

ESSA ELL Workgroup

April 2016

South Dakota's current system of accountability has been built over the past four years in a collaborative manner together with stakeholders in response to federal mandates, as well as the needs of students and stakeholders in the state. The ESSA offers the opportunity to take a thoughtful look at the elements of accountability, which include areas specific to English Language Learners, to determine what works well and what adjustments should be made.

The discussions should be framed around the overall mission of the department: All students graduate college, career, and life ready. The intention of the ELL Workgroup is to find a creative way to help our diverse ELL populations.

Below for consideration are factors that must be included and points for consideration.

Requirements:

Below are a series of questions and considerations that either cannot be changed or upon which we need the work group to make a recommendation.

Overall system: Accountability is for a wide variety of consumers, not just education professionals. The system should be easily explained and understandable to a person not steeped in education policy. We would also propose that the work that the collaborative work that has taken place to date to develop the current framework be honored. Finally, all schools must somehow be incorporated in a manner that includes the most students possible.

Indicators: Elementary and Middle Schools

1. Student Achievement: Required component, measuring the performance of students on the state assessment who have meet full academic year (FAY) requirements.
2. "Other Academic Indicator": ESSA sets out that this can be either student growth or another valid and reliable statewide academic indicator that allows for meaningful growth. We recommend that the state's Academic Growth key indicator be maintained because of the extensive work that went into developing the indicator and that we have yet to see the results of that work.
3. English language proficiency: what factors or measures should be used to determine the student's ELL Accountability.
4. "Not less than one indicator of school quality or student success . . ." ESSA sets out examples of what could be used, including Student engagement, educator engagement, school climate and safety, etc. The state's attendance indicator should be considered; other indicators could be added.

Indicators: High Schools

1. Student Achievement: same as above.
2. English language proficiency: what factors or measures should be used to determine the student's ELL Accountability.
3. Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate: at the state's discretion, this may be combined with an extended-year graduation rate.
4. "Not less than one indicator of school quality or student success . . ." similar to above. The current College and Career Readiness key indicator should be considered, although it could be adjusted. Additionally, other indicators could be added.

Participation: Schools and districts must continue to meet 95 percent participation for all students and subgroups. This must be factored in to the accountability system but it is up to the state to determine how. A component has been mandated: the student achievement denominator must be the greater of 95 percent of all such students or the number who participated in the assessment. The work group should consider how additionally to factor in participation.

Points to Consider:

The flexibility offered by the ESSA leaves states room to innovate. Below are some questions to guide your initial thinking. This list is not exhaustive; more could be added as you proceed.

Overall System:

- Do we need multiple “accountability tracks?” How do we handle small high schools and other small schools? How do we handle alternative schools? Schools with large transient populations? Colonies? Online or virtual attendance centers? Should their accountability look different? Schools that have a focus on language development?
- The state has used a norm based system for differentiating schools. Should we consider moving to a criterion basis? What would that look like?
- What does classification look like? We must continue to reward schools and have schools in two different levels of improvement. How should we define the scale? (This will be coordinated with the school improvement work group).
- Should we continue to use our Gap group? This was conceived as a means of increasing overall public reporting; its implementation has resulted in schools across the state being accountable for an additional 1052 subgroups because of n size suppression rules. Is it still useful? Should its composition be adjusted if it is retained?
- For small schools that may not meet the “N” size, how do we hold them accountable?
- Do we need to have accountability measures in place for those students that aren’t in tested grades?

Overall Indicators:

- How should SPI points be distributed? How should points be awarded when a school’s n size for an indicator is too small to be publicly reported. (This may be frequent with Academic Growth and English Language Proficiency).
- What goals should be set for schools and districts?
 - o Currently in place:
 - Achievement – decrease by half the percent non-proficient over 6 years (AMOs)
 - Growth – over three years all projected to be proficient or very high growth
 - Attendance – all students attending at least 94% of enrolled time
 - Graduation – 85% graduation rate for the four- year cohort
 - Completion – decrease by half over six years the percent of non-completers
 - College and Career Readiness – decrease by half over six years the percent not college and career ready
 - o The new standard is that goals and interim objectives, but how those look are left to the state. The goal for English Language Proficiency will be determined in coordination with the English Language Learners work group.

Specific Indicators:

- Achievement: when do First Year in Country students get tested? Count towards proficiency? Count towards growth in enrolled years 2 and beyond?
- How long should exited ELs be counted for accountability?
- Graduation/Completion: How should the graduation rate look? How do we handle ELL students and ELLs with severe cognitive disabilities given the flexibility offered? Do we include the HiSet as an addition to GED for High School Completion?
- Need to create an academic indicator for English Proficiency.
- College and Career Readiness:
 - How do we want to include ACT performance, in particular if the state moves to allowing the ACT/SAT/other for student achievement purposes?
 - Should Dual-Credit/ AP fit in here? Do we want to consider recommendations for an “opportunity” measure at the high school as an additional indicator?
 - Should Career readiness be a separate mandatory indicator?
 - Can/should we consider more options for Career readiness?
 - Should number of CTE courses taken/ passed be included?

Assessments:

- Should the ACCESS test results be used for growth?
- Can we use the ACCESS test results for the academic indicator for English proficiency?

Business Rules Questions:

- How does 95% participation fit in? The DOE can provide a few options. Can we use participation on the ACCESS test??
- How does the state approach the restriction of only being able to count participation on the alternative assessment for ELLs that take the Alt. ACCESS?
- What is the minimum n-size reporting recommendation? What about suppression for other groups and in other circumstances (i.e., all students scoring at the same level; easily identifiable extrapolations)?