

STATE ESSA PLANS: Uneven Progress toward Better Assessment and Accountability

III. CHART OF STATE ESSA PLANS

Codes for the chart:

SQSS: School quality, student success: the ‘other’ indicator(s) in addition to the core academic indicators.

EM: elementary and middle school (grades 3-8);

HS = high school;

ES = elementary;

MS = middle;

Ach: achievement on English Language Arts (ELA) and Math (M) tests;

Progress (Prog), usually on ELA and Math tests;

CCR: College and Career Ready;

EOC: End of Course test;

CSI: Comprehensive Support and Intervention;

TSI: Targeted Support and Intervention;

ELL: English language learners, generally a measure of English proficiency and/or growth toward it, measured by a standardized test;

FTP = firing, takeover, privatization.

Colors: **green**, **yellow**, **red**

SQSS: Particularly interesting options are highlighted in green. Some states are considering the use of additional, promising indicators, highlighted in yellow. We also provide a listing, below, of all SQSS indicators approved by at least one state.

Weighting: In most states, weighting is too test-centric. We use red to flag serious problems (e.g., 4-year only graduation rate), yellow for a potentially positive option being considered for future use, and green for a strong component.

Levels: Green indicates three levels, yellow four levels, and red 5 levels.

Support/Intervention: Green emphasizes support with stronger intervention after first period if needed, but not takeover/privatization/firings. Red means NCLB-style punitive actions within first six years.

95% Participation: Red indicates strongly punitive actions, green a state effort to avoid punishment, and yellow a requirement for an “improvement” plan potentially coupled with subsequent additional state requirements.

Note: The summaries in the chart eliminate many complex uses of the information. For example, a state that includes graduation rates over multiple years (e.g., 4-, 5- and 6-year graduation rates) will give more weight to the 4-year graduation rate, as required by ESSA, but how much weight is given to 4- vs 5- or 6-year rates varies. Also, states often use complex formulas as they turn test scores and other data into weighting systems. Therefore, people interested in a particular state’s policies will need to look at the state.¹

¹ FairTest compiled somewhat more detailed descriptions of each state in order to produce these summaries. We will share a state draft with advocates who request it. Use the contact box at <http://www.fairtest.org>.

16 STATES WITH ESSA PLANS APPROVED BY U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

State	Additional Indicators (SQSS)	Weighting of Indicators	School Ratings/Levels	Support/Intervention	95% Participation
ARIZONA	All: "Acceleration Readiness" (AR): Grades 5,6,7,8 & HS EOC; EM: decrease Gr 3 ELA % minimum proficient; chronic absenteeism; inclusion of students with disabilities in general education; improved subgroup scores. HS: CCR.	EM: Proficient ELA/Math 30%; Growth ELA/Math 50%; ELL Proficiency and Growth 10%. AR 20%; HS: Proficient ELA/Math 30%; Growth ELA/Math 20%; ELL Prof and growth 10%; CCR 20%; Grad rate 4-, 5-, 6-,7-yrs 20%.	Five levels via A-F letter grades. In addition to the weighting system, each indicator is given a points value. The points value is converted into a letter grade.	Range of monitoring and support for local plans and actions. If not successful in four years, more intense support. No firing, takeover, privatization.	Schools testing less than 95% of students will have denominator increased to reach 95%, thereby lowering average student score. A factor in school improvement considerations. If multiple years under 95%, unspecified interventions.

