

Michigan ESSA: Feedback Report Accountability Systems AND Additional Indicator



Team Leads

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Information

Note: This report combines the survey responses of two Action Teams:

- [Accountability Technical Action Team web page](#)
- [Additional Indicator of School Quality and Transparency Dashboard web page](#)

Key Ideas (summary)

- Overall A-F letter grade will be assigned to all schools in the state.
- A quadrant will display a school's aggregated student achievement and growth.
- The overall letter grade is not determined based on a school's placement in the quadrant display, however the school's placement in the display will be roughly equivalent to the overall grade.
- The overall letter grade will be calculated based on five different measures.
- The five different measures include: student achievement on state assessments, student growth on state assessments, graduation or attendance rates (including chronic absenteeism), English Learner progress, and at least one measure of school culture or success.

Key Question 1

Assessment participation plays an important role in any accountability system by ensuring valid and reliable results. ESSA requires a 95% participation rate target on state assessments be used in a state's accountability system. The U.S. Department of Education has proposed four methods of handling participation rates below 95% in the accountability system. Which of these should Michigan use?

Number of responses: 200

Where respondents agreed

Out of the 200 responses to this question, only 19 supported counting non-participating students as not proficient.

Where respondents diverged

The remaining 90% of responses were split almost evenly among the remaining three choices.

- Lower the overall indicator for any school having less than 95% participation (27.5%).
- Count non-participating students as not proficient (9.5%).
- Identify for "targeted support" any school having less than 95% participation (32.5%).
- Another action determined by the state (30.5%).

Other key findings

Although they represented slightly more than 10% of respondents, parents were less supportive of identifying schools falling below the 95% participation threshold as “targeted support” (17%) and more supportive of lowering the overall indicator for any school having less than 95% participation (39%).

Out of the 61 respondents who selected “Another option determined by the state,” comments varied widely. Not all comments were on topic. Selected comments covered the following:

- opt-out (12)
- basing the low participation consequence on why the threshold wasn’t met (11)
- no accountability/display only (8)
- financial consequences (2)

Next Steps

More feedback is needed as this is the foundation upon which a reliable and valid accountability system is built. Specifically, more feedback from parents would be helpful, as well as a finalizing of the U.S.

Education Department’s (ED’s) proposed regulations regarding the participation rate.

The accountability unit will use the different methods in its upcoming data modelling work.

Key Question 2

ESSA requires the first four components (achievement, growth, graduation/attendance, and English learner progress) of the accountability system carry substantial weight over the fifth (school success) measure. What component(s) should count most in a school’s letter grade? Please rank order the following components in order of importance.

Number of responses: 199

Where respondents agreed

Just over half of the respondents thought “growth” should count the most in a school’s letter grade. The majority of respondents also selected “English learner progress” and “school success” as less important indicators in a school’s overall rating.

(Top number in each box shows percentages; *bottom number in each shows number of responses.*)

	Most Important	More Important	Important	Less Important	Least Important	No Opinion	Total Resp.	Weighted Avg.
Achievement	20.74% 39	33.51% 63	21.81% 41	13.3% 25	10.64% 20	0% 0	188	3.4
Growth	55.44% 107	25.91% 50	11.4% 22	5.18% 10	2.07% 4	0% 0	193	4.27
Graduation or Attendance	12.57% 24	21.99% 42	40.84% 78	18.32% 35	5.76% 11	.52% 1	191	3.17
English Learner Progress	0% 0	6.59% 12	13.19% 24	38.46% 70	37.36% 68	4.4% 8	182	1.89
School Success	12.83% 24	12.3% 24	14.97% 28	25.13% 47	26.74% 50	8.02% 15	187	2.56

Where respondents diverged

Parents slightly favored “achievement” over “growth” as the “most important” indicator in an accountability system. This differs from the overall responses that favored Growth as the most important indicator.

Other key findings

The “school success” and “English learner progress” indicators were seen as less important in an accountability system. This is not too surprising, as these indicators focus on areas that do not receive much attention statewide.

