



Frequently Asked Questions

Michigan's Plan to Implement the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Winter 2017

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Introduction

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaces the former federal education law, commonly referenced as No Child Left Behind. ESSA offers new flexibility to states and local districts, and provides opportunities for Michigan to rethink existing systems and structures regarding supports for students and schools, teacher and leader training and evaluations, school accountability measures, state student assessment, and more.

Over the past year, the MDE has engaged education stakeholders in an ongoing dialogue around ESSA. From intimate focus groups with under-represented groups to broad outreach efforts via online survey tools, the MDE has sought to learn the insights, ideas, and priorities of a broad range of people who have a stake in making Michigan a Top 10 Education State in 10 Years.

The most recent significant outreach occurred in late 2016 during a series of [Feedback Forums](#) held in partnership with ISDs around Michigan. This document records a sampling of the questions raised during those forums. We hope that by providing answers to these questions, education stakeholders will be better prepared to participate in the ongoing dialogue around current *recommendations* for ESSA implementation as Michigan works to become a Top 10 education state.

Please NOTE: *This document should be treated as a “living document,” subject to change.* That’s because Michigan’s ESSA plans are still in draft form, and implementation details are still under development. The MDE will add questions and update answers as the plan is finalized and implementation details emerge. All questions in this document have dates that identify when each was published or updated.

- Learn more about Michigan’s ESSA planning process and review current documents at [the Michigan Department of Education ESSA web page](#).
- While there, click on “[ESSA Notes](#)” to [subscribe to email updates](#) on Michigan’s plan and process.

A. Accountability

A-F Rating

A-1. Can there be a letter grade system for different components?

Letter grades for both the system and components could be confusing. To increase understanding, the individual components have labels instead of grades: Near or Above; Approaching; Considerably Below; Critically Below.

1/27/2017

A-2. Will districts receive multiple grades or just one?

Accountability grades are assigned at the building level only. So a district with six buildings, for example, will report six letter grades—one for each building.

1/27/2017

A-3. Does the A-F system have 5 levels or 6 levels? A-F or A, B, C, D, E, F? What's the difference between E and F?

The proposed system would have five levels: A, B, C, D, and F. There is no "E."

1/27/2017

Alternative Schools

A-4. Is there something in the works to more appropriately measure alternative schools?

Yes. The MDE has been working with a referent group on an accountability system for alternative schools for the last year and a half. It will be included in the ESSA accountability plan.

1/27/2017

A-5. For students taking virtual courses through MVU or outside providers, will their scores be attributed to the school of record or to the provider?

Student scores for accountability purposes are attributed to the school in which they are enrolled in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS).

1/27/2017

Attendance

A-6. Is attendance purposefully missing from the list of school performance ratings?

Chronic absenteeism is part of the school quality/student success component.

1/27/2017

Charter

A-7. Will charter schools be included in the accountability expectations and discussion?

Yes. Charter schools are public schools and are held to the same accountability requirements under ESSA. Like traditional public school buildings, they would receive a letter grade and have an accountability report card.

1/27/2017

Career and Technical Education

A-8. When we describe the whole child, for some Career and Technical Education (CTE) is whole world; for others it's other things (Spec Ed, Alt Ed). Are we creating a system that looks at different metrics for children's needs in those settings?

We recognize that it is hard to create a system that has expectations that are different yet is still fair and equitable, but we are trying to do so.

1/27/2017

Disabilities

A-9. Will there be any indicators that specifically reflect students with disabilities?

No, the performance of students with disabilities is shown in any indicator where data is reported for this subgroup. Their scores are also included within the "all students" group.

1/27/2017

Early Childhood

A-10. Will the A-F ratings apply only to student data in grades K-12? If a building has PreK, would their data be included?

PreK data is not included in the proposed accountability system.

1/27/2017

A-11. Are districts rewarded for high-performing early ed programs the way they are for dual enrollment/AP, etc.?

Early childhood programming is not part of the proposed accountability system. However, there could be an opportunity to link it to the state's transparency dashboard, being developed outside of ESSA.

