Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan Development Activities

Presented to the Members of the Board of Regents
October 17, 2016

Overview of Development of State ESSA Plan: A multi-pronged approach

- Professional Development of Staff

- Committee of Practitioners

- ESSA Think Tank

- Regional State Plan Development Meetings

- Informal and Formal Public Comment

- Board of Regents Discussions and Actions

Work Thus Far

✓ Engaged in extensive professional development to understand the law and the opportunities it provides, including, but not limited to meetings with:

  ➢ United States Department of Education (USDE)

  ➢ Brustein & Manasevit – a law firm recognized for its federal education regulatory and legislative practice

  ➢ Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), which has provided access to many national experts including:

    ➢ Linda Darling Hammond, Learning Policy Institute

    ➢ Brian Gong, Center for Assessment

    ➢ Kenji Hakuta, Stanford University

    ➢ Delia Pompa, Migration Policy Institute

    ➢ Gene Wilhoit, National Center for Innovation in Education

    ➢ Susie Saavedra, National Urban League

Work Thus Far

✓ Met approximately ten times with Title I Committee of Practitioners to discuss ESSA.

✓ Established an ESSA Think Tank with representatives from over 100 organizations. The Think Tank has met at least monthly since June.

- Work Groups have met twice a month: Supporting All Students, Supporting English Language Learners, Supporting Excellent Educators, Challenging Academic Standards and Assessments, Accountability Methodologies and Measurements, and Supports and Improvement for Schools

Work Thus Far

✓ Developed draft Characteristics of Highly Effective Schools and Guiding Principles for development of the ESSA state plan.

  ▪ Surveyed Think Tank, Committee of Practitioners and the field for feedback on these documents.

✓ Drafted High Concept Ideas, which will be presented at Regional State Plan Development Meetings.

  ▪ Participant feedback on the High Concept Ideas will be gathered through meeting discussion and a survey.

✓ Provided USDE with comments on draft ESSA rulemaking on state plan requirements and assessments. Plan to comment on supplement not supplant regulations in November.

Development of Characteristics of Highly Effective Schools and Guiding Principles

- Since June, the Department has worked with the ESSA Think Tank to answer several essential questions related to development of the state's ESSA plan.

- To guide the work, the Department drafted the Characteristics of Highly Effective Schools and a set of Guiding Principles for development of the state plan.

- These documents are posted on the Department's public ESSA website at: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/essa.html

Development of Characteristics of Highly Effective Schools and Guiding Principles

- The Think Tank and the Committee of Practitioners were requested to provide feedback on the draft Characteristics of Highly Effective Schools and Guiding Principles.

- Both groups provided valuable feedback that lead to thoughtful revisions of the Characteristics of Highly Effective Schools and the Guiding Principles.

- When the Characteristics and Guiding Principles were posted for public comment, over 600 persons responded.

Development of High Concept Ideas

- The Department has drafted a list of High Concept Ideas in response to the essential questions and guided by the discussions within the Think Tank.

- The Department presented the draft High Concept Ideas to the Think Tank at the October 7 in-person meeting.

  – Think Tank feedback was requested during the meeting, as well as through a survey.

  – The draft High Concept Ideas were generally supported by the Think Tank. Each concept received at least a majority of support from survey respondents.

  – The Department made minor revisions to the High Concept Ideas based on Think Tank feedback.

Development of High Concept Ideas

- The Department will request feedback on these high concept ideas from the Committee of Practitioners, the Think Tank, and at Regional State Plan Development Meetings held across the state before submitting them to the Board of Regents for approval.

- The High Concept Ideas, and one page documents describing the rationale and research for each High Concept Idea, can be found at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/essa.html.

Sample High Concept Idea

High Concept Idea #11:

To ensure that schools support students until they graduate, we will use 4-, 5-, and 6- year graduation rates to determine how well schools are doing in getting students to graduate.

High Concept Ideas: Rationale and Research

Relevant Requirements of ESSA law and/or draft rulemaking:

- States must for all high schools in the State measure the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, and, at the State's discretion, the extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and include the performance of schools on this measure in the State's system of differentiated accountability.

