Opportunities to Make Data Work for Students

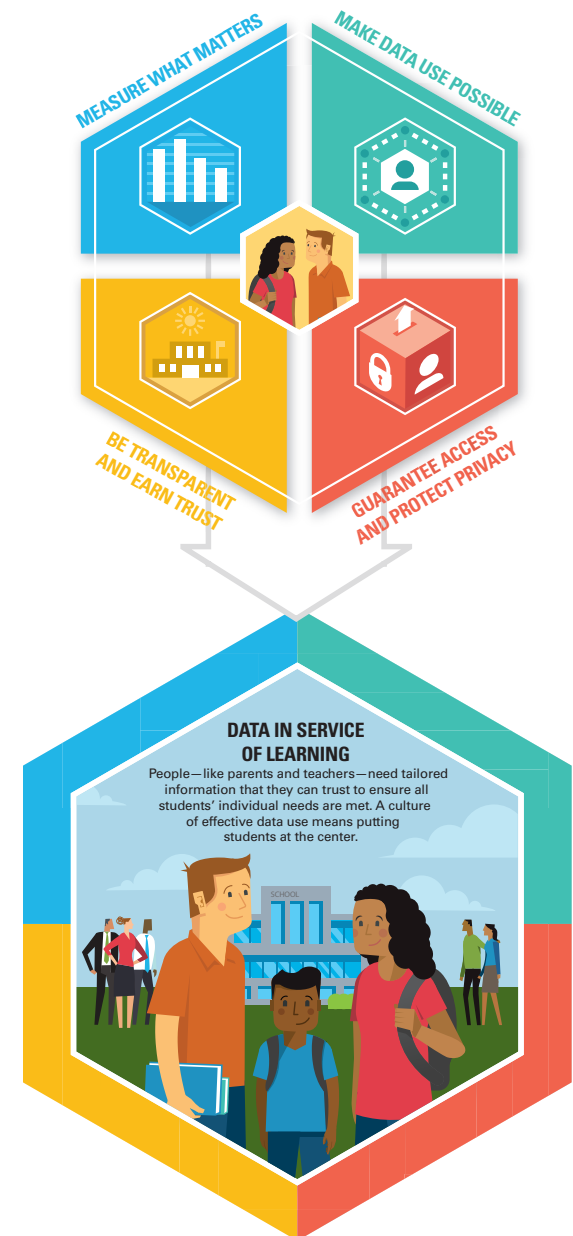## IN THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

Introduction

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) represents a change in federal education policy that gives states greater flexibility—and greater responsibility—to make decisions about the policies and practices to support all students' success and close achievement gaps. ESSA maintains the commitment of its predecessor, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), to using data to examine what is working for students—and what is not—to meet states' education goals.

The opportunities to make data work for students presented in this document capitalize on the provisions in ESSA and go beyond legal compliance to support the goal of ensuring that every child has the opportunity to excel. The Data Quality Campaign's (DQC) Four Policy Priorities are a set of recommendations for states that want to do more than meet the letter of the law in ESSA by helping them maximize the data foundation they have built over the past decade.

DQC's Four Policy Priorities to Make Data Work for Students

The Four Policy Priorities are a set of recommendations for policymakers who want to transform data from a tool of compliance to one that fuels continuous improvement. This culture change rests on several guiding principles:

◆ **Students are central.** Data must be used to support student learning and to ensure that each student's individual needs are met.

◆ **Data systems are not enough.** States must shift their focus from building systems to empowering people and from using data only for compliance to using it to foster improvement and results.

◆ **Data needs to be tailored to the user.** Parents, school leaders, and other stakeholders have different questions about education policy. States should provide access to education data in a thoughtful way that accounts for the specific needs of each user and the importance of protecting student privacy.

◆ **Data is used for different purposes,** including transparency, continuous improvement, and accountability. Not all data collected needs to be used for all three purposes. Data used for inappropriate purposes can damage trust and stunt a culture of continuous improvement.

◆ **Stakeholder engagement is critical.** People who need data—including teachers, principals, and parents—must be involved in the creation of the policies for data access and use. Data is more likely to be useful and used if those who need it have a say in the information delivery process.

MEASURE WHAT MATTERS

MAKE DATA USE POSSIBLE

BE TRANSPARENT AND EARN TRUST

GUARANTEE ACCESS AND PROTECT PRIVACY

DATA IN SERVICE OF LEARNING
People—like parents and teachers—need tailored information that they can trust to ensure all students' individual needs are met. A culture of effective data use means putting students at the center.