Next Steps	<p>The Accountability Action Team will be working on various weighting scenarios over the next several weeks in order to come up with a recommendation.</p>
Key Question 3 Number of responses: 202	<p>ESSA does not require a district-level overall rating. Given the focus on providing resources and assistance at a district level in the Top 10 in 10 plans, indicate your level of agreement that Michigan’s accountability system should rate districts.</p>
Where respondents agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strongly agree (12.87%) • agree (27.72%) • neutral (16.34%) • disagree (16.34%) • strongly Disagree (24.75%) • no Opinion (1.98%) <p>Responses were pretty evenly split between agree/strongly agree (82 responses or 40.59%) and disagree/strongly disagree (83 responses or 41.09%). Further discussions with stakeholders yielded a leaning towards some sort of district-level reporting/aggregation without an overall accountability designation.</p>
Where respondents diverged	<p>See above.</p>
Other key findings	<p>Parent respondents were more in favor of district level accountability. Ten responded in favor and six disagreed or strongly disagreed with district level accountability. The small number of community members who responded were more evenly split, while those identifying as educators were slightly not in favor of district-level accountability (64 for/70 against).</p>
Next Steps	<p>More discussion and feedback from community members and parents around district-level accountability.</p>
Key Question 4 Number of responses: 200	<p>What would be the ideal minimum number of students (n-size) needed before a subgroup receives its own accountability designation? Michigan has used an n-size of 30 for over a decade. A smaller n-size would increase the number of schools with subgroups (increase transparency) but would reduce the reliability of the calculations. Increasing the n-size would reduce transparency (by having fewer subgroups) and require Michigan to justify the change to the U.S. Department of Education for their approval.</p>
Where respondents agreed	<p>Respondents overwhelmingly agreed with keeping the minimum subgroup size at 30.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keep at 30 (59.5%) • fewer than 30 (17%) • greater than 30 (23.5%)

Where respondents diverged

Parents and community members showed less support for increasing the n-size and more support for decreasing the n-size when compared with educators as a whole. Roughly 27% of parents and community members supported a decrease in n-size while 14.6% of educators supported a decrease in the subgroup n-size. 14.6% of parents and community members supported an increase in the subgroup n-size compared with 26.1% of educators.

Other key findings

A preliminary analysis of subgroup sizes using 2014-15 data:

- Using an n-size of 30, Michigan schools contained a total of 3987 ethnic subgroups, and 3,993 programmatic subgroups (English Learners, Special Education, and Economically Disadvantaged).
- If the n-size is **increased** to 40, Michigan schools would have lost 447 ethnic subgroups and 662 programmatic subgroups.
- If the n-size is **decreased** to 20, it increases the number of ethnic subgroups by 842 and programmatic subgroups by 993.

Next Steps

There has been much discussion around subgroup size. One idea that increases transparency while maintaining an n-size of 30 is to display subgroup information down to 10 students while only using the subgroup in accountability determinations if the threshold of 30 students is met.

**Key Question 5
Number of Responses: 202**

As part of the state accountability system under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) must include a fifth “additional indicator” of school quality or student success. As MDE considers this “additional indicator” in the state accountability system, how important do you believe it is for this indicator of school quality to include:

- student success in areas other than state assessment, graduation rate, and attendance
- educator engagement/quality (teachers, school and district leaders)
- school climate, culture, and safety

Where respondents agreed

Percentage of respondents who indicated that it was “very important” or “important” to include an indicator of:

- student success in an area other than state assessment, graduation rate and attendance: 86%
- educator engagement/quality (teachers, school and district leaders): 80%
- school climate, culture, and safety: 89%

Where respondents diverged

For all three areas for the additional indicator of school quality, fewer than 10 individuals indicated that the area was “not important” or had “no opinion.”

Percentage of respondents who indicated that it was “somewhat important” to include an indicator of:

- Student success in an area other than state assessment, graduation rate and attendance: 9.6%
- Educator engagement/quality (teachers, school and district leaders): 18.5%
- School climate, culture, and safety: 8.5%

Next Steps

The action team has researched data currently collected at the state level, and meeting the ESSA requirements for this indicator, in each of the three areas. Additionally, the action team is examining evidence-based research in each of the additional indicator areas where data is currently collected at the state level and meets the ESSA requirements for the indicator, and which show the relationship between this data/indicator area and student success (achievement, graduation, etc.).

Key Question 6**Number of responses: 195**

The “additional indicator” in the state accountability system must include at least one measure of school quality or student success, be valid and reliable measures of school quality, and be available for all public schools in the state. The “additional indicator” may include one or more measures of school quality or student success. Please indicate which model for the additional indicator the Michigan Department of Education should consider:

- an indicator of only one measure of school quality or student success used for all public schools
- multiple measures of school quality or student success that are the same for all schools
- multiple measures of school quality or student success with one or more being the same across grade spans (elementary, middle, high school), and one or more being different/unique to the grade span
- multiple measures of school quality or student success, with the measures being all unique to the grade span (all different for elementary school, middle school, and high school)

Where respondents agreed

Percentage of respondents indicating ME should use:

- multiple measures of school quality or student success with one or more being the same across grade spans (elementary, middle, high school), and one or more being different/unique to the grade span: 49%
- multiple measures of school quality or student success, with the measures being unique to the grade span (all different for elementary school, middle school, and high school): 28%

Where respondents diverged

Percentage of respondents indicating ME should use:

- multiple measures of school quality or student success that are the same for all schools”: 17%
- an indicator of only one measure of school quality or student success used for all public schools: 6%

Next Steps

The action team is pursuing the effort to identify multiple measures of school quality or student success, with one or more being the same across grade spans (K-12) and one or more being different/unique to the grade span (elementary, middle, high school).