	5% of all YPS schools
Rest of State	124	3% of all Rest of State

Among the 106 districts, 125 schools (including 1 charter school) are identified as TSI Schools. For designations based on 2017-18 school year results, a school could be identified as TSI if the school had been a Priority or Focus School during the 2017-18 school year and one or more of its student subgroups performs at level 1 on a combination of the new indicators. If a school was in Good Standing in the 2017-18 school year, the school must have two years of low performance before the school can be identified as a TSI School.

### **Receivership and ESSA Identifications**

NYSED identified a new cohort of 26 Receivership Schools. Current Receivership Schools that are not identified as CSI Schools will be removed from Superintendent Receivership at the end of the 2018-19 school year. Accordingly, two Persistently Struggling Schools and 33 Struggling Schools will be removed from Receivership. In addition, two Struggling Schools will close at the end of this school year. That brings the total number of schools that will remain in Receivership to 43 at the end of the 2018-19 school year.

The newly identified Receivership Schools were in Priority status during the 2017-18 school year and are now newly identified as CSI Schools. This cohort of schools is placed into Superintendent Receivership and must show Demonstrable Improvement beginning with the 2019-20 school year or will be placed into independent Receivership. Alternatively, school districts may choose to close and replace the schools with a new school or phase out these schools instead of having an Independent Receiver appointed.

For the 37 Persistently Struggling and Struggling Schools that have not been identified as CSI Schools under ESSA, including two schools that are closing, removal from receivership status is effective June 30, 2019. While these schools are no longer receivership schools, they are expected to continue their school improvement efforts that were initiated while in receivership.

### **Next Steps**

The Department hosted a Target District Institute on January 9-11, 2019 to orient districts to the new accountability system. The goal of the Institute was to provide district staff with information on Target District, Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) School, and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) School requirements so they can effectively support their schools. Training was provided on the needs assessment process as well as the supports provided to and requirements for schools in receivership. Additionally, the Department held a webinar entitled, "ESSA Update for School Leaders" on January 28, and school and district leaders from all identified schools were invited to attend and submit questions for discussion. The webinar, which was attended by over 300 school and district leaders, provided an overview of the new accountability system and sample templates for school and district staff to use when communicating about accountability designations with local stakeholders.

During the remainder of the 2018-19 school year, Target Districts, CSI Schools, and TSI Schools will participate in an on-site needs assessment process and conduct parent, teacher, and student surveys to gather data that will inform the creation of school improvement plans that will be implemented in the 2019-20 school year. Title I 1003(a) grants are available to identified schools and districts to support the implementation of school improvement plans.

The Department has also created a new [ESSA website](#) to serve as a “one-stop-shop” to provide information regarding ESSA to parents, educators, and other stakeholders. The website features guidance documents such as: 1) a frequently asked questions component and informational videos and webinars on what ESSA requires and how it creates more opportunities for student success; 2) brochures and fact sheets in multiple languages; and 3) data about the performance of each school and district on the ESSA indicators. New resources will be added to the ESSA website as they are completed/revised.