Contents

WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS TOOL

The ESSA provisions highlighted in this document are opportunities for states to maximize the power of data to meet their education goals. In each section, the reader will find the following:

◆ a **summary of the specific provision** in ESSA, highlighting what the law requires states to do

◆ the **value proposition for state action,** describing why the provision is important to meeting the needs of educators, families, taxpayers, and policymakers

◆ **opportunities for states to act** on that provision of the law *and* to go beyond compliance to use data to support students and schools

◆ an **example of a state** that has already taken action

◆ **resources** from DQC and partner organizations to guide next steps

For more details on the specific provisions in ESSA, go to www.dataqualitycampaign.org/ESSAOpps.

Opportunities to Measure What Matters

When states prioritize measuring what matters, they are clear about what students must achieve and have the data to ensure that all students are on track to succeed. Much of this important data may not be relevant for accountability purposes but still has value to families, educators, and policymakers for measuring student and school success. The opportunities included in this section prompt states to take the framework provided by ESSA and go further to determine measures that provide a fuller picture of student outcomes.

Incorporate Multiple Measures of Student Success into Accountability Systems

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA requires that state leaders **include multiple measures in accountability systems,** which opens the door for including richer measures of student and school performance, such as student growth and on-track indicators (i.e., attendance, behavior, and grades).

◆ ESSA requires states to engage directly with stakeholders to prioritize which measures of student and school success communities value.

Why This Matters

Holding schools accountable for successful education outcomes requires a more robust set of measures than only math and reading scores. Educators and families are hungry for a bigger picture to help them understand how students and schools are performing. The information they need is not only accountability data—stakeholders need more context about student outcomes. When community members have a hand in determining what pieces of information are good measures of student success, they are more likely to buy into and act on the results.

Opportunity

◆ Because states have already invested in building education data systems, they should **leverage existing data** to produce indicators of success that will be meaningful to a broad range of stakeholders.

State Story

As Connecticut worked to develop a new accountability system, state leaders solicited feedback from stakeholders and heard that communities wanted performance to be evaluated based on multiple measures—including measures that Connecticut had not used previously, such as chronic absence. The State Board of Education responded by incorporating new indicators into the state's accountability system so that it reflected the measures most important to educators and families.

Resources

◆ Council of Chief State School Officers: Exploring Multiple Measure Dashboards Webinar Series

◆ Data Quality Campaign: What Is Student Data?

◆ Fordham Institute: ESSA Accountability Design Competition

Ensure That at Least 95 Percent of Students Take Annual Assessments

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA preserves the requirement that **95 percent of students must participate in annual assessments.**

◆ States can **use assessment audit grants in ESSA to improve upon current assessments.**

Why This Matters

Annual assessments measure where students are academically at the end of the school year, and while they do not provide the whole picture of student and school performance, they remain a critical measure of learning. Maximizing student participation in assessments ensures that the resulting data is valid and reliable. State and local leaders need valid and reliable information about student performance to set goals and allocate resources to meet student needs. Educators and parents need a test score for *every* child as a benchmark on learning progress.

Opportunity

◆ The best way for states to build trust and buy-in for annual assessments and to ensure that students participate will be to **get timely, useful information about how students perform on annual assessments directly to parents and educators.**

State Story

State leaders in West Virginia recognized that parents need clear information about annual state tests and what they measure. In response, leaders created a website to provide information to families about how to read and use their children's assessment scores. West Virginia's high student participation rates on annual assessments ensure that policymakers and other stakeholders have a complete, accurate picture of student achievement in their state.

Resources

◆ Achieve: Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts

◆ Data Quality Campaign: How Do Data Empower Parents?

◆ The Education Trust: The Every Student Succeeds Act: What's in It? What Does It Mean for Equity? (Topic: Assessments)

◆ Foundation for Excellence in Education: ESSA: Implications for Standards and Assessments

Determine Whether to Include Measures of Student Growth in Accountability

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA asks states to include student growth measures in their accountability systems at their discretion and **acknowledges the value of growth data** throughout the law.

Why This Matters

Student growth is a measure that helps educators and families understand student progress over time. Meeting learning proficiency benchmarks is an important goal, but every student—whether he or she is a high flyer or is struggling—should demonstrate learning growth each year. Growth data helps paint the fuller picture of which students, teachers, and schools are improving student achievement and are on track to meet proficiency goals.

