

ESSA Update

There's been some major changes with ESSA, the Every Student Succeeds Act, enacted on December 10, 2015 in the regulatory arena (U.S. Department of Education).

Congressional Review Act

The House and Senate passed resolutions of disapproval for 2 sets of rules under ESSA: under the Congressional Review Act (CRA) and was signed into law by President Trump: ESSA accountability (for student performance) and teacher preparation rules. The CRA allows Congress to overturn regulations set out by the executive branch. It does away with these regulations from the Obama administration—they have “no force or effect.” It give states/LEAs greater flexibility in how they implement ESSA (the statute), which makes it's more difficult without final regulations

Noteworthy is with the overturning of these regulations. The new administration can't issue similar regulations until there's new authorizing legislation—leaving states and local jurisdictions responsible for implementing ESSA (the statute) without regulations to guide their efforts.

U.S. Department of Education State Plans

- An State Education Agency (SEA) must submit its consolidated State plan or individual program State plans to the Federal Department of Education (ED) by either **April 3, 2017**, or **September 18, 2017**, with a spring and summer peer review window (following each submission deadline).
- In February 2017, Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, wrote a letter (Dear Colleague) advising chief state school officers to continue finalizing their state ESSA plans for review by ED.
- In April 2017, Secretary DeVos sent another Dear Colleague letter on ESSA implementation to address key questions relating to the implementation timeline, school improvement requirements for the 2017–2018 school year, **and stakeholder consultation requirements** that apply to consolidated State plans.

Stakeholder Consultation regarding Consolidated State Plans

ED encourages timely and meaningful consultations by SEAs with a variety of stakeholders consistent with the individual State plan consultation requirements for each program. The statute requires that the State plan must be developed in consultation with a bunch of stakeholders (Governors, local education agencies (LEAs), SEAs, paraprofessionals, etc), including specialized instructional support personnel (Sec 1111 (a)(1)(A). This type of engagement will help an SEA submit a high-quality consolidated State plan that is designed to ensure that schools, LEAs, and the SEA meet the needs of all students in the State.

ASHA members should pay attention to this important area. There is a need to advocate at the state and local levels and to be involved in stakeholder engagement opportunities.

The following States (16 + DC) have submitted complete plans under ESSA for the spring peer review window, which is going on now. The deadline for that was April 3, 2017. State plans listed below have been approved by ED and sent for peer review are online.

- Arizona
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Illinois
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Nevada
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- North Dakota
- Oregon
- Tennessee
- Vermont

The next window for state plan submission is September 2017.

Next Steps: Peer Review

State plan peer review criteria were established. This replaced the existing State plan peer review guidance. SEAs may find it helpful to review this as they finalize their plans.

The peer review teams comprises members that represent:

1. Parents, teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, SEAs, LEAs, and the community (including the business community); and
2. Researchers, etc.

The peer review panels must also include, to the extent practicable, majority representation of individuals who, in the most recent two years, have had practical experience in the classroom, school administration, or State or local government (such as direct employees of a school, LEA, or SEA) and must represent a regionally diverse cross-section of States.

ASHA Deliverable on ESSA:

ASHA is looking at a developing a deliverable for ASHA members to aid them in ESSA implementation subsequent to the ESSA Guide that was developed last year. It will be some sort of 1-pager (2 sided) with informatics showing how states/state plans fare on key targets/issues (6-7) of concern to ASHA Members and how members can use this tool to advocate at the state/local levels... a report card of sorts.

Budget

The President's budget proposal cuts ED budget by \$9.2 billion, while setting aside \$1.4 billion to support new investments in public and private school choice programs. This figure includes voucher programs for charter, private and religious schools. The proposal represents a 13 percent reduction in the Department's budget from the currently funded 2017 level.

ED's New IDEA Website

ED launched a new website dedicated to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) - <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/?src=pr>. The initial launch of the new website incorporates feedback such as improved search capabilities, expanded content, and an easier-to-navigate design compared to the previous Legacy site according to ED. IDEA stakeholders can continue to provide feedback on the new IDEA website to the Department on the [OSERS Blog](#).