1/27/2017

Educator Longevity

A-12. Educator longevity is a quantitative measure. It is harder to use a qualitative measure. Is longevity really the way to measure quality?

At this time, given the significant variability across the state in district educator evaluation systems, educator effectiveness ratings were determined to not be appropriate to use in an accountability system. It is MDE's plan that as we move towards a more consistent educator evaluation system across the state, which meets the high reliability and validity requirements, we would transition to a measure of educator (teacher and administrator) quality, in addition to or in place of the current teacher and administrator longevity.

1/27/2017

English Language Learners

A-13. How are districts held accountable for English language learners (or any other subgroup)?

The proposed accountability system is focused on building-level accountability. District-level accountability is not required under ESSA, nor is it part of the proposed accountability system. There are reports being developed for English language proficiency outside of the accountability system.

1/27/2017

A-14. How can all English learners count in an accountability system that puts the EL proficiency progress at n=30?

English learners would be included in transparency reporting within the accountability system when there are at least 10 students in the English Learner subgroup. Under the proposed accountability system, the English Learner component would not count in a school's accountability rating unless there were at least 30 students.

1/27/2017

A-15. What is the rationale behind giving significant weight to English Learner Progress rather than weighting growth of more prominent subgroups, such as the lowest quartile of student achievement?

The English Learner Progress indicator is required under ESSA. It is considered one of the four indicators receiving substantial weighting over the school quality/success indicator.

1/27/2017

Feedback

A-16. You talked about accepting input on the accountability system. What processes do you have in place to do this?

We accepted comments during the feedback forums and related surveys, and still have a dedicated e-mail address (mde-essa@michigan.gov) for additional comments. Michigan's Consolidated Plan for ESSA opened for formal public comment February 14-March 16, 2017 via the [Michigan Department of Education ESSA web page](#).

3/8/2017

Funding

A-17. Regarding transitions between between K-12 and postsecondary, has there been any discussion around the flow of money and how it might relate to the accountability system?

ESSA will not propose spending solutions or impact, but data can inform decisions around funding. The governor's Gov's 21st Century Education Commission is giving thought to this.

1/27/2017

Graduation Rate

A-18. How are graduation rates measured for alternative education programs? Can they look at a 5- or 6-year cohort?

All schools are eligible to use an extended year graduation rate (up to six years).

1/27/2017

A-19. How are graduation rates calculated for students that leave the district? Who is responsible if they do not graduate with their cohort?

The graduation rate calculation uses the cohort methodology, which has been used in Michigan for many years. CEPI has [comprehensive documentation on cohort methodology](#).

1/27/2017

A-20. Does the graduation rate stay in the formula for districts/schools that are not part of a K-12 system, and are just K-6 or K-8?

If a school does not have graduation data, it is not included in the formula.

1/27/2017

Grades

A-21. Am I right in my understanding that schools will earn a score between 0 and 100 in the proposed accountability system rather than a pass/fail in the current system?

Yes, under our proposal for accountability, a school would get partial credit for getting close to target and will get proportional credit for what it achieves.

1/27/2017

Growth

A-22. When measuring and reporting the student growth indicator, will the system report on all students only, or will you also report by subgroup? How will growth targets be indentified?

Growth is calculated for all students. The growth component is disaggregated by subgroup, that is, each subgroup is expected to meet a growth target. Growth targets are yet to be defined but will most likely be ambitious targets based on historical growth.

1/27/2017

A-23. Has MDE looked at using a Criterion-Based Growth metric that measures student progress against objective proficiency levels, rather than a Norm-Based student growth percentile that may give a free pass to students in poverty?

MDE used a criterion-based growth metric in years past. Assessment transistions break criterion-based measures and this is why MDE switched to using an assessment-neutral student growth percentile measure.

1/27/2017

K-2

A-24. Are grades K-2 assessments used for accountability? If not, how will a K-1 building receive a grade?

A building that does not assess students on state assessments in grades 3-8 and 11 would show indicators for the data that exists for that school (namely, school quality/success, and potentially English learner progress.) There is ongoing discussion around allowing a school that falls into this category to not receive a letter grade.