Opportunity

◆ Many states have already demonstrated a commitment to the value of the measure by calculating student growth. State leaders should **leverage grant funds in ESSA to build on the quality of the student growth measures** they use.

◆ States should **consider including measures of student growth on state report cards whether or not growth is included in accountability.**

◆ States should **go further than transparency to provide educators and families access to growth information about individual students,** which is a powerful tool for supporting student success.

◆ To ensure that the potential of growth data to support student learning is realized, states should **provide educators data literacy training** that helps them use multiple types of data to personalize learning.

State Story

Colorado paved the way in developing student growth models and providing information to parents that helped them understand that measuring student academic progress is as useful as growth charts that parents get at the doctor. Colorado's tool informed a broader audience by showing that student growth illuminates progress in a way proficiency alone cannot.

Resources

◆ Bellwether Education Partners: Policy Play: Create Accountability Mechanisms That Give Schools Credit for Advancing Students Who Are Far Behind Grade Level

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Teacher Data Literacy: It's about Time

◆ The Education Trust: Individual Student Growth: An Overview

◆ US Department of Education: Emerging Approaches to Measuring Student Growth

Opportunities to Make Data Use Possible

When states make data use possible they provide teachers and leaders the flexibility, training, and support they need to answer questions and take action. The reporting requirements in ESSA include data that is valuable to educators and families, and the opportunities in this section prompt states to go further by creating rich tools, resources, and training to help those closest to students use information to ensure that every student excels.

Report Chronic Absence on Report Cards

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA requires states to **include rates of chronic absence by school on report cards.**

Why This Matters

Students who miss as few as two days of school per month for any reason are at a much greater risk of falling off track academically and even dropping out. High levels of chronic absence can be a key indicator of systemic problems in a school or community such as health issues, limited access to transportation, and school climate challenges like bullying. When educators and communities have timely access to chronic absence data they illuminate barriers to student success and keep students on track for graduation.

Opportunity

◆ Providing an aggregate snapshot of last year's chronic absence rate by school is important but not sufficient. Collecting chronic absence data is an opportunity for states to go further and **support the development of early warning systems that identify students at risk of being chronically absent** for schools and districts to use and to provide intervention support to schools and districts.

District Story

Chicago Public Schools provided every high school educator a set of on-track indicators, including chronic absence, about their students. School leaders use the information to create targeted interventions based on specific student needs. Between 2007 and 2014, the rate of students on track to graduate in Chicago rose from 57 to 84 percent, which represents 7,000 additional students on track to graduate each year.

Resources

◆ Attendance Works: Absences Add Up: How School Attendance Influences Student Success

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Giving All Students a Chance at Success in Chicago

◆ Data Quality Campaign and Attendance Works: Monitoring Chronic Absence Fact Sheet

◆ EdNavigator: Don't Miss the Bus!

Use Flexible Funding to Train Teachers to Use Data Effectively and Keep It Secure

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA provides **flexible funds for states to train educators on how to use data to support student learning and how to protect student privacy.**

Why This Matters

High-quality teachers are critical to ensuring that all students excel, and the ability to use data in service of student learning is an increasingly important skill for a high-quality teacher. Neither states nor districts will be able to meet their goals for student success unless teachers and school leaders know how to act on and protect data.

Opportunity

◆ States should prioritize using those flexible funds to train educators to use data while keeping it secure. Teachers need **training on the protection and use of multiple types of data** (i.e., growth, on track, noncognitive), not only assessment data.

◆ States should also seek to promote data literacy skills among preservice teachers and **create licensing policies that include a definition of data literacy.**

State Story

Reflecting their commitment to training teachers to use data effectively, leaders in Delaware made sure that every school in the state had time with a data coach. The state requires every school to have 90 minutes of weekly collaborative planning time so teachers can have data-informed conversations about how to best support every student.

Resources

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Ms. Bullen's Data-Rich Year

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Teacher Data Literacy: It's about Time

◆ Student Data Principles

Use Evidence to Make Decisions

ESSA Says

◆ States are **no longer required to base their decisions solely on formal randomized controlled studies** and may now use evidence from different types of research.

◆ By broadening the definition of "evidence-based practices," ESSA provides more flexibility on how policy and programming decisions are made while also preserving the value of research-based practices. Policymakers may now **choose the types of evidence that help them select the best resources and interventions suited to the specific needs of their communities.**

Why This Matters

School, district, and state leaders need to make decisions about resources and tools that are being used in schools and want to use strategies that are shown to work best. Leaders need relatively quick, useful ways to assess whether resources meet their students' needs; otherwise they are left to make decisions in the dark and waste time using resources that do not best support student learning.

