

OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE EDUCATION IN ARKANSAS ESSA & STATE SYSTEMS AND POLICIES



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OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE EDUCATION IN ARKANSAS

ESSA & STATE SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

On behalf of ForwARd Arkansas, the Office of Innovation for Education (OIE) collaborated with *ForwARd* officers and several state agencies to develop the series: *Opportunities to Advance Education in Arkansas*. This series of working documents uncover and highlight potential intersections among *ForwARd*'s recommendations, the Every Student Succeeds Act (*ESSA*), and related efforts among Arkansas agencies to transform Arkansas. These intersections are unpacked and situated in Arkansas' current context to provide a richer understanding of the current work, identify potential next steps, and spotlight the unprecedented opportunities to advance and accelerate Arkansas' transformation.



ForwARd Arkansas. ForwARd Arkansas is a partnership of parents, educators, civic leaders, business professionals, and policy makers committed to helping every Arkansas student graduate prepared for success in college and the workplace. In early 2015, following extensive input from stakeholders, the ForwARd Arkansas Steering Committee crafted “A New Vision for Arkansas Education”. The vision outlines seven areas of focus which include recommendations for realizing the vision.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA was signed into law December 10, 2015 replacing the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in the latest reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act. ESSA includes provisions for federal education funds and outlines the requirements under which state and local education agencies receive, distribute, use, and are accountable for the use of these funds.

The language of ESSA provides states and districts with more flexibility, enabling states to determine long-term goals for student success. Given this historic opportunity, it is timely to review state agency initiatives that might intersect with new opportunities under the law.

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Unprecedented Opportunity. ESSA represents a unique opportunity at the state and local district levels to reimagine how federal, state, and local efforts and resources might be coordinated to enhance educational opportunities and outcomes to benefit all students in Arkansas and to close long-standing differences in student success. The launch of the *ForwARd* initiative to advance education in Arkansas provides additional intersections from which momentum might be gained to advance equity and access to opportunities to close those success gaps for the children in Arkansas.

In this Series

ESSA provides state policymakers an opportunity to improve and expand learning opportunities for ALL students with new systems and policies that build and improve statewide systems of support, streamline regulation and shift mindsets, and ensure federal, state and local funding for equity, efficiency, and excellence. In this series, we draw connections to the Arkansas Department of Education's Vision for Excellence in Education to highlight and integrate opportunities.

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ESSA & STATE SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

Intersection with Arkansas Agencies	Every Student Succeeds Act	<i>Opportunities to Build & Improve Statewide Systems of Support</i>
<p>Each student will meet or exceed educational milestones along pathways to graduate prepared for college, career, and community engagement (Arkansas Department of Education, Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 1).</p> <p>Each student will meet or exceed his/her expected individual growth annually (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 2).</p> <p>The Arkansas Department of Education will build the capacity of each team member to provide efficient and effective customer service that benefits students, respects taxpayers, and serves stakeholders (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 5).</p>	<p>With ESSA, states have wide latitude in accountability classifications and systems of improvement and support beyond the lowest performing schools (Sec. 1003).</p> <p>Ensuring that SEAs continue to close achievement gaps and that all children have an opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality, requires states to analyze how the states system of accountability and support are periodically reviewed and revised (Sec. 1111).</p>	<p>As a way to support all schools in continuous improvement, Arkansas could refine statewide systems of supports to ensure evidence-based interventions are part of school and district plans, while strengthening capacity to help the full range of schools. Arkansas has an opportunity to consider, while continuing to gauge feedback, how statewide systems of support can promote the “shifts in teaching, learning, and supports necessary to help all students master College and Career Readiness (CCR) knowledge and skills.”</p> <p>Arkansas has an opportunity to continue to learn from how the state has supported schools in the past under NCLB and the shifts in supports that will be required as the state grows into a new model of continuous improvement for all schools. If the United States is to close the “long-standing racial and socioeconomic gaps and address concerns about the nation’s overall educational performance,” states will increasingly need to lead the effort.</p> <p>The Building State Capacity and Productivity Center (BSCPC) recommends states consider the following five undergirding principles as they redefine their improvement and accountability strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create comprehensive plans that encourage action • Be deliberate about how rich data are used and by whom • Be clear in defining non-overlapping roles and responsibilities for the state and districts • Stay nimble enough to allow for triaging persistently struggling schools • Focus on fostering continuous improvement statewide
<div style="border: 2px solid #0056b3; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>ForwARd Recommendations</u></p> <p>Streamline regulatory burdens at all levels to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset and enable educators to focus on their most important roles. Focus regulations and related support on highest-risk situations where compliance activities could be most helpful (e.g. struggling schools). Develop statewide district efficiency metrics to support spending transparency and set efficiency targets for schools needing intensive support to improve how funds are spent. Districts, co-ops, ADE and other stakeholders should make decisions based on educational value and ADE should support this capacity. Drive greater efficiency without compromising outcomes (Recommendations 1, 7, 8 and 9).</p> </div>		