<p>CONNECTICUT</p>	<p>As applicable: All: Chronic absenteeism; physical fitness. HS: On track to grad; post-secondary enrollment.</p>	<p>Substantially more weight to required indicators, but not specified. Weighting varies by ES, MS and HS. In HS, graduation factor requirement includes 4- and 6-year graduation cohorts.</p>	<p>Points assigned to indicators on sliding scale; are maximum number of points at E, M, H and M/H schools. All students weighted 59%, subgroups total 41%. Only 3 intervention levels, but five identification levels: top (1), middle two (2), and bottom quartile (3); targeted (4) and comprehensive support (5).</p>	<p>3 intervention levels: 1) “performing adequately,” 2) 30 “alliance” districts of which, 3) 10 are “opportunity districts,” with differentiated required activities and supports. If insufficient progress, then firings, required partners, private control (decided by LEA), or other similar requirements.</p>	<p>Schools in levels 1 or 2 that do not reach 95% participation are lowered a level (1 to 2, 2 to 3).</p>
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<p>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</p>	<p>All: Chronic absenteeism; In-seat attendance; “Re-enrollment” (return to same school); “Access and opportunities.” EM: Pre-K metrics. HS: “Alternate Graduation Metric”; AP/IB participation and performance. Each factor has a weight.</p>	<p>EM: Ach 30%; Prog 40%; ELL 5%; SQSS total 25%. HS: Achieve 40%; ELL 5%; 4-year grad rate 11%; SQSS total 44%.</p>	<p>5 levels (quintiles). Separate identification of comprehensive and targeted interventions. Also 3 categories of CSI and 2 categories of TSI.</p>	<p>CSI and TSI: Plan, implement, monitor for improvement. CSI: If insufficient progress by year 4 or 5, then “state directed intervention” and “significant additional action.” No specified actions for other 3 levels.</p>	<p>Support and monitoring. If still do not reach 95%, then unspecified additional actions.</p>
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<p>DELAWARE</p>	<p>All: Science, social studies, chronic absenteeism. HS: College and career readiness; on track to graduate. Will report, not weight, 8 other indicators, including discipline, class size, teacher-parent surveys.</p>	<p>E/M: SQSS 20%; Ach 30%; Prog 40%; ELL 10%. HS: SQSS 35%; Ach 40%; Grad rates 4-, 5-, 6-yr 15%; ELL 10%.</p>	<p>3 levels: targeted intervention, comprehensive intervention, and 'other.'</p>	<p>Provide tools, analysis. Review and monitor local plans. If does not improve, more rigorous interventions.</p>	<p>Submit an improvement plan if participation rate less than 95%; unspecified actions if rate does not improve.</p>
<p>ILLINOIS</p>	<p>Starting 2019-20: All: Chronic absenteeism, school climate, arts. EM: Unspecified EM and P-2 indicators. HS: 9th grade on-track, CCR.</p>	<p>Starting 2019-20: All: Ach 15%; ELL 5%; science* 5%; SQSS 25%. EM: Prog 50%. HS, grad 50% (4-, 5- & 6-year). SQSS: differs EM & HS; greater arts weight means lower absenteeism weighting.</p>	<p>Four tiers: exemplary, commendable, underperforming (targeted) and lowest performing (comprehensive).</p>	<p>Work with partner provider, plan, then 3 years implementation. If insufficient progress, then "more rigorous intervention" leading to a state plan for improvement.</p>	<p>If do not test at least 95% of student population, including relevant subgroups, for three years in a row, becomes "chronically underperforming."</p>

<p>LOUISIANA</p>	<p>All: Science and social studies. HS: ACT work keys, “Strength of Diploma credentials” (success in rigorous course work). All, 2019-20, add “Interests and Opportunities indicator.”</p>	<p>All: ELL folded into Ach. EM: Growth 25%. E: Ach 50%; Science + social studies 25%. M: Ach 47%; Sci + soc st 28%; HS: Ach 21%; graduation 42% (4-yr only); science + social studies EOC 4%; ACT work keys 25%; strength of diploma = 8%.</p>	<p>5 levels, A-F grades. Title I D or F schools = comprehensive support. All schools with F for two years = comprehensive support. Targeted includes subgroups scoring at D or F, schools with excessive discipline (EM: out of school suspension; HS, suspension over 20% for 3 years).</p>	<p>School choice (private, public) offered to students in D, F-level schools. LEA plans. Extra funding for plans that include an external partner. 4 years of insufficient progress, could be takeover, or other stronger state interventions.</p>	<p>Score of zero for those who opt out, factored into school performance score. No other action specified.</p>
<p>MAINE</p>	<p>Consistent attendance/ chronic absenteeism. Considering CCR indicators.</p>	<p>All: ELL 10%; Attendance 10%. EM: Ach 42%; Prog 38%. HS: Ach 40%; Grad rate (4-,5-,6-yr) 40%;</p>	<p>Three levels: comprehensive support, targeted support, all others.</p>	<p>Three tiers of differentiated support. Planning, implementation, supports, monitoring. If insufficient progress after three years, then increased support and assistance. No punitive actions.</p>	<p>Will have at least 95% students in calculating achievement. Actions required in addition for schools with 75-95% participation and those with less than 75%.</p>