1/27/2017

Mascots

A-25. Have you considered the impact of Native American mascots on school climate? Is it addressed?

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) should identify this type of issue. The ESSA planning teams are engaged in ongoing consultation with tribal governments around ways to implement the State Board of Education’s policy.

1/27/2017

Miscellaneous

A-26. What does the high accountability for underperforming schools look like?

All schools would be held to the same accountability requirements. Supports could potentially differ for underperforming schools, since a key idea embedded in our planning is to drive the most supports to the schools that show the greatest need for improvement.

1/27/2017

A-27. Is civic education included in any of the school quality indicators?

Civic education specifically is not included in the ESSA school quality/student success indicator areas. However, it is possible that civic education would be included in Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), dual enrollment, and/or Career and Technical Education courses taken by 11th and/or 12th grade students, which are included in the ESSA School Quality/Student Success indicator.

1/27/2017

A-28. Do you copy or learn from other states like Minnesota, for example?

Yes, we pay careful attention to the proposals and ideas of other states; we are also trying to drive forward Michigan's goals as outlined in the Top 10 in 10 plan.

1/27/2017

A-29. Will focus, priority, and reward schools be gone for good?

The current ESSA draft plan calls for the continuation of reward schools.

1/27/2017

A-30. If ESSA does not require specific interventions, will Michigan require their own?

Interventions will be unique to each district, based on the school's data and the needs identified through the Comprehensive Needs Assessment.

1/27/2017

A-31. Matrix of 4 quadrants – what will the metrics be to put a school in one of them?

The quadrants display a school's proficiency and growth rates relative to the statewide averages. A school with high proficiency and high growth is placed in the upper right quadrant. A school with low proficiency and low growth is placed in the lower left quadrant.

3/8/2017

N-Size

A-32. For incredibly small districts with small N-sizes, how do we remain transparent without violating FERPA (student privacy) laws when reporting dashboard metrics such as advanced course work?

We will use reporting rules designed to protect student privacy. We'll use common sense, and we plan to employ focus groups to review and validate the design.

1/27/2017

Participation

A-33. What does participation mean?

Participation means a student has taken the state assessment and received a valid score.

1/27/2017

Participation Rate

A-34. If a school has 92% participation, how does that affect its grade? (For example, is it no longer "credit for 95% or no credit at all?")

The proposed accountability system uses a partial credit index model. This means a school that has a 92% rate will get 92% of its participation points.

1/27/2017

Peer Schools

A-35. Have Action Teams explored inclusion of a metric that includes comparison with schools of like demographics on proficiency rates?

Yes. There has been much debate on whether or not to include a measure like this, how to include it, and where to include it. The proficiency/growth quadrants display a school's proficiency and growth rates relative to the statewide averages, as well as data points showing similar schools' proficiency and growth rates.

3/8/2017

A-36. How might "similar" peers be identified? Each context is unique, and what might appear "similar" may actually be quite different.

Our current proposal describes similar peers as those who have similar enrollment of economically disadvantaged students.

1/27/2017

A-37. How do the current indicators really account for poverty's effect on performance?

The proposed system includes reporting on peer schools based on similar socioeconomic status of students.

1/27/2017

School Quality

A-38. What is the rationale for including teacher and administrator longevity as a measurable factor? Is there concern about perverse incentives, such as retention of ineffective teachers, by using this measure?

ESSA requires for additional indicator(s) included in the accountability system that there be high-quality research showing the link between the indicator area and student outcomes/achievement and graduation. Research shows a clear relationship between high teacher and/or school administrator turnover (longevity being the reverse of that) and student academic outcomes. High turnover of staff at a school has also been found to be related to school climate and culture.

1/27/2017

A-39. When it comes to measuring school climate or culture, will the State be reviewing models and tools?

Yes, we encourage you to share examples of those you think work well. You can comment and add examples through our dedicated ESSA e-mail address: mde-essa@michigan.gov.

1/27/2017

Subgroups

C-40. How do you define a subgroup?