Opportunity

◆ States should **develop research partnerships** that combine the analytical skills of researchers with policy expertise at the state level to collaboratively create a culture that uses data for continuous improvement based on evidence.

◆ To do so, states should **consider working with universities, the Regional Education Laboratories, Comprehensive Centers, and other experts**.

◆ States should **promote and model the importance of creating a culture where evidence is used to make decisions.**

State Story

The Maryland P–20/workforce data governing board sets the state's research agenda and uses the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Center to analyze data and guide improvement of the state's education system. The MLDS Center has research partnerships with state agencies to answer state policy questions and meet education goals.

Resources

◆ Brookings Institution: From Evidence-Based Programs to an Evidence-Based System

◆ Center for American Progress: Better Evidence, Better Choices, Better Schools: State Supports for Evidence-Based School Improvements and the Every Student Succeeds Act

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Turning Data into Information: The Vital Role of Research in Improving Education

◆ Results for America: Evidence-Based Decision-Making in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Include Information Required in the Civil Rights Data Collection on State Report Cards

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA requires that states **include information on the state report card required in the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC),** including school climate, quality, and safety and student enrollment in programs like prekindergarten and Advanced Placement.

Why This Matters

Data is a powerful tool to highlight inequities in the quality of education that students receive. Information that illuminates those inequities is valuable to policymakers and communities to inform decisions about resources and supports for students and schools. That information is most valuable when reported in a way that is in state context and easy to find for families, communities, and taxpayers.

Opportunity

◆ The CRDC gets data directly from districts, but districts are often stretched thin by data collection and reporting requirements. Since states are now required to collect and report this information, states should seek to **reduce burden on and support districts.** The door is open for states to pursue different approaches to the CRDC—like partnering with districts to submit the needed data or the state submitting the CRDC data directly so that districts do not have to report the information to both the state and the federal governments.

◆ The CRDC occurs biennially, and the data is not released until two years after the collection. If reported with more regularity on state report cards the information will round out the picture of student and school success and provide stakeholders an **up-to-date picture of whether schools are meeting the needs of all students.**

◆ When states report measures typically included in the CRDC, it shifts the "owner" of accountability from the federal government to the state and local levels. Rather than wading through national data on federal websites, stakeholders will be able to find CRDC information alongside other information presented on their school's or district's report card. Having the information side by side **empowers families, communities, and taxpayers to make informed decisions.**

State Story

Massachusetts launched an early warning information system (EWIS) to help educators, school leaders, and policymakers gain a clearer picture of how students are progressing toward college and careers. Rather than each district having to create its own tool, the state supported development of an EWIS that provides every district in the state, regardless of its size or capacity, the data it needs to know whether its students are on track for success.

Resources

◆ US Department of Education: CRDC Tool: Chronic Absenteeism in the Nation's Schools

◆ US Department of Education: Office of Civil Rights Data Collection

Opportunities to Be Transparent and Earn Trust

When states are being transparent and earning trust, they ensure that every community understands how its students and schools are doing, why data is valuable, and how it is protected and used. To provide the fullest picture of student success and build trust among stakeholders, states will need to think beyond compliance with federal reporting requirements. The opportunities in this section prompt states to work with communities to make sure that the information included in state report cards and other vehicles provides value to families, educators, and taxpayers.

Design State Report Cards That Meet the Needs of Families and Communities

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA requires that **state report cards be widely accessible to the public and in language that parents can understand,** so state leaders must rethink how they publicly present education data.

◆ States can seek **grants established in ESSA to redesign report cards** in an easily accessible, user-friendly format.

Why This Matters

In an era when people select the cars they drive, houses they live in, and restaurants where they eat based on information they find online, information about how schools perform should be just as useful and accessible. With a focus on compliance, current state report cards do not provide stakeholders the easy access to the information about student and school performance they need and deserve.

Opportunity

◆ States should **engage stakeholders and think creatively about the most valuable way of presenting public report cards** so that parents and the public can easily use and act on the information.

◆ State leaders should **communicate with stakeholders to raise awareness** of and provide context for the information displayed on report cards.