<p>MASSACHUSETTS</p>	<p>All: Chronic absenteeism; HS: Advanced coursework. (Revised after DoE plan approval, awaiting approval by state Board of Ed.)</p>	<p>EM: Ach 60% (includes science*); Prog 20%; ELL 10%; absenteeism 10%. HS: Ach 40%; growth 20%; grad rate 20% (4-yr + dropout + “extended engagement”); ELL 10%; SQSS 10%. (Bd of Ed still determining final weights.)</p>	<p>Bd of Ed planning revision, to have 3 levels: recognition, intervention [CSI & TSI], all others.) Approved plan has 6 levels. Bottom 5% of schools and high schools with 4-year grad rates below 67% = comprehensive support. Schools with very low-performing subgroups = targeted.</p>	<p>Continues NCLB era “Turnaround” plans including state takeovers. Direct technical assistance, competitive funding, annual monitoring, professional development, turnaround partners. If insufficient progress, takeover, privatize management, alternative governance.</p>	<p>Level lowered if school assesses less than 95% of students in the aggregate or for a subgroup. (New draft plan under Bd of Ed consideration is to put in intervention level, based on 2 year average, tailor intervention to participation issue.)</p>
<p>MICHIGAN</p>	<p>All: Absenteeism (29% of SQSS). EM: Access to arts, phys ed (29%), access to librarian, media (7%). HS: Advanced coursework (21%), post-secondary enrollment (14%).</p>	<p>All: Ach 29%; Prog 34%; ELL 10%; 95% participation 2%; ELL test participation 1%; SQSS 14%. EM: weights for Ach, Prog increase as no grad rate, HS: grad rate (4-,5-,6-yr) 10%. Ach, prog increase if no ELL or test participation bonus.</p>	<p>3 levels: CSI, TSI, all others; plans to create additional tier of “reward schools.”</p>	<p>Plan with 3-5 benchmarks and outcomes. State list of approved improvement interventions. Assigned an implementation facilitator. If do not exit CSI in 3 years, unspecified further actions, to be determined case by case.</p>	<p>Rewards schools having 95%+ general participation, counts as 2% of index, ELL participation as 1%. Schools with consistently less than 95% participation “eligible for additional supports.”</p>

<p>NEVADA</p>	<p>All: Absenteeism, science. MS: HS matriculation, academic plans. HS: academic plans, ACT scores, EOC, 9th & 10th grade credits.</p>	<p>All: ELL 10%; ES: Ach 15-20%; read by gr 3, 5%; prog 35%; gap closing 20%; absenteeism + science 10-15%. MS: Ach 20-25%; prog 35%, gap close 20%; other 10-15%. HS: Ach 20-25%; 4-yr grad 20%; 5-yr grad 10%; SQSS total 35-40%.</p>	<p>Five tiers ('stars'). CSI includes one-star, lowest 5%, low grade rate HS, low and declining score, not-improved TSI. Exit by reaching 3-star level and for HS 67% grad rate.</p>	<p>Plan evaluation. Competitive grants. Can be in "achievement district" (6/yr) or 'turnaround' status (replace principal). If not improvement, stronger intervention, can be closure, redesign, restart, privatize control, partnerships, professional development.</p>	<p>Improvement plan. If 3-4 years, "participation warning." If another year, 'status indicator' lowered. In another year, earn zero points for proficiency rating.</p>
<p>NEW JERSEY</p>	<p>Chronic absenteeism</p>	<p>After 2019: All: Ach 30%; ELL 20%; Chronic Absenteeism 10%. EM: Growth 40%. HS: Grad Rate (4-,5-yr) 40%.</p>	<p>Four levels. 1) CSI. 2) TSI. 3) Consistently underperforming subgroup (but not TSI). 4) All others.</p>	<p>Three levels of support: CSI, TSI, all other. Needs assessment, plan, monitor, evaluate. Esp. for CSI, state assistance teams and data analysis. If CSI does not improve in 2 years, more detailed analysis, possible external providers and state interventions.</p>	<p>Two calculations: 1) with at least 95% of students; 2) without participation rate, or based on the actual number of tested students. This "creates a more balanced depiction of assessment results." Unclear which will be used for accountability.</p>

<p>NEW MEXICO</p>	<p>All: Science; opportunity to learn (OTL; absenteeism + survey). HS: College-career readiness, growth in 4-yr grad rate.</p>	<p>2019: EM: Proficiency 33%; Growth 42%; ELL 10%; Science 5%; OTL 10%. HS: Proficiency 25%; Growth 30%; ELL 10%; Grad 9% (4-, 5-, 6-yr); Growth in 4-yr grad 4%; OTL 10%; coll-career 12%.</p>	<p>Five levels, A-F. Separate CSI calculation based on federal requirements, 4-year grad rate used for CSI. Apparently more F schools than will be in CSI.</p>	<p>Competitive grants. State improvement planning template. 3 improvement options, focused on key areas, including "resource inequities." If inadequate improvement after 4 years, potential firings, closure, choice, privatization.</p>	<p>Schools failing to meet the subgroup participation rate of 95% and failing to meet the weighted average participation rate of 95% will drop one letter grade.</p>
<p>NORTH DAKOTA</p>	<p>All: Student engagement HS: College and career Ready, GED, school climate (includes engagement).</p>	<p>EM: Ach 30%; Prog 30%; ELL 10%; Engagement 30%. HS: Ach 25%; Grad rate (4-, 5-, 6-yr) 16%; GED 8%; ELL 10%; SQSS = Climate/Engagement 20%; CCR 21%.</p>	<p>3 levels: general, targeted, comprehensive.</p>	<p>State improvement model or comparable local. May use external partner. All CSI get grants, some TSI may. Plan to have few schools in CSI to provide more funding to them. Funding for studies, planning, staff development.</p>	<p>If lower than 95%, improvement plan required.</p>

