

## Alabama ESSA Key Decisions

DRAFT report of the Alabama ESSA Implementation Committee -- November 1, 2016

<b>Key Decision Point in ESSA</b>	<b>Accountability Work Group Alabama Recommendation</b>
1. The minimum number of students (n-size) that the State determines are necessary with respect to the disaggregation of information, including:	<i>N</i> Count = 20
1.a How that number is statistically sound;	1.a Data Analysis has been completed for a sampling of different <i>N</i> counts.
1.b How such minimum number of students was determined by the State, including how the State collaborated with teachers, principals, other school leaders, parents and other stakeholders when determining such minimum number; and	1.b The <i>N</i> count of 20 should remain to enable appropriate supports to be provided to students in various sub populations.
1.c How the State ensures that such minimum number is sufficient to not reveal any personally identifiable information”	1.c The <i>N</i> count of 20 is above the FERPA regulation requirements and will show transparency in reporting of subgroup.
2. States will have to establish “ambitious long-term goals, which shall include measurements of “interim” progress toward meeting such goals.” States must decide what constitutes “ambitious” “long-term” and “interim.” These goals include:	2. The work group recommends to wait on the federal regulations/ guidelines, with the stipulation that research and statistical data models be taken into consideration for establishing these goals. (for indicators 2a-2c)
2.a Academic achievement as measured by proficiency on annual state assessments; and	
2.b Graduation rates in which states must decide if they want to use the extended-year rate in addition to the required 4-year cohort graduation rate.	
2. With respect to English learners, increases in the percentage of students making progress achieving English language proficiency, within a timeline which must be determined by the State.	

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3. States will have to annually measure for all students and separately for each subgroup of students the following indicators:	
3.a For all schools and based on the long-term goals, academic achievement as measured by proficiency on annual state assessments and at the discretion of the state, student growth on such assessments for each public high school in the state;	3.a The work group recommends in order to ensure a single system of accountability for all Alabama public schools and LEAs, data from the following indicators will be utilized: Student Achievement and Learning Gains (High School Growth)
3.b For non-high schools, any other measure of growth as determined by the state (not necessarily based on the state assessments), or another valid and reliable indicator that allows for meaningful differentiation in school performance;	3.b The work group recommends in order to ensure a single system of accountability for all Alabama public schools and LEAs, data from the following indicators will be utilized: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Gains (Non-High School Growth)</li> </ul>
3.c For high schools, graduation rates in which states must decide if they want to use the extended-year rate in addition to the required 4-year cohort graduation rate;	3.c The work groups recommends in order to ensure a single system of accountability for all Alabama public high schools and LEAs, data from the following indicator will be utilized: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduation Rate (Utilizing both 4 year cohort and 5 year cohort data)</li> </ul>
3.d For all schools, progress of ELs in attaining English language proficiency--states must decide what is meant by "progress." This could be just a continuation of the indicator a state is currently using under the similar NCLB language in Title III;	3.d The work group recommends in order to ensure a single system of accountability for all Alabama public schools and LEAs, data currently collected by Federal Programs utilizing baselines established by the WIDA Consortium from the ACCESS.
3.e For all schools, one additional school quality or student success indicator – states must decide what additional indicator or indicators they will use that allow for meaningful differentiation in school performance.	3.e The work group recommends in order to ensure a single system of accountability for all Alabama public high schools and LEAs, data from the following indicators will be utilized: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College and Career Ready for schools with a grade 12</li> <li>• Attendance Rate for all public schools</li> </ul>

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4. States must develop a system to meaningfully differentiate all public schools in the state.	
4.a States will have to decide how much weight to assign to each indicator, while ensuring that each such indicator has substantial weight.	4.a The work group recommends to wait on the federal regulations/ guidelines, with the stipulation that research and statistical data models be taken into consideration for establishing these goals. (for indicators 4a,4b,4d)
4.b State must also ensure that in the aggregate, the indicators that do not include the additional school quality or student success indicators are assigned a much greater weight. States will need to decide what constitutes “substantial” and “much greater”.	4. b The work group recommends to wait on the federal regulations/ guidelines, with the stipulation that research and statistical data models be taken into consideration for establishing these goals. (for indicators 4a,4b,4d)
<p>4.c States will need to decide whether to count former ELs as part of the EL subgroup for up to four years after they exit EL status.</p> <p>States will need to decided guidelines for recently arrived ELs who have been enrolled in an U.S. school for less than one year, ESSA outlines two options:</p> <p><b>OPTION 1:</b> States’ school performance calculations may exclude the results from math, ELA, and English language proficiency assessments taken by recently arrived ELs during their first year. States may also exempt these students from taking the ELA assessment entirely during that first year.</p> <p><b>OPTION 2:</b> This options-which is new under ESSA- allows states to phase in recently arrived ELs’ assessment results for accountability purposes over three years, as outlined below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>First year:</b> Recently arrived ELs take math, ELA and English language proficiency assessments, but the results are not used for any accountability purposes.</li> <li>▪ <b>Second year:</b> ELs take all three assessments; states use the measure of the students’ growth on the assessments between the two years for accountability purposes.</li> <li>▪ <b>Third year:</b> beginning in year three, ELs’ academic results count toward school performance and are reported the same way al all other students.</li> </ul>	4.c This item falls under the <b>Standards, Assessments and ELL Workgroup</b> . The recommendation of the workgroup is <b>Option 2</b> .

