



With the [approval of Florida's ESSA plan yesterday](#), all state plans have been approved. Now, states can continue the hard work of implementing policies to ensure all students receive an equitable education.

This week's newsletter highlights the ESSA implementation process and progress toward a more flexible and innovative accountability system.

**We are extending the States Leading campaign and want to hear from you!**

[Please take a minute to tell us what topics you'd like to see in future newsletters and how we can keep you up to date on all the great work states are doing.](#)

Visit [StatesLeading.org](https://StatesLeading.org) and follow #StatesLeading on social media to learn more and join the conversation.

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## State Spotlights

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With the implementation of its ESSA plan, the **Louisiana** State Department of Education is raising student, educator, and school expectations to ensure that every student is on track for college or a career.

The state has updated its school accountability formula, changed how it measures student progress, and improved its school planning process under ESSA.

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The **Nebraska** Department of Education is working to create a state testing system that collects comparable data across schools using a series of assessments throughout the school year instead of one culminating test at the end of the year.

This new model will help measure student growth with assessments that align with what teachers are teaching in their classrooms.

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To reflect stakeholder input and public feedback, the **New York** State Education Department (NYSED) has proposed changes to regulations for implementing ESSA.

Among the changes, NYSED proposes setting aside funds to improve grades 3-8 English language arts and math assessment participation rates, implementing a participation rate improvement plan, and revising the exit criteria for Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools (CSI) and Targeted Support and Improvement Schools (TSI) as it relates to participation rate.

Showing their commitment to ensuring success for all students in NY, the Department will continue to consider additional amendments based on public feedback, lessons learned from implementation, and the ability to create new teaching and learning indicators as valid and reliable data.

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Department of Education

# Must Read

This week, Molly Spearman of the **South Carolina** Department of Education, Matthew Blomstedt of the **Nebraska** Department of Education, and Susan Bunting of the **Delaware** Department of Education provided testimony to the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions on ESSA and how their states are leading the way in innovative policies that ensure equitable education for all students.

Spearman spoke about how South Carolina is using the flexibility under ESSA to fund high school dual-credit classes and provide extra math and reading help during afterschool programs. Blomstedt highlighted Nebraska's statewide database where teachers can access best practices, communicate, and collaborate with each other. Bunting discussed Delaware's new accountability system that measures college and career preparedness based on the percentage of high school students taking advanced classes and obtaining the technical skills and training to be successful after graduation.

[Read Spearman's testimony](#)

[Read Blomstedt's testimony](#)

[Read Bunting's testimony](#)

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## Tools & Resources

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In the most recent issue of NASBE's *The Standard*, Ary Amerikaner of the Education Trust highlights key questions state board members should consider when leveraging school-level spending data and resource allocation reviews under ESSA.

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ExcelinEd created the ESSA Playbook Series to provide states with clear recommendations, practical advice, and resources for school accountability, interventions, innovation, and weighted student funding.

This A-F School Accountability Playbook offers recommendations for issuing powerful and transparent A-F school grades and report cards, implementing each of ESSA's required indicators, and using an A-F school grading system to identify schools for interventions.

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**We want to hear from you!**

Send your state's stories or organization's resources to [communications@ccsso.org](mailto:communications@ccsso.org)

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The States Leading campaign celebrates the progress states are making toward providing equitable education for all students through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and innovative policies in other key areas of education, such as early childhood education, teacher preparation, and career readiness, among others.

**Thank you to our proud partners:**

The Council of Chief State School Officers  
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