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Making Progress Towards Oregon's State Plan

*A recap of the third convening of the
ESSA Advisory Committee*

The Every Student Succeeds Act

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaces No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and affords states greater flexibility. The new law extends the promise of an excellent, well-rounded education to every student, regardless of race, family income, home language, or disability. ESSA encourages schools and educators to innovate and create systems that address local needs.

As a part of this work, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is responsible for creating a State Plan for submission to the U.S. Department of Education that reflects a shared statewide vision for Oregon's students and schools on topics such as accountability, funding, school improvement, and supports for educators and students. ODE remains committed to designing a State Plan that reflects the state's education priorities. To ensure that Oregon's State Plan is rooted in the day-to-day needs of educators, students, and communities, ODE designed a stakeholder engagement process that relies on participation from diverse audiences, thought partners, practitioners, and leaders.

Oregon's State Plan Development

Over the past six years, the Oregon Department of Education in partnership with Oregon's teachers, principals, and administrators have worked hard to implement more rigorous college- and career-ready standards for all students. The progress we have made together sets the foundation for our work moving forward under the nation's new education law.

Commitment to Equity

Oregon is committed to developing a coherent, integrated, equity-driven plan for federal review. To ensure deep and critical thinking in the process to develop Oregon's State Plan, it will apply the following lenses:

- **EQUITY:** Supports equitable outcomes and learning opportunities for all of Oregon's students.
- **ALIGNMENT AND COHERENCE:** Aligns with Oregon's vision, values, and goals and other parts of the plan.
- **FEASIBILITY:** Reflects state and local capacity to support implementation (human, organizational, fiscal).
- **EFFICIENCY:** Streamlines processes where possible, avoids creating unnecessary burdens and duplicative systems or processes.

As a part of the ESSA Advisory Committee member's opportunity to share their feedback during the meeting on October 7, ODE staff asked members to review components of the State Plan with these criteria in mind. Committee members were also asked to identify gaps and additional policy and/or implementation considerations related to the components they reviewed. This information was collected and will be synthesized and analyzed in order to inform the development of key components of the State Plan.

Collaboration and Coherence

To date, ODE has worked hard to engage stakeholders in meaningful dialogue about their values, priorities, and hopes for Oregon's students and schools. These conversations have taken on several forms, including ODE's efforts to:

- Launch regional [community forum conversations](#);
- Establish [stakeholder work groups](#) to develop recommendations under key areas of flexibility: Standards & Assessment, Accountability, School Improvement, and Educator Effectiveness;
- Vet work group recommendations with an [external advisory committee](#);
- Collect input on recommendations through conference presentations and other meeting venues;
- Provide information and updates on ESSA through its [website](#).

In addition to the four key areas mentioned above, ODE staff and stakeholders are working to address other programs, including the education of English learners, migrant children, at-risk students, student support and academic enrichment grants, homeless education, and 21st century community learning centers. All of these components are [required elements](#) in Oregon's State Plan that will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.

ESSA Advisory Committee

The primary role of the ESSA State Advisory Committee is to help ensure the final State Plan represents our state's values and aspirations for our schools. Advisory Committee members are an [appointed group of educators](#) comprised of superintendents, principals, teachers, and education partners who review recommendations from the four work groups and offer critical feedback, including considerations for

implementation and policy implications. This meeting marks the third time they will convene; they met first in June and again in July of 2016.

Meeting Details – October 7, 2016

The ESSA Advisory Committee convened on October 7, 2016 with the purpose of:

- Reviewing and providing feedback on components of Oregon’s State Plan;
- Deepening understanding of the criteria for reviewing Oregon’s State Plan: equity, alignment, feasibility, efficiency; and
- Identifying gaps and reflecting on policy and implementation considerations

At Friday’s meeting, ODE staff provided a draft framework outlining key elements of Oregon’s State Plan, including standards and assessment, accountability and school improvement and educator effectiveness that serve as critical elements of Oregon’s education system. Along with sharing an overview of the components and asking committee members to offer their best thinking using the criteria outlined above (equity, alignment, feasibility, and efficiency), ODE staff shared rationale to underscore the collective thinking that went in to designing the framework presented.

Committee members were asked to engage in table and whole group conversation regarding their review of the components and rationale and in turn, identified items that they (as committee members) could come to consensus on and those components that require deeper consideration and reflection. The information resulting from those conversations was recorded and collected and will be analyzed to inform next steps at the Department level in developing components of the State Plan.

Review of State Plan Components

The following serves as a summary of the information presented to ESSA Advisory Committee members on October 7.

Academic Standards and Assessments

Under ESSA, Oregon has the opportunity to hone its prioritization and progression of content standards across grade levels to support school and district implementation of effective instructional practices to ensure alignment to the standards. In addition, Oregon will consider how best to leverage available flexibility surrounding the high school assessment to promote equitable opportunities and outcomes for all of Oregon’s students.

Accountability System

ESSA provides Oregon with an opportunity to improve its accountability system by moving the state in a new direction in accountability in order to better serve all schools, particularly those in need of supports. With this new opportunity, Oregon strives to build a state accountability system that is grounded in Oregon’s values as a state; one that provides markers of Oregon student, school and district success; one that also includes required ESSA elements; and lastly, one that broadens the indicators used for state and federal accountability to demonstrate the value of capturing the diverse learning opportunities and services schools provide to

students. Under ESSA, Oregon proposes an enhancement of our current accountability system. Oregon's proposed accountability system has the following key features:

- No overall school rating.
- Additional indicators for English learner progress and school quality/success.
- Indicators are grouped into categories.
- Within each indicator for a school or student group there will be a rating, still to be determined. We will also show district, state and comparison schools data to provide context.
- Additional indicators will be reported that will not be part of the federal accountability system.

As a part of the work to improve Oregon's accountability system, ODE staff will redesign its school and district report cards with the following three aims:

- Implement a multiple measures dashboard approach to school accountability, including measures that go beyond data derived from test scores.
- Create a brief (i.e., two-page) summary report card that can be printed and sent to parents.
- Move much of the detailed data reporting to an on-line application, reducing the reliance on paper reports.

School Improvement

Under Oregon's proposed accountability system, schools in Oregon will not receive an overall rating. Instead, the indicators above will be used to create a profile for each school. As mentioned above, each indicator will be evaluated. ODE still needs to determine how this evaluation will happen. By leveraging both accountability data as well as locally reported student progress data, Oregon honors the need to account for context as well as consider multiple measures to better identify schools and districts truly in need of comprehensive supports. In addition, developing an evidence-based diagnostic review and needs assessment tool will provide the necessary and tangible implementation information to support the development of healthy and sustainable systems.

Supporting Excellent Educators

Currently, *The Oregon Framework for Teacher and Administrator Support* and Oregon's District and School Achievement Indicators provide a framework to support Oregon's educators in meeting the needs of specific student groups. Despite Oregon's efforts and investment in hiring and retaining educators of color, the state has not kept pace with the increase in student populations. To ensure that every student has access to excellent educators, the Oregon Department of Education will work together with school districts to develop, attract, and retain excellent educators in all schools, especially in high-need schools.

Conclusion

We are vested with great responsibility, and even greater potential, as we develop and implement a State Plan for ESSA that addresses the needs of every Oregon student. To ensure the design and implementation of a well-rounded, student-centered State Plan that best represents the diverse communities Oregon serves, the Oregon Department of Education is committed to engaging stakeholders in meaningful dialogue and will continue to seek input as development of the State Plan progresses.