

March Board of Regents
ESSA Retreat Briefing Summary
Group 2 Summary Fact Sheets

<p>ESSA Topic: Required Actions in Identified Schools</p>
<p>Relevant Requirements of ESSA law: Sections 200.21 and 200.22</p> <p>All Comprehensive Supports and Improvement (CSI) Schools and all Targeted Supports and Improvements (TSI) Schools are required to have a Diagnostic Needs Assessment and develop a plan with stakeholders based on the results of that assessment. The plan must include at least one evidence-based intervention and must also address resource inequities that have been identified.</p> <p>States have the flexibility to implement additional requirements in addition to those stated above.</p> <p>As part of ESSA, the state will be responsible for approving the plan of the Comprehensive Supports and Improvement Schools, and will focus its supports on those schools, rather than the Targeted Support and Improvement Schools, which will be monitored by the district.</p>
<p>Relevant High Concept Ideas, if any:</p> <p>“To ensure that schools identified as Comprehensive are able to address the specific areas that are contributing to their identification status, Comprehensive schools will have some flexibility in the school reform model they pursue.”</p>
<p>Department Recommendations, if any:</p> <p>NYSED recommends refraining from establishing extensive additional requirements in addition to what is required in ESSA. NYSED recommends developing a tiered accountability system that initially provides flexibility for schools upon identification rather than one-size-fits-all requirements.</p>
<p>Questions for Consideration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Are there any required actions that Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools must do upon being identified in addition to what is outlined in ESSA?2. Are there any actions that may be appropriate to consider later for Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools that do not show progress?
<p>Background Information on the Recommendations and/or Questions for Consideration:</p> <p>In general, Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools that are not in the Receivership program and all Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) schools will have flexibility to determine which actions the schools should pursue to improve results at the school. These responses will follow the school having received a Diagnostic Needs Assessment. The “Prescription”-- what the school should do -- needs to come after the “Diagnosis,” therefore it would be inappropriate to enact top-down mandates on all low-performing schools. First there needs to be an investigation into what is causing the school’s low performance.</p> <p>If schools do not show improvement under this flexibility, then the state may consider mandatory requirements.</p> <p>NYSED believes it can develop a robust accountability system that still allows for local flexibility by having the state leverage its authority in other ways, such as through the current Receivership program, which would remain in effect for schools re-identified as being in the bottom five percent, by providing additional supports and interventions when schools are not making progress in spite of having been given flexibility, and by holding districts accountable when significant inequities within</p>

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the district are identified through the resource allocation review and data reporting required under ESSA.

The only mandatory requirements currently under consideration by the Department to recommend to the Board of Regents are public school choice in CSI schools and potential provisions required for school leaders of CSI schools. The department is still collecting feedback from stakeholders regarding public school choice and is intending to discuss Public School Choice at a later time. The leadership provisions can be found on the next page.

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<p>ESSA Topic: Leadership of Identified Schools</p>
<p>Relevant Requirements of ESSA law: Under the New York Every Student Succeeds Act Flexibility Waiver, schools in the bottom 5 percent (i.e. “Priority Schools”) were required to implement a specific whole school reform model. Many of these involved the removal of the principal.</p> <p>Under ESSA, there is no requirement that districts need to pursue a model that involves removing the principal of an identified school.</p>
<p>Relevant High Concept Ideas, if any: “To ensure that schools identified as Comprehensive are able to address the specific areas that are contributing to their identification status, Comprehensive schools will have some flexibility in the school reform model they pursue.”</p>
<p>Department Recommendations, if any: The ESSA Think Tank has considered a number of potential ways that could help ensure that the principals of high-needs schools have the skills and experience that would allow the principals to be successful. These ideas are being presented at Winter Regional Meetings so that the Department can receive broader public feedback.</p> <p>The Department acknowledges that the lowest performing schools in the state need the strongest principals, and that the skills necessary to be a successful leader at a school identified as in need of improvement are not necessarily the same skills required to lead schools in Good Standing. Therefore the Department recommends considering ways to better identify leaders who are best suited to lead low-performing schools, including analysis of the current principal’s skills and ability to lead such schools.</p>
<p>Questions for Consideration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Should the state consider pursuing the development of a “High-Needs” principal extension/endorsement?2. Should the state consider requiring that those interested in filling a vacancy at a Comprehensive Supports and Improvement school meet certain criteria?3. If yes, does the Board of Regents support any or all of the following criteria:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) If a principal vacancy exists at the school, the newly hired principal must have prior experience as a principal.b) If a principal vacancy exists at the school, the newly hired principal must have prior experience as a principal or assistant principal.c) If a principal vacancy exists at the school, the newly hired principal must have been rated Effective or Highly Effective in his/her two most recent annual evaluations.d) If a principal vacancy exists at the school, the newly hired principal must have a minimum of five years’ experience in education.e) If a principal vacancy exists at the school, the district must assert that the newly hired principal has recent statistical evidence of successful improvementf) If a principal vacancy exists at the school, the newly hired principal must have previous experience as a teacher or leader at a School in Good Standing OR as a district employee in a District in Good Standing.g) A combination of some of the options above to create a criteria in which the newly hired principal must meet one OR another one of the conditions (i.e. “the newly hired principal must _____ OR _____”).