State Story

State leaders in Ohio saw that different people, like educators, parents, and policymakers, need different data to meet their information needs. They sought to report education data in multiple formats with varying levels of complexity. The state presents data in multiple categories, such as "gap closing," "financial data," and "graduation rate," and provides an overview of the questions data in each category helps answer.

Resources

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Empowering Parents & Communities through Quality Public Reporting

◆ Foundation for Excellence in Education: Building State Capacity for Powerful School Information

◆ GreatSchools.org

Engage Stakeholders in State Planning

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA requires that states **engage teachers, school leaders, parents, and others in planning for accountability, school interventions, and more.**

Why This Matters

People trust what they help create. For too long, decisions about what works for students and families have been determined only by compliance or decisions at the highest level. Families, educators, and communities deserve a seat at the table in determining what is best for students and schools.

Opportunity

◆ Thinking about stakeholder engagement only in the context of developing plans for ESSA compliance is not enough. States should **build ongoing relationships with diverse stakeholders to solicit feedback on what data is collected and how it is used and presented.**

◆ Developing strategies for engaging stakeholders will **improve the quality of states' data and its use** because educators and families are more likely to buy into the tools the state creates, and they will have a mechanism for providing ongoing feedback on what else they need.

State Story

When leaders in Illinois wanted to design a new state report card, they knew that feedback from parents and educators would lead to more useful information and better presentation. To kick off the design process, leaders convened nearly 60 focus groups to ensure that their newly designed report card would include the information parents and educators wanted to see.

Resources

◆ Institute for Educational Leadership and Coalition for Community Schools: Stakeholder Engagement in the Every Student Succeeds Act

◆ Council of Chief State School Officers: ESSA Implementation Considerations: Stakeholder Engagement

◆ Council of Chief State School Officers: Let's Get This Conversation Started: Strategies, Tools, Examples, and Resources to Help States Engage with Stakeholders to Develop and Implement Their ESSA Plans

◆ Parent Teacher Association: Family Engagement in ESSA

Report Postsecondary Enrollment

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA requires states to **report postsecondary enrollment data on school report cards** "where available."

Why This Matters

Parents want to know whether their child's school is getting them ready for what comes next. To have the best understanding of which high schools are preparing graduates to thrive after graduation, families must have information about postsecondary success presented alongside graduation rates and other information about how students fare in high school.

Opportunity

◆ **Every state has the capacity to report postsecondary enrollment information.** In fact, the vast majority of states are already reporting this information. But few have made it easy to find or presented it side by side with other information about school quality.

◆ While many states already report postsecondary enrollment information, it will be even more valuable when states place enrollment data on state report cards that are easy to find and use. **Cohort high school graduation rates,** now a reporting requirement in ESSA, **are most informative when presented side by side with information about how students fare once they go on to postsecondary.**

◆ States should **go above and beyond the requirements of ESSA by including data about postsecondary access and success in report cards**—not only enrollment information but also remediation, retention, and other valuable measures of success after high school.

◆ States should also **break down enrollment and other information by four-year and two-year programs and postsecondary training** that leads to a certificate or credential.

◆ States should also **consider including workforce outcomes and military enlistment** information on the state report card along with postsecondary data.

State Story

When policymakers in Kentucky wanted to provide educators and communities a more robust picture of success after high school, they created high school feedback reports that include multiple measures of postsecondary readiness and success. After the initial release, the state redesigned the reports based on educator feedback to make them more useful for informing continuous improvement at the local level.

Resources

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Preparing Students For Jobs: Ensuring Student Success in the Workforce

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Roadmap for High School Feedback Reports

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Roadmap for K–12 and Postsecondary Linkages

◆ State Higher Education Executive Officers: En Route to Seamless Statewide Data Systems: Addressing Five Cross-Cutting Concerns

Disaggregate Data about Mobile Students

ESSA Says

◆ In addition to the subgroups required by the previous No Child Left Behind Act, ESSA requires states to **disaggregate information about the performance of students in foster care, homeless students, and those connected to the military.**

Why This Matters

As the demographics of students in public schools change with time stakeholders are demanding information that shines a light on the performance of students who may have fallen through the cracks, like the most mobile student populations. Disaggregating information about groups of students is valuable to communities and policymakers to ensure that schools are meeting the learning needs of their entire student population.

Opportunity

◆ New disaggregation requirements present an opportunity for states to **implement linkages between data systems** (e.g., K–12 and Child Protective Services) and even across state lines to have the most complete picture of mobile students' experiences.