Rationale for High Concept Idea:

- By including results from the five and six year graduation cohorts, the state accountability system provides incentives for schools to work with students until they earn a high school diploma. While the six year graduation rate is only slightly higher statewide than the five year rate, there are for certain groups of students and schools some significant differences in these rates.

Research:

- American Youth Policy Forum. (2012). *Making Every Diploma Count: Using Extended-Year Graduation Rates to Measure Student Success*. http://www.aypf.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Making-Every-Diploma-Count_updated-Feb-2012.pdf

Sample High Concept Idea

<u>High Concept Idea #13:</u>

To ensure that schools maximize opportunities for students, we will create a high school "Success Index" that gives partial credit for students who successfully complete the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) through Alternative High School Equivalency Program and programs at the school, BOCES, or night school; and extra credit for students who earn a Regents diploma with advanced designation, CTE endorsements, or a Seal of Biliteracy.

High Concept Ideas: Rationale and Research

Relevant Requirements of ESSA law and/or draft rulemaking:

- For purposes of computing the high school graduation rate, states may include students who graduate with a "regular high school diploma," which is defined the standard high school diploma awarded to the preponderance of students in the State that is fully aligned with State standards, or a higher diploma, and does not include a general equivalency diploma, certificate of completion, certificate of attendance, or any similar or lesser credential, such as a diploma based on meeting individualized education program (IEP) goals that are not fully aligned with the State's grade-level academic content standards.

Rationale for High Concept Idea:

- The High School Success Index would reward schools that are able to ensure that if students do not complete high school with a regular diploma they work to earn another credential, and if students do complete high school, they earn the most rigorous diploma that they can.

Research:

- Martin, C., Sargrad, S., & Batel, S. (2016). *Making the Grade: A 50-State Analysis of School Accountability Systems.* https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/report/2016/05/19/137444/making-the-grade/

Regional ESSA State Plan Development Meetings

The purpose of the Regional ESSA State Plan Development Meetings is to engage stakeholders in a discussion of ESSA and the draft High Concept Ideas.

The Department has:

- Provided District Superintendents and the Big 5 with "ESSA Meeting in a Box" materials for Regional meetings;

- Posted ESSA Requirement & Informational Webinars to the ESSA website for review by Regional Meeting invited guests;

- Hosted two webinars for Regional Facilitators to prepare for the meetings; and,

- Provided District Superintendents and Big 5 with High Level Concepts PowerPoint and Survey for use during October Regional Meetings.

Regional ESSA State Plan Development Meetings

- Regional ESSA State Plan Development Meetings will be held across the state in the last two weeks of October and in early November.

- Each Regional Meeting Facilitator (District Superintendents and Big 5) determines who to invite based on Department guidance.

- Regional Meeting Facilitators will provide a summary of the feedback received on the high level concepts.

- Each participant will also be asked to complete a survey.

ESSA State Plan Development Timeline Choices

✓ Two potential dates for states to submit their ESSA state applications: **March 6, 2017 or July 5, 2017.**

✓ The Department has previously recommended to the Board that it approve the state plan for submission in March 2017.

✓ March 2016 –
  ✓ Allows Department to work with USDE during the summer to gain plan approval.
  ✓ Allows school districts to have as much time as possible to prepare for implementation of the new ESSA provisions.
  ✓ Early submitting states sometimes are allowed more flexibility in their plans.
  ✓ But, timeline for completing plan is very challenging.

✓ July 2016 –
  ✓ Ensures that the State is thorough in the engagement of stakeholders and drafting of the plan.
  ✓ Department may be able to learn lessons from plans approved in March submission.
  ✓ But, could delay distribution and/or funding approval and creates uncertainty about the rules for the 2017-18 school year.

Next Steps

The Department will:

- Present "high concept" ideas for consideration by stakeholders.
- Hold invitational regional meetings on "high concept" ideas.
- Use feedback from Regional Meetings to refine the "high level concepts" to include in the state plan.
- Seek permission from the Board of Regents to release the draft plan for formal public comment based on the high concept ideas.
- Conduct public meetings in order to gain feedback on the draft ESSA Plan.
- Give the Governor an opportunity to comment on the ESSA Plan, as required by ESSA.
- Submit the ESSA Plan to USDE after approval by the Board of Regents in either March or July.