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Background Information on the Recommendations and/or Questions for Consideration:

In regards to the High-Needs Principal Endorsement, this would be developed through a committee involving colleagues from Higher Education. The endorsement/extension would potentially require additional experience and coursework pertaining to high-needs schools beyond what is expected of the current School Building Leader certification. The ESSA Think Tank has expressed a preference that the principals currently leading identified schools would be exempt from having to pursue the endorsement so that they could focus their attention on improving their school.

The Department acknowledges that attracting highly qualified leaders to high-needs schools can be a challenge and there have been some preliminary discussions about ways to help districts be able to expand their pool of applicants. There would be an even greater need for this additional support if it is determined that any of the additional provisions above should be required.

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ESSA Topic: Diagnostic approaches
Relevant Requirements of ESSA law: Sections 200.21 and 200.22
Both Targeted Supports and Improvement Schools and Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools are required to receive a diagnostic needs assessment. This needs assessment will inform the development of the school's improvement plan.
Relevant High Concept Ideas, if any: "To ensure that school improvement plans are tailored to the identified needs of schools, we will require low-performing schools to complete a diagnostic needs assessment that looks at whole school practices and use the results as the basis for school improvement plans." "To ensure that plans are driving improvement, schools identified as low-performing will receive an annual review and develop annual plans in collaboration with the families and school community."
Department Recommendations, if any: The Department recommends that the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) review process serves as the initial Diagnostic Needs Assessment that informs the development of the school plan. Subsequent annual reviews would not need to be diagnostic, and instead could focus on providing feedback on the school's ability to address identified needs through the implementation of the school's plan. In schools that are not making progress, a diagnostic needs assessment may need to be conducted again to ensure that the needs assessment has accurately identified the root causes contributing to the school's challenges.
Questions for Consideration: Currently Commissioner's Regulations stipulate that identified schools must receive an annual diagnostic review. Should the Department use the DTSDE as its initial diagnostic review and consider revisions to regulations that reviews in subsequent years focus on the school's ability to implement its plan in certain circumstances?
Background Information on the Recommendations and/or Questions for Consideration: Under ESSA, districts will approve the annual plans developed by Targeted Support and Improvement schools and will have greater responsibility for the diagnostic needs assessments in those schools. The state is well positioned for the transfer of responsibility to districts because it has already developed a framework for effective school practices through the DTSDE rubric, and this framework has become a common language within the state. The Department has provided professional development to district leaders on the DTSDE rubric and the review protocols, and would strongly recommend that the DTSDE continues to be the common lens that the state uses with its struggling schools. The department also recognizes that schools may be better served if they received specific feedback on how effective the implementation of their plan has been on addressing identified needs, so that the schools can best revise their plans where appropriate. The department recommends using the school's progress data to determine if the school should receive a review focused on the implementation of its plan or if the school should receive another diagnostic needs assessment.

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<p>ESSA Topic: Evidence-based interventions & learning supports</p>
<p>Relevant Requirements of ESSA law: ESSA requires that all Comprehensive Supports and Improvement Schools and all Targeted Supports and Improvement Schools include at least one strategy in their annual plan that meets the criteria for being an “evidence-based” intervention.</p> <p>ESSA identifies “evidence-based intervention” as an intervention that “demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on the three tiers of evidence-based interventions as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tier 1 The intervention is backed by “strong evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented experimental study”• Tier 2 The intervention is backed by “moderate evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study”• Tier 3 The intervention is backed by “promising evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias
<p>Relevant High Concept Ideas, if any: “The state will develop systems to connect identified schools to evidence-based interventions, and identified schools will have the ability to identify the evidence-based solutions appropriate to the root causes they have identified.”</p>
<p>Department Recommendations, if any: The Department recommends that schools and districts should have the flexibility to identify the evidence-based intervention most appropriate to their specific needs. Therefore the Department should not define a limited set of approved evidence-based interventions.</p>
<p>Questions for Consideration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Should districts and schools have the ability to identify the evidence-based interventions they will implement or should the Department create a list of approved evidence-based interventions?
<p>Background Information on the Recommendations and/or Questions for Consideration: SED considered two ways that the state could ensure that the identified schools use evidence-based interventions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The state could develop a list of the only approved interventions, and require schools to choose interventions from that list; OR2. The schools could identify the interventions they believe are most appropriate for their circumstances, and it would be the responsibility of the schools to demonstrate that the research for the intervention meets one of the tiers described above. <p>The ESSA Think Tank discussed the challenges of generating a statewide list of approved interventions. The Think Tank felt it was essential to allow flexibility for schools to identify the best solutions to their specific challenges, rather than prescribing top-down, one-size-fits-all solutions. The Think Tank saw a benefit in having the state provide support to help connect districts and schools to interventions, but felt ultimately the intervention chosen should be the one the school feels is most appropriate. It is also noted that the third tier of “evidence-based interventions” allows for interventions that show “promising” evidence. This level can be used to promote districts being able to do action research locally and potentially scale up solutions that the district has identified, which could have a tremendous</p>

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impact.

Furthermore, NYSED sees the shift of responsibility to the districts as a key lever in supporting improvement at the local level by reinforcing the importance of finding solutions specific to the needs within the district and establishing a culture of using research and evidence-based interventions locally.

When approving plans, NYSED would confirm that the school has included an intervention that meets the evidence-based criteria.