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<div style="border: 2px solid #003366; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">ForwARd Recommendations</p> <p>Streamline regulatory burdens at all levels to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset. Focus regulations and related support on highest-risk situations where compliance activities could be most helpful. Consider current staffing and budget rules governing the ADE that may constrain ADE from hiring the best personnel for the job. Revise staffing and budget rules to offer more hiring autonomy to ADE leadership and increase compensation in ADE staff salary schedule to be at least as competitive as districts in order to attract strong educator talent. Consider changes structural for underperforming co-ops to ensure all districts have access to a consistent set of high-quality services. The ADE should hold each co-op accountable for providing high-quality services that support student achievement and effective use of resources at the school and district levels (Recommendations 1-5).</p> </div>		

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ForwARd Recommendations

Streamline regulatory burdens at all levels to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset. Focus regulations and related support on highest-risk situations where compliance activities could be most helpful. Districts, co-op, ADE, and other education stakeholders should make decisions based on educational value. Support districts and other entities in building this capacity. Drive greater efficiency of district spending without compromising outcomes. Education laws should be kept as simple as possible; implement legislative changes only when department policy changes are necessary to drive needed change. Continue to build alignment across Arkansas’ school performance designations to enhance clarity and improve communication to educators and communities. (Recommendations 1. 7. 9. and 15).

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<p>The Arkansas Department of Education will build the capacity of each team member to provide efficient and effective customer service that benefits students, respects taxpayers, and serves stakeholders (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 5).</p>	<p>Between ESSA and the new Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG), states can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify ways to meet “time and effort” requirements (paperwork required to support staff paid with federal funds) • Tailor approaches to monitoring districts, including “risk-based monitoring, that encourages states to focus their efforts where the risks to federal funds are greatest” • Consider performance issues when determining how to best oversee districts 	<p>Federal law gives Arkansas many ways to help districts reduce the administrative burdens associated with administering federal programs. School districts, with the guidance of the state, may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate administrative funds • Flexibly design Title I programs, including programs under the Title I schoolwide model • Reduce paperwork to make it easier for staff to work with multiple student groups supported by multiple funding sources (time and effort flexibility) • Coordinate monitoring and data requests • Focus on districts that have the greatest need and/or risk <p>As a part of the stakeholder outreach of ESSA, Arkansas has an opportunity to strengthen the process of gathering feedback on a wider range of federal grant issues such as user-friendliness of grant processes, guidance documents, and technical assistance.</p>
<div style="border: 2px solid #003366; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; background-color: #e6f2ff;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>ForwARd Recommendations</u></p> <p>Streamline regulatory burdens at all levels to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset. Focus regulations and related support on highest-risk situations where compliance activities could be most helpful and make decisions based on educational value. Develop statewide district efficiency metrics to support spending transparency. Efficiency targets should be coupled with intensive support on how to spend funds in underperforming districts. Drive greater efficiency of district spending without compromising outcomes. Education laws should be kept as simple as possible; implement legislative changes only when department policy changes are necessary to drive needed change (Recommendations 1, 7, 8, 9, and 15).</p> </div>		

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<p style="text-align: center;">ForwARd Recommendations</p> <p>Streamline regulatory burdens at all levels to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset. Focus regulations and related support on highest-risk situations where compliance activities could be most helpful and make decisions based on educational value. Develop statewide district efficiency metrics to support spending transparency. Efficiency targets should be coupled with intensive support on how to spend funds in underperforming districts. Drive greater efficiency of district spending without compromising outcomes. Education laws should be kept as simple as possible (Recommendations 1, 7, 8, and 9).</p>		

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ForwARd Recommendations

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<p style="text-align: center;"><u>ForwARd Recommendations</u></p> <p>Streamline regulatory burdens to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset and enable educators to focus on their most important roles. Focus regulations and support on highest-risk situations where compliance activities could be most helpful. Develop statewide district efficiency metrics to support spending transparency and set efficiency targets for schools needing intensive support. Drive greater efficiency without compromising outcomes (Recommendations 1, 8 and 9).</p>		

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ForwARd Recommendations

Streamline regulatory burdens at all levels to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset. Focus regulations and related support on highest-risk situations where compliance activities could be most helpful. Drive greater efficiency of district spending without compromising outcomes. Sufficiently resource Arkansas’ schools to perform at the aspired level and invest in additional funding for excellence. Smooth out the step-wise function used for the National School Lunch program to reduce funding differences between similar percent FRL districts (Recommendations 1 9 10 11)

