

TALKING POINTS ON THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA)

Background

- In December 2015, Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the main federal law governing P-12 public education.
- Known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the measure replaces No Child Left Behind and creates a long-term policy designed to give states additional flexibility and more state and local control over the accountability process. It is the main federal law governing P-12 education in the United States.
- Before the U.S. Department of Education (USED) released the proposed regulations, Kentucky started working to engage a broad spectrum of education shareholders, through a series of 11 face-to-face Town Hall meetings held across the state, one conducted virtually and one with superintendents.
- More than 3,000 people participated in the Town Hall meetings. They told the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) what they valued in their schools and how they define school success. In addition we received hundreds of written comments from the public through a special email box set up specifically for this purpose. All feedback is posted on the KDE website.
- In summer 2016, KDE kicked off the first meetings of the Commissioner's Accountability Steering Committee and the accountability work groups. The groups – comprised of nearly 200 diverse individuals representing various interests – were tasked with designing various elements of the new school accountability system and making recommendations to the Steering Committee. The Accountability Steering Committee considered the work groups' recommendations and advised the Commissioner of Education on what the system should look like.
- Any changes to Kentucky's accountability system must be approved by the Kentucky Board of Education and move through Kentucky's regulatory process.
- The current timeline calls for the new accountability system to be in place by the 2018-19 school year.