ESSA maintains the requirement for data disaggregation for accountability purposes for the following subgroups: race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, disability, and English language learners (ELLs). ESSA also adds three new subgroups for data reporting, but not accountability purposes: homeless status, students with a parent in the military, and students in foster care.

1/27/2017

A-41. How do subgroups fit into the A-F grading and the proposed weighing of indicators in the overall index?

Subgroups are part of the indicators rolled up to the overall letter grade. Within each indicator, subgroups count equally as long as they have at least 30 students.

1/27/2017

A-42. Will the minimum subgroup size change under ESSA?

No; Michigan has been using a subgroup N-size of 30 for accountability purposes under No Child Left Behind, and is proposing to keep it the same under ESSA except for the English Learner Progress component, which will be included in accountability designations when there are at least 10 English Learner students. Reporting for transparency purposes has used an N-size of 10, which will remain the same under ESSA as well.

3/8/2017

A-43. If my student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and is also a member of another subgroup (e.g., African American), how will s/he be counted for accountability and reporting purposes? Do schools get to choose the subgroup in which to report that student?

Students count in any and all appropriate subgroups; this has been Michigan’s accountability practice for more than 15 years. In other words, the student in your example would be reported in both the subgroup of students with special needs *and* the subgroup of students who are African American.

3/8/2017

A-44. Is the bottom 30% subgroup gone?

The Bottom 30% subgroup is not part of the proposed accountability system; however, there is still interest in having transparency reporting related to this subgroup.

1/27/2017

A-45. What about small districts that have difficulties identifying a subgroup?

Subgroup calculations are only made when the minimum n-size threshold is met. Small schools will typically not have subgroups, just the “All Students” group.

1/27/2017

Weighting

A-46. How did you develop the specific weights of different factors within the School Quality/Student Success component?

The additional indicator component is proposed to be 10% of the overall scorecard weight. Within that 10% overall weight, a team developed business rules for two types of schools: those without 11th or 12th grade (includes weights for chronic absenteeism, teacher longevity, and school administrator longevity); and schools with 11th and/or 12th grade (includes weights for all the above PLUS advanced college and career/postsecondary coursework completion and passing).

1/27/2017

A-47. Has there been any discussion about weighting the school quality indicator higher?

Yes, the weighting of indicators has been proposed, taking into consideration a lot of stakeholder input. The initial weights of each indicator are: Academic Achievement = 29%; Academic Progress = 34%; Graduation Rate = 10%; English Learner Progress = 10%; School Quality/Student Success = 14%; participation on state assessments = 2%, participation of English Learners in WIDA assessments = 1%.

3/8/2017

A-48. A problem I see with high weight on growth and proficiency is a school already performing high has a low or stagnant growth, which hurts their current performance rating. How do schools already performing high keep their performance rating? Their lower growth rate should not drop their performance rating from A to B.

The scores of students who maintain proficiency will not hurt schools with high proficiency rates. Growth is calculated using Student Growth Percentiles, which are a relative measure. This means growth can be expected, even in high proficiency schools.

1/27/2017

Whole Child

A-49. If we are looking at the whole child, why does the school performance rating system neglect anything outside of academics?

Metrics proposed for Michigan’s transparency dashboard address non-academic measures that go beyond test scores. The local Comprehensive Needs Assessments (CNAs) that will shape the types of supports schools receive and provide to students also must consider the needs of the whole child.

1/27/2017

A-50. When discussing whole child, is there a focus on the child before K-12?

Yes. While not included in the Feedback Forum presentation, the MDE has identified lots of places to incorporate an early childhood focus in ESSA. Early childhood is also part of the Top 10 in 10 plan. Transitions are important to break silos.

1/27/2017

B. Assessment

Alternative

B-1. *Are you looking into alternative assessments specific to immersion programs?*

Not at this time.

1/27/2017

Benchmark

B-2. *Would the benchmark assessments be selected by the State, or would districts be offered a choice?*

The State would work to identify whether we can complete the assessment vision with our current vendors; if necessary we will conduct a competitive bidding process through an RFP. This element is still evolving and will be answered following our final plan submission and approval by the U.S. Department of Education.

