

The Every Student Succeeds Act: A Catalyst for RI's Education Strategic Plan

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) gives Rhode Islanders unprecedented flexibility.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed into law December 10, 2015, revises the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 by giving states a more robust role in defining how education policy and resources shape the practices of schools and districts. The new law provides states with a **great deal of flexibility** in a number of key areas, including academic standards, accountability, support for school improvement, student and educator support, and use of federal education funds. The U.S. Department of Education has asked all states to **submit a plan** for transition to ESSA, and our goal at the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE) is to complete our plan and submit it by **July 2017**.

ESSA will be leveraged as a catalyst for the vision laid out in the strategic plan.

ESSA gives an opportunity for Rhode Island to further develop and resource Rhode Island's **Strategic Plan for PK-12 Education**, completed in 2015. As a part of our state plan, we will build upon the strategic plan to carefully consider our state's long- and short-term goals, the metrics by which we will hold schools and districts accountable, and the means by which we will assess our progress toward these goals for all students and subgroups of students. We will also determine how we can best utilize federal funding to support students, educators and schools in reaching these goals. In the end, Rhode Island's **state plan for ESSA will outline critical steps to realizing the vision** set forth in our state's strategic plan and ensure that **every Rhode Island graduate is prepared** to take on life and career as a critical and creative thinker, collaborative and self-motivated learner, and culturally competent active citizen.

Rhode Islanders will work together to solidify our ESSA state plan.

Engagement and public input are critical elements of our state planning process. Over the course of the 2016-2017 school year, RIDE will be engaging with the greater education community with critical questions surrounding our state plan. Starting in July 2016, a group of 26 community members will gather monthly as a **Committee of Practitioners** to give the RIDE team input on high-level questions concerning ESSA, to serve as liaisons to the community at large regarding our planning process, and to weigh in on multiple drafts of the Rhode Island State ESSA Plan. To get widespread input and feedback, RIDE, with the Committee of Practitioners, will be hosting open **community forums** in Fall 2016, will launch a **public survey** in Winter 2017, and will hold a **public comment period** in Spring 2017. Additionally, RIDE will be meeting frequently with **critical stakeholder groups** on pertinent topics to gain understanding and advice on how the state plan can support current practice. RIDE's internal ESSA Oversight Team will incorporate all of this feedback, input, and guidance into several drafts of an ESSA state plan and submit to the U.S. Department of Education for the July 5, 2017 deadline.

To stay up to date on the latest ESSA state planning news, please visit RIDE's ESSA website at www.ride.ri.gov/ESSA

Key Considerations within Rhode Island's ESSA State Plan

- Academic Assessments
- Academic Standards
- Educator Development, Advancement, and Evaluation
- Educator Recruitment and Retention
- Federal Funding Allocations
- School and District Accountability
- School Improvement Strategies
- School Report Cards
- State Outcome Goals
- Student Support Strategies