

Inside ESSA: The New Federal K-12 Law

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the new federal law that governs K-12 education in the United States. It was signed into law by President Barack Obama on December 10, 2015, and it replaced the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). ESSA is a significant change from NCLB, and it is expected to have a major impact on how schools are operated and how students are taught.

One of the most significant changes in ESSA is the way that schools are held accountable for student performance. Under NCLB, schools were held accountable for making adequate yearly progress (AYP) on state assessments. Schools that failed to make AYP were subject to a number of sanctions, including being required to offer school choice to students and being taken over by the state.



Inside ESSA: The New Federal K-12 Law by Willis Barnstone

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ESSA replaces AYP with a new accountability system that is based on multiple measures of student success. These measures include:

- Academic achievement on state assessments
- Graduation rates
- College and career readiness
- School climate and safety

Schools will be held accountable for making progress on all of these measures, and they will be given more flexibility in how they meet these goals. For example, schools will be able to use a variety of assessments to measure student achievement, and they will be able to set their own goals for graduation rates and college and career readiness.

Another significant change in ESSA is the way that federal funds are distributed to schools. Under NCLB, federal funds were distributed to states based on the number of low-income students in each state. This system was criticized for being unfair to states with a large number of low-income students.

ESSA changes the way that federal funds are distributed by giving states more flexibility in how they use the funds. States will be able to use federal funds to support a variety of programs and services, such as:

- Early childhood education
- Teacher professional development
- School improvement
- College and career readiness

States will be required to use at least 90% of their federal funds on these programs and services. The remaining 10% of the funds can be used for other purposes, such as administrative costs.

ESSA also includes a number of other changes, such as:

- A new focus on early childhood education
- Increased support for students with disabilities
- New requirements for teacher professional development
- A new emphasis on college and career readiness

ESSA is a significant change from NCLB, and it is expected to have a major impact on how schools are operated and how students are taught. It is important to note that ESSA is a framework law, and each state will need to develop its own plan for implementing the law. As a result, the impact of ESSA will vary from state to state.

What ESSA Means for Schools

ESSA is a significant change from NCLB, and it is expected to have a major impact on how schools are operated. Here are some of the key changes that schools need to be aware of:

- **New accountability system:** ESSA replaces AYP with a new accountability system that is based on multiple measures of student success. This gives schools more flexibility in how they meet their accountability goals.
- **New funding formula:** ESSA changes the way that federal funds are distributed to schools. States will have more flexibility in how they use

the funds, and they will be required to use at least 90% of the funds on programs and services that support student achievement.

- **New focus on early childhood education:** ESSA includes a new focus on early childhood education. This is important because research shows that students who participate in high-quality early childhood education programs are more likely to succeed in school and life.
- **Increased support for students with disabilities:** ESSA includes increased support for students with disabilities. This includes new requirements for schools to provide students with disabilities with the services they need to succeed in school.
- **New requirements for teacher professional development:** ESSA includes new requirements for teacher professional development. This is important because teachers need to be well-trained in order to help students succeed.
- **New emphasis on college and career readiness:** ESSA includes a new emphasis on college and career readiness. This is important because students need to be prepared for college and careers in order to succeed in the 21st century economy.

Schools need to be aware of these changes and begin planning for how they will implement ESSA. This will take time and effort, but it is important to get it right. ESSA has the potential to be a major force for good in American education, but it will only be successful if schools are committed to implementing it effectively.

What ESSA Means for Students

ESSA is a significant change from NCLB, and it is expected to have a major impact on how students are taught. Here are some of the key changes that students need to be aware of:

- **New focus on student growth:** ESSA places a new focus on student growth. This means that schools will be held accountable for helping all students make progress, regardless of their starting point.
- **More flexibility for teachers:** ESSA gives teachers more flexibility in how they teach. This means that teachers will be able to use the methods that they believe are most effective for their students.
- **More opportunities for students:** ESSA provides students with more opportunities to succeed in school. This includes new opportunities for students to participate in early childhood education programs, receive support services, and prepare for college and careers.

ESSA has the potential to be a major force for good in American education, but it will only be successful if students are given the opportunity to benefit from its provisions. Parents and educators need to work together to ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed under ESSA.

ESSA is a significant change from NCLB, and it is expected to have a major impact on American education. It is important for schools and students to be aware of these changes and begin planning for how they will implement ESSA. ESSA has the potential to be a major force for good in American education, but it will only be successful if everyone is committed to implementing it effectively.

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