1/27/2017

B-3. *Could the benchmark assessments be used as universal screeners for the MTSS process?*

It is likely that these benchmark tools as proposed would not be the best resources to use as universal screeners.

1/27/2017

B-4. *Will the State Superintendent's vision for assessment include benchmark assessments that can be used to measure student growth for use with teacher evaluation?*

The vision will include benchmark assessments in some manner that will allow quick, actionable information to be given to the students and teacher to be used throughout the school year.

1/27/2017

B-5. *Has there been conversation about benchmarking beyond grades 3-7 (i.e., 8-12)?*

Not at this time.

1/27/2017

Funding

B-6. Will the state provide funding for the envisioned assessments?

It is the intent of MDE that any assessment tools included in the future vision be provided at no cost to districts or schools.

1/27/2017

Innovation Pilot

B-7. Is Michigan still looking to be one of the seven states in the ESSA Innovation Assessment Pilot?

No. After reviewing the [ESSA Assessment Regulations](#) issued on December 8, 2106, MDE has determined that the proposed assessment vision can be accomplished without the Innovative Assessment Pilot Waiver, so does not plan to apply at this time.

1/27/2017

K-2

B-8. Will the Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) be mandatory and if so, when? How will training be done and who will pay for it?

It is unknown at this time if the legislature will continue support of this tool.

1/27/2017

B-9. Where do things stand with K-1-2 assessments?

ESSA does not require K-2 assessment; rather, State law requires districts to assess students in K-2 as part of the State's effort to improve rates of third-grade reading proficiency. Michigan's Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessments are options available to schools to help them meet this requirement. These benchmark assessments are completely aligned to Michigan's academic content standards and began being administered during the 2016-17 school year. MDE is still considering next steps; guidance is evolving, as it also will be influenced by the new third-grade reading law. Additional information is available on the [assessments web page](#).

1/27/2017

Miscellaneous

B-10. What are the characteristics of “benchmark” vs. “summative” test?

In brief, a summative assessment is meant to provide an overall picture of a student’s attainment on that grade’s content standards. Benchmark assessments are meant to be used throughout the school year to provide information that could be acted upon by the educator to improve success by the end of the year. The tests are both important, but they are built in different ways for different uses.

1/27/2017

B-11. One of the factors influencing assessment data/results is how learners view assessments. What strategies will be put into place that make assessment more relevant to learners?

We are working to create professional learning around the recently endorsed Assessment Literacy Standards to increase awareness of high-quality assessment practice for students, parents, educators, and policymakers, which should help in this area.

1/27/2017

B-12. Would it be possible to offer professional learning to ISDs on how the assessment items are written?

Michigan has always put a priority on having Michigan educators be involved in the writing and review of assessment items to be included on Michigan’s tests. MDE would be glad to find a way to provide at least an online guide of how the item writing process goes.

1/27/2017

B-13. Why can’t we do a summative assessment per grade once per year?

We could; however, we are looking to move towards a model of having benchmark assessment during the year to help provide more actionable data within the school year.

1/27/2017

B-14. How can ISDs be more of a support in the assessment process?

We are always looking for educators to participate in our processes. Please feel free to fill out an [application](#) to get involved.

1/27/2017

B-15. What's going on with a statewide computer adaptive test? I heard about it at the special pops conference and would love to see statewide NWEA-MAP.

We are currently using a statewide Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) with the M-STEP. We hope to continue using a CAT test no matter how Michigan's vision gets fulfilled.

1/27/2017

B-16. How do you make students "care" about a test that colleges/universities are not using for admissions?

A goal of the assessment vision is to provide timely effective feedback and data back to educators, students, and parents to allow them to have more meaningful data from which to set goals.

1/27/2017

B-17. How are tests being adjusted to test key areas such as critical-thinking and problem-solving?

We currently assess critical thinking and problem solving skills with the M-STEP, and we are looking to continue to do that through a coherent system of assessment activities throughout the school year.

1/27/2017

B-18. What is the status of assessments that were developed but not rolled out?

The Michigan-developed assessment items are still within our available assessment tools; they could be implemented if there was interest.