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<p>ForwARd Recommendations</p> <p>Streamline regulatory burdens to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset and enable educators to focus on their most important roles. Focus regulations and support on highest-risk situations where compliance activities could be most helpful. Develop statewide district efficiency metrics to support spending transparency and set efficiency targets for schools needing intensive support. Drive greater efficiency without compromising outcomes. Sufficiently resource Arkansas’ schools to perform at the aspired level and invest in additional funding for excellence. Evaluate a school’s effectiveness based on both absolute performance and student growth. Continue to build alignment across Arkansas’ school performance recommendations (Recommendations 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 16 and 17).</p>		
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		<i>Excellence</i>
<p>Each student will meet or exceed educational milestones along pathways to graduate prepared for college, career, and community engagement (Arkansas Department of Education, Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 1).</p> <p>Each student will meet or exceed his/her expected individual growth annually (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 2).</p> <p>The ADE will build the capacity of each team member to provide efficient and effective customer service that benefits students, respects taxpayers, and serves stakeholders (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 5).</p>	<p>ESSA aims to “remove silos among different funding streams and support collaboration and efficiency across multiple programs” to help ensure that all children have a significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education and that each SEA continues to close achievement gaps (Sec. 1111).</p>	<p>The ADE School Improvement Unit has many opportunities to guide and support districts in alignment of funds, particularly in showing how improvement funds can work in tandem, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title II funding to support professional development • Title III funding to support English learners • New Title IV funding for Student Support and Enrichment Grants • Optional Direct Student Services set-aside, which can directly support students in underperforming schools • Conditional funding based on the districts use of aligned and evidence-based strategies and interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Similar to NCLB’s Investing in Innovation (i3), Arkansas could use a tiered model of funding based on the use of evidence based practices and independent evaluation of practices <p>In order to support schools in identifying and coordinating funds for school improvement, the ADE could develop guidance for coordination of federal, state, and local funds and guidance for the transition from the use of SIG funding.</p>

ForwARd Recommendations

Make decisions based on educational value. Develop statewide district efficiency metrics to support spending transparency and set efficiency targets for schools needing intensive support. Drive greater efficiency without compromising outcomes. Sufficiently resource Arkansas’ schools to perform at the aspired level and invest in additional funding for excellence. Evaluate a school’s effectiveness based on both absolute performance and student growth. Continue to build alignment across Arkansas’ school performance recommendations. Smooth out the step-wise function to reduce funding differences. Invest in categorical funding for EL students and tie a portion of funding to district effectiveness in supporting EL and FRL students (Recommendations 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13).

OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE EDUCATION IN ARKANSAS

ESSA & STATE SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

Intersection with Arkansas Agencies	Every Student Succeeds Act	<i>Opportunities for Funding for Equity, Efficiency & Excellence</i>
<p>Each student will meet or exceed educational milestones along pathways to graduate prepared for college, career, and community engagement (Arkansas Department of Education, Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 1).</p> <p>Each student will meet or exceed his/her expected individual growth annually (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 2).</p> <p>Each student will develop and apply personal competencies that foster learning, community engagement, and success in life (Arkansas Department of Education, Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 3).</p>	<p>ESSA is explicit in providing Title I students with a well-rounded education. ESSA defines a “well-rounded education” as courses, activities, and programming in subjects such as English, reading or language arts, writing, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, geography, computer science, music, career and technical education, health, physical education, and any other subject, as determined by the State or local educational agency, with the purpose of providing all students access to an enriched curriculum and educational experience.</p> <p>ESSA clarifies that Title I schools, with Title I funding, can support student achievement through a wide array of services, including counseling, specialized instructional support services, mentoring services, preparation for postsecondary education and the workforce, behavior supports, early intervening services, violence prevention programs, professional development, and other activities for school staff (Sec. 8101, 1114 and 1115).</p>	<p>Under NCLB, many states did not permit LEAs to use Title I funds for school climate initiatives, instruction beyond reading and math, or other non-academic supports. Now that ESSA clarifies these can all be part of the Title I program, SEAs may wish to review their Title I spending policies to ensure they are aligned to ESSA. In addition, SEAs should ensure alignment between the state’s accountability system and the program services schools can pay for with Title I funds. For example, if Arkansas chooses an indicator personalized learning as an indicator in its accountability system, the SEA might review its Title I spending policies to ensure LEAs can spend funds to personalize learning for students.</p> <p>According to CCSSO’s, Decision Guide for Implementing ESSA: State Considerations for Effective Grant Programs, spending policies are often reflected in (and thus need to be reviewed):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State guidance documents and other technical assistance materials distributed to LEAs and schools • Informal communications between SEA and LEA staff • The local-to-state application tool • The SEA’s monitoring instruments and related materials <p>SEAs may also want to update or develop new Title I spending guidance for their LEAs.</p>