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<p>4.d The indicator measuring progress of ELs in attaining English proficiency does not need to be an annual indicator; states need to decide how often to use this indicator.</p>	<p>4.d The work group recommends to wait on the federal regulations/guidelines, with the stipulation that research and statistical data models be taken into consideration for establishing these goals. (for indicators 4a,4b,4d)</p>
<p>5 States must decide a methodology for identifying schools for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) and for determining if additional categories of schools, beyond what is required, should be included. This must be “not less than the lowest=performing 5% of all schools receiving funds under this part in the State.”</p>	<p>5. The work group recommends utilizing a support model that identifies every school within the state based on multiple performance levels. Factors that will be considered in the identification of schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification in the bottom 6%* (no less than the bottom %5 as required by ESSA guidelines) of the schools</li> <li>• History of being identified among the bottom 6% for 3 years</li> <li>• Scoring an F in the area of achievement on the state report card</li> </ul> <p>*The 6% identifications is in alignment with the state Failing Schools Law (AAA).</p>
<p>6. ESSA requires that high schools that graduate fewer than two-thirds of their students be identified for comprehensive support and improvement (this identification is to be made based on the four-year adjusted cohort rate). Unless the Department regulates on this issue, states will need to decide what rate to use.</p>	<p>6. The workgroup recommends using ESSA requirements for a school with a Graduation Rate of less than 67% to be identified for comprehensive support and improvement.</p>
<p>7. States must decide how the requirement that 95% of all students and students in each subgroup participate in assessments will factor into their state accountability systems.8 a.</p>	<p>7. The work group discussed the proposed options under federal regulations and decided to wait until further guidance/regulations are released.</p>
<p>8. Districts with schools identified by the state for comprehensive support and improvement must develop a plan for each such school.</p>	<p>(Recommendations for section 8 are made by the Schools and District Improvement Work group)</p>
<p>8 a. States must determine the plan approval process and what will be required for approval. They must also develop the process by which the state will provide on-going monitoring and review of the plan.</p>	<p>8 a. The work group recommends to continue the current plan development/ Compliance Monitoring Process developed by the SDE.</p> <p>The components of the plan are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-Site Monitoring</li> <li>• Self-Assessment Monitoring</li> <li>• Desk Review Monitoring</li> <li>• Technical Assistance</li> <li>• High-Risk Assessment</li> <li>• Enhanced Self-Monitoring</li> <li>• Corrective Action Plan for LEAs that have citations from on-site monitoring or desk reviews</li> </ul>

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8 b. States must decide if they will permit differentiated improvement activities for high schools that predominantly serve students who are either retuning back to school after dropping out or are significantly off track to graduate.	8 b. The work group recommends to continue the current process of plan development that offers differentiation opportunities for schools including improvement activities.
8 c. States must decide if they will permit high schools with a total enrollment of less than 100 students to forego otherwise required improvement activities.	8 c. The work group recommends to continue the current process of plan development that offers differentiation opportunities for schools including improvement activities.
9. States must notify districts if they have any school where any subgroup of students is consistently underperforming. These schools will be identified for Targeted Support and Improvements (TSI).	
9.a States must decide what constitutes “consistently” and “underperforming”	9 a. The work group recommends that Alabama use the following definitions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Consistently</b>- the same subgroup of students that are underperforming for 3 consecutive years.</li> <li>2. <b>Underperforming</b>- The workgroup recommends waiting on public feedback and guidance to further direct them with appropriate guidelines.</li> </ol>
9.b State must decide how frequently to identify these schools.	9 b. The work group recommends that upon initial identification (2018-2019), targeted support school status will be evaluated after the second year. Thereafter, evaluation of status will occur every 3 years.