◆ States should ensure that they have **robust data governance structures** in place to facilitate the collection and reporting of information about mobile students.

◆ States should also **consider what questions newly disaggregated data can help answer** and find ways to use the information beyond compliance purposes.

State Story

After research showed that students in foster care in California were more likely to struggle in school and drop out, policymakers took action. The findings spurred widespread state attention and reform—including a change to the formula governing school funding and a legislative requirement of a report on the education outcomes of students in foster care.

Resources

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Pivotal Role of State Policymakers as Leaders of P–20/Workforce Data Governance

◆ Data Quality Campaign and American Bar Association: Supporting Students in Foster Care

Cross-Tabulate Student Performance Data

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA requires states to **report data that is able to be cross-tabulated by the performance of students.** States must make data able to be cross-tabulated at least by race, gender, English proficiency, and whether or not students have disabilities.

Why This Matters

Cross-tabulation allows leaders to dig into specific questions about student performance—for instance, examining the performance of boys who are both English language learners and have special needs as compared to their peers. Viewing cross-tabulated data on student performance provides leaders and communities a better understanding of achievement gaps and empowers them to improve direct resources and support.

Opportunity

◆ States have some flexibility in how to present cross-tabulated data, so states should **consider how they can make cross-tabulated data user friendly and easy to find and understand.**

◆ The new requirement is also a chance for states to **release de-identified open data sets that are able to be cross-tabulated** so that districts, advocates, policymakers, and community partners can dig into the information and target resources and support to the groups of students who need the most help.

◆ When reporting data at the smaller group sizes that cross-tabs will create, states must **be thoughtful about privacy protections,** like minimum subgroup size (N-size), while still making data available to the public.

State Story

Leaders in Virginia made de-identified open education data sets available to innovators, including Virginia high school students, through a software application development program. A state program challenged innovators to use K–12 data to design innovative new tools. Virginia's program resulted in new education resources that educators can use to support student success.

Resources

◆ The Leadership Conference Education Fund: Data Provisions in the Every Student Succeeds Act

◆ MISchoolData.org

◆ Open Data Handbook: How to Open Up Data

Ensure That Every Child Has an Effective Teacher

ESSA Says

- States are required to **publicly report the professional qualifications of teachers disaggregated by high- and low-poverty schools.** States must include the number and percentage of teachers and leaders who are inexperienced, using an emergency credential, or teaching out of field.

- States are also required to **determine and make public definitions and measures for effective teachers and leaders.**

Why This Matters

The nation's education goals will not be met unless every student, regardless of zip code, has access to high-quality teachers in their classrooms and effective leaders in their schools.

Opportunity

- States should **go further than public reporting by providing school and district leaders the data they need** to ensure that every child has a high-quality teacher in the classroom and leader in the building.

- As policymakers define or build on existing definitions of effective teaching, they should **consider multiple data-driven measures,** including measures of student learning outcomes, that provide a complete picture of teacher performance.

- States should also **establish feedback loops to provide educator preparation programs information about the performance of their graduates that drives continuous improvement** and the development of high-quality preservice teachers who are able to meet diverse student needs.

State Story

Massachusetts leaders developed a plan to remedy the fact that schools with large populations of low-income and minority students were less likely to have effective, experienced educators. The state provides data that allows school leaders see whether students have been overassigned to new, out-of-field, or ineffective teachers and empowers school leaders to find ways to increase students' exposure to high-quality teachers.

Resources

- Data Quality Campaign: Using Data to Improve Teacher Effectiveness

- The Education Trust: The Every Student Succeeds Act: What's in It? What Does It Mean for Equity? (Topic: Teachers and School Leaders)

Clarify How Education Dollars Are Spent

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA attempts to address the clarity of financial information by requiring states for the first time to **publicly report** *school-level* **per-pupil expenditures,** including actual—not average—educator salaries. The law also requires that states distinguish federal funding from state and local funding.

Why This Matters

Parents, policymakers, communities, and taxpayers want and deserve access to financial information about their schools so they can understand how dollars are being used to help students succeed. Unfortunately, attempting to evaluate education funding feels like looking through murky water. Too often information is buried, isolated from school performance data, reliant on averages, and hard to understand.

Opportunity

◆ States must **prioritize making sure that per-pupil expenditure data is quality, accessible, and useful.** If stakeholders cannot trust the quality of the information or easily understand what is presented, the needed conversations that expenditure data is meant to spark will by stymied.