1/27/2017

B-19. Has there been any consideration of moving to not giving a high-stakes test each year?

State and federal law currently require tests in grades 3-8 and 11. If those requirements change, we could consider doing something different in Michigan.

1/27/2017

RFP

B-20. Is NWEA-MAP still being considered as an option for the state assessment?

This assessment vision calls for use of required benchmark assessments in the fall and a longer required comprehensive benchmark in the spring. At the point of an RFP any vendor may submit a proposal for a solution. At this time we are expecting that our benchmark tests be a custom built Michigan solution, likely not an off-the-shelf product like NWEA MAP, etc.

3/8/2017

B-21. When will the RFP for this assessment system be published?

The assessment vision and possible RFP timing is one of the topics still under discussion.

3/8/2017

B-22. Who are the vendors MDE is working with? What about the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, MAT test, or the NAEP?

As part of the request for information (RFI) process, we heard from NWEA, Questar/Curriculum Associates, Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), Measurement Inc., Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, Measured Progress, and ACT/Aspire.

1/27/2017

SAT

B-23. Will high schools stay with the SAT/PSAT, or could the State go back to the ACT or even something else?

State law requires a college entrance exam to be administered. The College Board/SAT was the last winning bidder and has the current contract. That contract will remain in place until it expires, at which time, another assessment provider could be the winning bidder.

1/27/2017

Science

B-24. Will the science assessment identified for 5th grade administration align with new science standards?

Yes; in time science assessment will have to move to 5th, 8th, and 11th grades to be more closely aligned to the new science standards.

1/27/2017

Timeline

B-25. How soon could the assesement vision be put forward to a request for proposal (RFP)?

After we collect final feedback on our ESSA plan, it is expected that an RFP could be put out fairly soon. If necessary, it will be out by the end of June.

3/8/2017

B-26. How soon could the assessment vision become a reality for statewide implementation?

The MDE is targeting the new system to be ready in fall 2018 for the 2018-19 school year.

1/27/2017

WIDA

B-27. Can Michigan provide some benchmark assessments for the WIDA (tests for English learners) prior to the annual testing? The window to prepare students to take the WIDA is so small.

The WIDA consortium does not currently provide a benchmark assessment specific for English learners. We will take this suggestion to them for consideration.

1/27/2017

B-28. Is WIDA out of the mix?

WIDA will continue to be our assessment for English learners throughout this process.

1/27/2017

C. Supports to Students and Schools

CNA

C-1. *What exactly is the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)? Who is on the committee to develop it?*

The CNA is envisioned as a universal needs assessment process used across multiple programs, grants, and initiatives statewide. The committee is in the process of being formed.

1/27/2017

C-2. *How does the CNA accommodate needs that do not show up on data (e.g., external medical needs)?*

The plan is to include medical needs as a component of the CNA.

1/27/2017

C-3. *How can we provide input on the CNA process?*

We welcome stakeholders' thoughts and ideas through one of the feedback mechanisms at the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) [ESSA web page](#) (click "Get Involved"). The MDE staff is collecting ideas, and will be developing a mockup that will be released for review and feedback.

3/8/2017

C-4. *What will MDE be doing to support districts' Michigan CNA process?*

The MDE will assist district work on comprehensive needs assessments and ESSA plans through technical assistance and through a structure of regional support.

1/27/2017

Early Childhood

C-5. Regarding Title I, Part A – Access to Early Childhood: Will there be money set aside for private schools as well?

Local districts set aside an allocation of Title I, Part A funds for private schools to support instruction, professional learning or parent involvement for grades K-12. Title I, Part A funds may not be used to support pre-school in private schools because Title I, Part A funding is partly based on census poverty counts for children ages 5-17, which does not include pre-school age.

1/27/2017

Labels

C-6. Will the distinction between school aid and the targeted assistance tag still be used in Title funding?

Title I has two distinctions: Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance. State school aid is separate and distinct from federal grants.

1/27/2017

C-7. When will schools first receive the new ESSA labels?

The ESSA accountability labels will begin in the 2018-19 school year; everything will then roll out from there.

