



School Quality Indicators Scan

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The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires states to reconsider their accountability systems for schools and districts. Many of the accountability requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act are continued under ESSA, including judging schools by such academic measures as students' proficiency on annual assessments, graduation rates, and English learners' progress toward attaining English proficiency. But ESSA also requires states to adopt at least one additional indicator of school quality or student success, and it gives states flexibility in choosing that indicator.

In meeting this new requirement, states may choose non-traditional indicators, adding to their accountability system one or more measures of student engagement, educator engagement, student access to and completion of advanced coursework, postsecondary readiness, school climate and safety, or any other indicator they choose. The selected measure(s) must meaningfully differentiate between and among schools, based on performance, and be valid, reliable, comparable, and available for schools statewide.

These alternate indicators attempt to measure the learning conditions, supports, and/or opportunities for students. Below are a number of possible indicators states may consider as they revise and reconstruct their state accountability system.

For Consideration as Indicators

Possible Climate and Safety Indicators

- ◆ Student, staff, and/or parent survey results
- ◆ Student, staff, and/or parent focus group feedback
- ◆ Discipline and incidence data (e.g., in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, fights, harassment/bullying, alternative school assignments)
- ◆ Attendance records of students and staff
- ◆ Data on chronic absenteeism

Possible Postsecondary Readiness Indicators

- ◆ Student enrollment in and successful completion of dual-credit college coursework
- ◆ Student participation in and successful completion of Career and Technical Education courses
- ◆ Student attainment of certificates and licenses
- ◆ Postsecondary enrollment rates
- ◆ Postsecondary persistence rates
- ◆ Student participation in and performance on college entrance and/or college placement exams

Possible Student Access to and Completion of Advanced Coursework Indicators

- ◆ Student completion of required credits by year to determine “on track” status
- ◆ Student successful completion of required courses for graduation

- ◆ Student successful completion of required courses for college entrance
- ◆ Student participation in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, honors courses

Possible Student Engagement Indicators

- ◆ Student access to high-quality materials
- ◆ Student access to safe and clean facilities
- ◆ Student access to highly qualified teachers
- ◆ Student access to counselors
- ◆ Student access to engaging coursework (e.g., project-based learning, wide selection of offerings, etc.)
- ◆ Student participation in school-sanctioned extracurricular activities

Possible Educator Engagement Indicators

- ◆ Teacher evaluations that support continuous improvement
- ◆ Principal evaluations that support continuous improvement
- ◆ Professional learning opportunities that support effective teaching strategies
- ◆ Variety of professional learning opportunities that meet teacher needs in various stages of development
- ◆ Program evaluations that provide actionable information

Key Questions for State Education Agencies to Consider as They Revise Their State Accountability System

- ◆ What current indicators provide meaningful, valid, reliable, comparable, state-wide data?
- ◆ What additional indicators would reflect the needs of our state?
- ◆ What data are available for each indicator that we consider?
- ◆ How readily available are those data?
- ◆ What capacity do we have to assist districts in using these data for planning and improvement?
- ◆ What additional data might we need to collect?
- ◆ How would the combined set of indicators inform our work?

As states select indicators to include in their revised accountability system, they should consider how the indicators, both individually and collectively, would allow for meaningful differentiation in school performance. These indicators will ultimately inform how the states and districts support schools; consequently, states should consider how well these data would guide support efforts and inform the community about school quality and progress.

Key Resources

Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation. (2016). *Review of State Accountability Systems That Include a Student Growth Indicator*. http://www.csai-online.org/sites/default/files/CSAI_Report_State%20Growth%20Measures_proofedv6.pdf

Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation. (2016). *School Climate and Stakeholder Engagement Measures in States*. http://www.csai-online.org/sites/default/files/CSAI%20Report_SchoolClimate.pdf

Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation. (2016). *Scan of Measures Used in States' Accountability and Accreditation Systems*. http://www.csai-online.org/sites/default/files/CSAI_StateAccountabilityandAccreditationSystems_Measures.pdf

AdvanceED. (2016). *Designing State Accountability Systems for Continuous School Improvement: A Call to Action*. <https://www.advanc-ed.org/sites/default/files/ESSA%20Call%20to%20Action%20Whitepaper.pdf>

Learning Policy Institute. (2016). *Pathways: New Accountability Through Every Student Succeeds Act*. https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Pathways_New-Accountability_Through_Every_Student_Succeeds_Act_04202016.pdf



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