◆ Done well, the requirement will **allow communities to access and understand how financial resources relate to school success** and how resources are distributed across communities and schools.

State Story

Collecting information about how dollars were spent at the local level was cumbersome, and the resulting reports were hard to understand, so leaders in Maine engaged district superintendents to develop a new common reporting system for financial information. In response to feedback from superintendents, the state also provided training to a wide range of stakeholders, including the press, to help them better understand and report on district financial data.

Resources

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Using Financial Data to Support Student Success

◆ The Education Trust: The Every Student Succeeds Act: What's in It? What Does It Mean for Equity? (Topic: Funding)

Include Other Information Parents, Students, and the Public Need to Understand Progress

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA requires states to determine and **include additional information that will help parents, students, and the public understand school progress in state report cards.**

Why This Matters

Parents have diverse priorities for the best education for their children, and the public is interested in more than only reading and math outcomes. By providing information tailored to each state's unique needs, leaders help families and the public have the best understanding of student and school progress.

Opportunity

◆ States should not make this decision in a vacuum; they must **engage stakeholders to understand the questions families and the public want answered** about how schools are performing.

◆ States already have a lot of information and should **leverage existing data** to round out the information presented on report cards.

◆ Stakeholders may have questions about student success that are informed by out-of-school opportunities or life after high school including in the workforce, so states should **consider data sharing and linkages that will help answer stakeholder questions.**

State Story

State leaders in Illinois provide school leaders the opportunity to upload additional contextual information to the state report card. Information that school leaders know is valuable to parents and members of the community is side by side with information about student and school progress on the report card. Schools highlight offerings of Advanced Placement courses, arts programs, and volunteer and community service opportunities.

Resources

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Pivotal Role of Policymakers as Leaders of P–20/Workforce Data Governance

◆ Strive Together: Data Drives School-Community Collaboration

Opportunities to Guarantee Access and Protect Privacy
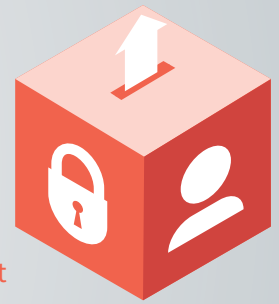
When states guarantee access and protect privacy, they provide teachers and parents timely information on their students and make sure it is kept safe. To maximize the opportunities presented in ESSA, states must ensure that data gets into the hands of those closest to students.

Go Beyond ESSA Requirements to Get Data to Individuals

ESSA Says

◆ ESSA includes no provisions to get data into the hands of those closest to students, like educators and families.

Why This Matters

Students will not be successful unless the individuals closest to them have timely, tailored access to information that answers their questions and drives action. Getting education data into the hands of educators, parents, and students themselves, while protecting student privacy, is critical to student success.

Opportunity

◆ Though ESSA provides states many opportunities to be transparent and provide robust measures of school success to the public, the new law **stops short of supporting states in getting individual-level data into the hands of those closest to students.**

◆ States will have to pick up the baton and **prioritize making data work for students both through publicly reported information and through access to student-level data** that helps teachers and parents support students' learning.

◆ States should **consider policies that provide portable, secure dashboards for parents and teachers.**

◆ Data access and data privacy go hand in hand; states must **establish strong privacy and security policies** that keep student data safe.

State Story

Leaders in Georgia demonstrated their commitment to giving teachers appropriate access to student data, and the state sought to design a tool that would put state longitudinal data and resources to support student learning side by side with data available to teachers from districts. The data access tool gives teachers the student-level data they want and need. By securely sharing relevant and timely data with those closest to students, Georgia is transforming data use from a compliance exercise to a tool that enables educators to tailor learning based on the unique needs of the student.

Resources

◆ Data Quality Campaign: How Data Empowers Parents

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Mr. Maya's Data-Rich Year

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Ms. Bullen's Data-Rich Year

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Parents Want Their Children's Data

◆ Data Quality Campaign: Roadmap to Safeguarding Student Data

For more details on the specific provisions in the Every Student Succeeds Act, go to www.dataqualitycampaign.org/ESSAOpps.

DQC
DATA QUALITY CAMPAIGN

The Data Quality Campaign is a nonprofit policy and advocacy organization leading the effort to bring every part of the education community together to empower educators, families, and policymakers with quality information to make decisions that ensure that students excel. For more information, go to www.dataqualitycampaign.org and follow us on Facebook and Twitter (@EdDataCampaign).