1/27/2017

Miscellaneous

C-8. How do local superintendents keep the boards informed about the Title programs and use of federal funds?

School boards adopt the annual budget, which includes the state and federal grant budgets. The superintendent often shares grant information at board of education committee meetings for curriculum and instruction and finance for all program budgets. The District Improvement Team often has board member participation, and input is gathered on program design, implementation, and evaluation.

1/27/2017

C-9. Is the process of completing the Consolidated Application going to change?

Regular annual updates will be made to the Title I School Selection and Consolidated Application based on the law. The MDE will send transition guidance on allocation changes as clear direction becomes available.

1/27/2017

C-10. Some districts are AdvancED accredited, and some aren't. Do you want all districts to go through that process?

That's somewhat out of the MDE's control.

1/27/2017

C-11. In regards to private foundations partnering with districts, are we making parents and community members aware of who is providing money to the district?

This varies, depending on the community and the outside funder. School districts would have to follow the funder's protocol.

1/27/2017

C-12. Is the State-approved plan for comprehensive schools similar to a turnaround plan?

That language and regulation goes away in ESSA. Schools will have a locally developed and state approved "school implementation plan," which must contain evidence-based activities, strategies, or interventions.

1/27/2017

C-13. Where do postsecondary and higher education fit into this?

Postsecondary and higher-education institutions are not specifically addressed in student support measures, but will be addressed somewhat through Title II and Accountability measures.

1/27/2017

C-14. Federal law has a long list of descriptors around “well rounded education.” Has Michigan defined this? How can we give input?

We have not defined “well-rounded education.” We’re focusing on designing the CNA to capture that information when it is significant in a school, thereby allowing districts to have flexibility around when and how to address it.

3/8/2017

C-15. How will the required 7% reservation impact local funding and set asides?

There are multiple factors that influence how much Title I funding a local district receives. Given this, the impact of increasing the school improvement reservation from 4% under NCLB/ESEA Flexibility to 7% under the ESSA will vary depending on the circumstances of the local school district.

The 7% reservation is one of the topics still under discussion as Michigan’s ESSA plan is finalized. More information on this and other pending decisions can be found in the report, “[Michigan’s Approach to the Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#)” (Jan 10, 2017). Be sure to subscribe to ESSA Notes at the [Michigan Department of Education ESSA web page](#) to receive continued ESSA updates.

3/8/2017

C-16. Can we get access to resources you talked about during the Feedback Forums?

Yes, click on the “State Plan Development” tab at the [Michigan Department of Education ESSA web page](#).

1/27/2017

Partnership

C-17. Does the proposed “package of supports” in the partnership model include the MI Excel Blueprint?

Systems work is included in the supports vision. MDE is planning on continuing the MI Excel Blueprint work as an option for districts in which the systemic infrastructure of support for identified schools needs to be improved. This one of the topics still under discussion as Michigan’s ESSA plan is finalized. More information on this and other pending decisions can be found in the report, “[Michigan’s Approach to the Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#)” (Jan 10, 2017).

3/8/2017

Preparation

C-18. What role does the ISD play?

While ISDs are not specifically referenced in ESSA, they are a key partner in Michigan's education system and play an important role in the overall menu of supports provided to schools and students.

1/27/2017

Title IV

C-19. When does ESSA Title IV go into effect?

As soon as Michigan receives federal funding allocation for 2017. It is effective for the 2017-18 grant cycle.

3/8/2017

C-20. Is the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) a new funding stream?

Not new, the SSAE aggregates previous separate Title IV funding streams that schools can access through a block grant.

1/27/2017

D. Teacher and Leader Quality

Certification

D-1. National Board Certification is a part of Michigan's Top 10 in 10 goals. Can this help with funding? Is there funding available? Can it be used for districts?

The MDE, indeed, considers National Board Certification to be the most respected professional certification available in education, and we believe it provides numerous benefits to teachers, students, and schools. However, there is not enough federal funding through ESSA to be used to fund all our priorities around high-quality teaching and leading. We'll have to choose among various options. Be sure to subscribe to ESSA Notes the [Michigan Department of Education ESSA web page](#) to learn more details as they become available.