<p>OREGON</p>	<p>All: Chronic absenteeism; HS: 9th grade academic progress (on track) and five-year grad rates. Planning to include other indicators: Exclusionary discipline, well-rounded education, parent/family engagement.</p>	<p>Does not weight by percentages, but adds multiplier weights (in parens). All: Ach (1), ELL (2); Absenteeism (1). EM: Growth (2). HS: Grad 4-yr (2); Freshmen on track (1); Grad rate 5-yr (1). Five levels of performance for each indicator.</p>	<p>3 levels. CSI if Level 1 in at least half of rated indicators (including weights), level 1 or 2 on all academic indicators, or HS grad rates below 67%, plus some other schools. TSI based on subgroups. All other schools.</p>	<p>Local state-OK'd plans or a state plan. If insufficient progress then re-evaluate for stronger intervention, with potential controls or mandates.</p>	<p>Less than 95%, develop plan to improve participation. (Oregon law allows opt outs.) "Non-participants that drop the school or student group below the 95% threshold are counted as not meeting the standard."</p>
<p>TENNESSEE</p>	<p>All: Chronic absenteeism, science. Provides info on a range of other indicators, and is considering adding additional indicators to accountability index.</p>	<p>All: ELL 10%; Absences 10%. EM: Ach 30%; Sci 15%; Prog 35%. HS: Ach 23%; Sci 7%; Prog 25%; 4-yr grad rate 5%; post-grad success skills 20% (includes SAT or ACT). For many indicators, either absolute score or growth toward targets.</p>	<p>5 levels, A-F. CSI = F (5% of schools). TSI = D ranking plus schools with subgroup at or below bottom 5% statewide scores (per ESSA regs).</p>	<p>CSI options: Statewide "Achievement School District" (takeover); "shared governance" (more power to principal, state collaboration); "Innovation Zones" (district-led actions with state oversight); competitive grants, focus on leadership, curriculum wrap-around services.</p>	<p>"Schools that do not meet the 95% participation rate in any subject, either for all students or for any accountability subgroup included in the achievement indicator, will receive an "F" on the achievement indicator for the given group of students."</p>

VERMONT	All: Science, phys ed, HS: career-college readiness test and college-career outcomes.	EM: Ach + growth 70% (1/2 of each); Science 10%; ELL 10%; Phys Ed 10%. HS: Ach + growth 40%; Science 5%; Phys Ed 5%; ELL 10%; Grad rate (4- & 6-yr) 20%; CCR 10%; Coll + career outcomes 10%. 4-level label for each indicator. Only 3% of VT schools have enough ELLs to include as a group.	4 levels. CSI are lowest level, which will include schools from level 2 or 3 or even 4 to reach at least 5% of Title I schools.	6 priority levels, from 1 (lowest ranking), to 6. If insufficient progress, more technical support and monitoring. After 6 years, can be stronger intervention: limit superintendent's power, assert state control over problematic areas, or close the school.	Score for each school and group multiplied by percent of test takers if participation below 95% and test-taking group has 25+ students.
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* ESSA does not include science as an option under “achievement” and DoE rejected numerous plans that listed science under Achievement instead of SQSS. However, both IL and MA include science under Achievement and were approved.

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IV. APPROVED SQSS INDICATORS

There are 22 approved SQSS indicators from the 16 states analyzed in this study. The most common is chronic absenteeism, which is used by 14 states. On-Track to Graduate and College and Career Readiness (CCR) measures are employed by 5 states each, though other states have indicators similar to CCR (e.g., high school matriculation and average ACT score) so that more general category is used in 12 states. The next most common SQSS indicators are Science Proficiency and School Climate Surveys, each used by 4 states. States, on average, have 3.5 SQSS indicators; Nevada has 7, the most of any state.

The List of 22 Approved SQSS Indicators from 16 states:

1. Chronic absenteeism
2. In-seat attendance
3. School climate survey
4. Re-enrollment in same school
5. Access and opportunities
6. Inclusion of special education students
7. Pre-Kindergarten metrics
8. Fine Arts
9. K-8 access to a librarian or media specialist
10. Physical fitness
11. Proficiency in science
12. Proficiency in social science
13. Percentage with academic learning plans

14. On-track to graduate
15. Graduation rate growth
16. Drop-out rate
17. Advanced coursework
18. College and career readiness
19. Meeting college & career readiness cut score on end-of-course exams
20. Meeting high school matriculation requirements
21. Average ACT composite score
22. Postsecondary entrance