1/27/2017

Early Childhood

D-2. Related to having a P-12 system, how do schools influence [teacher and leader quality at the] early childhood [level] if they don't run programs?

Title I funds can be used to support professional development for early childhood education teachers and administrators outside of the school. We are still developing the details, but we do know that it will be integrated as part of the CNA. We're considering a number of questions: What partners need to be at the table? What opportunities are available? How do we ensure integration of goals? If this is identified in the CNA as a need, districts will be encouraged to work with early childhood partners to determine what supports are needed.

3/8/2017

Evaluations

D-3. Will Michigan's ESSA plan include support for the use of educator evaluations in determining needed professional development for building staff, as well as measures to prevent evaluation being implemented in a punitive manner?

The MDE's support for the implementation of educator evaluations is grounded in the use of these tools primarily as a means to identify and provide professional learning that improves instructional practice. The MDE does plan to prioritize professional learning for principals and other evaluators in using teacher evaluations as a powerful feedback tool through the ESSA State Plan.

3/8/2017

D-4. Is there any talk about evaluations for schools that hit the benchmark of being among the 10% top performing schools in Michigan? How will we know they are identifying gifted students well, and training educators to support these students?

MDE staff are designing the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) in a way that will allow districts to examine and address this issue.

1/27/2017

Miscellaneous

D-5. How can the MDE help Michigan establish a master teacher system that entices master teachers to stay in the classroom and not pursue administration for career advancement?

While discussions are ongoing to fully answer this question, some options the MDE has discussed are a tiered certification system, technical assistance models, information and training (including National Board Certification for Teachers [NBCT]), and using teacher leaders in policy work. Districts, however, are where the rubber meets the road on this; they can use Title funds to train teacher leaders, create hybrid assignments, and offer pay incentives.

1/27/2017

D-6. Has the state looked ahead to anticipate the possibility of a shortage of quality teachers, and is it a concern?

Yes, the MDE continually monitors and reviews teacher shortage areas in Michigan, by both content and geographic region/district. In addition, we know that enrollment in teacher preparation programs in Michigan and nationwide is declining. Ensuring that Michigan has high-quality teachers is a priority; thus, you will find strategies throughout Michigan's ESSA plan to make education an attractive and rewarding profession for both young professionals and career changers.

1/27/2017

D-7. How do we keep high-quality educators from leaving high-needs districts?

The MDE plans to work with Partnership Districts to identify underlying causes of educator attrition within those districts. Through the Partnerships, the MDE hopes to both support districts in making key changes to boost retention and examine actions the department can take to reduce systemic and/or policy barriers to the establishment of a high-quality workforce.

1/27/2017

D-8. Will you be asking for input from those who implement a "grass roots" teacher leader or principal support program?

Teacher Leaders have been involved in the development of Michigan's approach to educator quality in ESSA since the beginning of our process. The MDE will continue to collaborate with Teacher Leaders to learn from their experiences and support their development and outreach efforts.

1/27/2017

D-9. Has the MDE defined the terms "quality" and "effective" as we implement?

We are working to define these terms in our application. We'd like to begin moving in the direction of referring to "effective teaching" versus "effective teachers."

1/27/2017

Preparation

D-10. How do you reconcile the need to have high-quality teacher preparation with the desire to have alternative certification/preparation?

Alternative routes to educator certification are not inherently of low quality; nor are traditional routes to educator certification inherently of high quality. The MDE will continue to maintain high standards for the program providers of both alternative and traditional educator preparation.

1/27/2017

D-11. How does the state's ESSA planning around teacher and leader quality fit with the regional plan for educator evaluations?

ESSA doesn't require educator evaluations, but state law does. Both processes should be a part of the district's Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) process and should work together.

1/27/2017

D-12. When it comes to teacher preparation, does the MDE have any plans to influence higher education institutions to ensure that they're aligned and held accountable for these goals?

Yes. We have an accountability system for the teacher preparation system that is aligned to Michigan's strategic goals. However, there is an implementation lag; changes made now won't hit classrooms for 4-5 years.

1/27/2017