ForwARd Recommendations

Streamline regulatory burdens to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset and enable educators to focus on their most important roles. Focus regulations and support on highest-risk situations where compliance activities could be most helpful. Develop statewide district efficiency metrics to support spending transparency and set efficiency targets for schools needing intensive support. Drive greater efficiency without compromising outcomes. Sufficiently resource Arkansas’ schools to perform at the aspired level and invest in additional funding for excellence (Recommendations 1, 8, 9 and 10).

OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE EDUCATION IN ARKANSAS

ESSA & STATE SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

Intersection with Arkansas Agencies	Every Student Succeeds Act	<i>Opportunities for Funding for Equity, Efficiency & Excellence</i>
<p>Each student will meet or exceed educational milestones along pathways to graduate prepared for college, career, and community engagement (Arkansas Department of Education, Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 1).</p> <p>Each student will meet or exceed his/her expected individual growth annually (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 2).</p> <p>Each student will develop and apply personal competencies that foster learning, community engagement, and success in life (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 3).</p>	<p>In addition to Title 1 funds set-asides, ESSA funds include competitive grants for supportive programs (including Full service community schools, promise neighborhoods, and 21CCLC). Set-asides may be used to conduct a grant competition and permits an award for up to 4 years, which may include a planning year. States must give priority to school districts who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve high numbers or percentages of elementary and secondary schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support • Demonstrate the greatest need, as determined by the state • Demonstrate the strongest commitment to using the funds to improve student achievement and outcomes <p>States may use federal professional development to increase access to effective teachers for students from low-income families and students of color, may access Teacher and Leader school improvement grant funds, and may use Title II funds for Teacher and Leader Academies.</p>	<p>ESSA contains a new optional set-aside for SEAs. ESSA permits SEAs to keep up to three percent of the 95% otherwise earmarked for LEAs for state-level activities for principal and school leaders. ESSA expands and updates the activities SEAs and LEAs can support with Title II, Part A funds. Activities may include for states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher certification reform, evaluation, equitable access to teachers, alternative routes for certification, recruitment and retention, establishing or expanding teacher or school leader academies, appropriate data use, and professional development <p>For districts activities may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiting and retaining teachers, reducing class size to evidence-based levels, evidence-based personalized professional development, training in recognizing trauma, mental illness and child sexual abuse, training to support the identification of gifted and talented students, developing feedback mechanisms, professional development on integrated academics and career and technical education and others.

ForwARd Recommendations

Streamline regulatory burdens to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset and enable educators to focus on their most important roles. Focus regulations and support on highest-risk situations where compliance activities could be most helpful. Develop statewide district efficiency metrics to support spending transparency and set efficiency targets for schools needing intensive support. Drive greater efficiency without compromising outcomes. Sufficiently resource Arkansas' schools to perform at the aspired level and invest in additional funding for excellence (Recommendations 1, 8, 9 and 10).

OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE EDUCATION IN ARKANSAS

ESSA & STATE SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

Intersection with Arkansas Agencies	Every Student Succeeds Act	<i>Opportunities for Funding for Equity, Efficiency & Excellence</i>
<p>Each student will meet or exceed educational milestones along pathways to graduate prepared for college, career, and community engagement (Arkansas Department of Education, Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 1).</p> <p>Each student will meet or exceed his/her expected individual growth annually (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 2).</p> <p>The ADE will build the capacity of each team member to provide efficient and effective customer service that benefits students, respects taxpayers, and serve stakeholders (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 5).</p>	<p>As detailed in CCSSO’s “Decision Guide for Implementing ESSA: State Considerations for Effective Grant Programs,” ESSA’s new “Maintenance of Effort” provisions provide increased flexibility on requirements. In general, MOE requires states and LEAs to spend a consistent amount of state and local money on providing a free public education from year-to-year. Specifically, to receive a full Education Finance Incentive Grant allocation from the USDOE (one of the four grants that generate Title I, Part A funds), states must spend at least 90% of the state money they spent the year before on providing a free public education. Districts must spend at least 90% of the state/local money they spent the year before on providing a “free public education” to receive a full allocation under:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I, Part A (Improving Basic Programs) • Title I, Part C (Migrant Education Program) • Title I, Part D (Neglected & Delinquent) • Title II, Part A (Supporting Effective Instruction) • Title III, Part A (English Language Acquisition) • Title IV, Part A (Student Support and Academic Enrichment) • Title IV, Part B (21st Century Community Learning Centers) • Title V, Part B subpart 2 (Rural and Low-Income School Program). 	<p>In the past, the penalty for not maintaining effort was a proportional reduction to the relevant federal grants and reductions were made each year a state or LEA failed to maintain effort. With the new proposed regulations, a reduction will only be made if the state or LEA also failed to maintain effort at least once in the prior five years.</p> <p>In the “Decision Guide” CCSSO provides the following example, “if a state or LEA maintained effort in Years 1-5, but not in Year 6, its allocation would not be reduced.” ESSA also allows maintenance of effort to be waived if “requirements if a state or LEA reduced its spending due to exceptional circumstances, such as a natural disaster or a change in the organizational structure of the state, or a precipitous decline in the State’s financial resources.”</p> <p>Arkansas has an opportunity to review new flexibilities, such as the MOE updates, to ensure that policy and practice reflect the new opportunity. In addition, SEAs can transfer any or all state-level ESSA funds as described in CCSSO’s comparison chart (see page 34).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ForwARd Recommendations</p> <p>Streamline regulatory burdens to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset and enable educators to focus on their most important roles. Focus regulations and support on highest-risk situations where compliance activities could be most helpful. Develop statewide district efficiency metrics to support spending transparency and set efficiency targets for schools needing intensive support. Drive greater efficiency without compromising outcomes. Sufficiently resource Arkansas’ schools to perform at the aspired level and invest in additional funding for excellence. Smooth out the step-wise function to reduce funding differences (Recommendations 1, 7, 8, 9 and 10).</p>		<p><i>ies for Funding for Equity, Efficiency &</i></p>

OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE EDUCATION IN ARKANSAS

ESSA & STATE SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

Agencies		Excellence
<p>Each student will meet or exceed educational milestones along pathways to graduate prepared for college, career, and community engagement (Arkansas Department of Education, Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 1).</p> <p>Each student will meet or exceed his/her expected individual growth annually (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 2).</p> <p>The Arkansas Department of Education will build the capacity of each team member to provide efficient and effective customer service that benefits students, respects taxpayers, and serves stakeholders (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 5).</p>	<p>While Title I, Part A funds must be used to supplement and not supplant their state and local education spending, ESSA changes the method for testing compliance with this requirement. While proposed regulations on Title I's supplement not supplant (SNS) rule that are not yet final as of the date of this publication, the statute clarifies that SNS will no longer be tested by analyzing individual costs to determine if they are supplemental as was typically done in the past (Sec. 1118).</p>	<p>Changes to the supplement not supplant requirement in Title I, Part A, clarify that SNS will no longer be tested by analyzing individual costs to determine if they are supplemental, as was done under NCLB. This change could make it easier to spend Title I funds. The complexity of, and confusion over, SNS has often been a barrier to effective Title I spending. ESSA's changes – specifically the elimination of the traditional three presumptions of supplanting – “could help unlock Title I funds so they can be used more effectively for schools and students.”</p> <p>Under NCLB and previous versions of ESEA, supplanting was presumed when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An activity was required by state or local law • An activity was supported with state or local funds in the past • Or when Title I funds are used to pay for the same services for Title I students that state and local funds support for non-Title I students. <p>These three presumptions of supplanting will not apply to Title I, Part A funds under ESSA.</p>

ForwARd Recommendations

Streamline regulatory burdens at all levels to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset and enable educators to focus on their most important roles (Recommendations 1 and 7).

OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE EDUCATION IN ARKANSAS

ESSA & STATE SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

Intersection with Arkansas Agencies	Every Student Succeeds Act	<i>Opportunities for Funding for Equity, Efficiency & Excellence</i>
<p>Each student will meet or exceed educational milestones along pathways to graduate prepared for college, career, and community engagement (Arkansas Department of Education, Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 1).</p> <p>Each student will meet or exceed his/her expected individual growth annually (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 2).</p> <p>The Arkansas Department of Education will build the capacity of each team member to provide efficient and effective customer service that benefits students, respects taxpayers, and serves stakeholders (Vision for Excellence in Education, Goal 5).</p>	<p>ESSA highlights English learners in public schools and ensures they will make progress in attaining English proficiency and meeting other learning goals. Under Title I, states must include an indicator of “progress in achieving English language proficiency” on state assessments and information on the number and percentage achieving English proficiency, must be reported on state report cards (Sec. 1111).</p> <p>Title II allows states to use funds to “ensure that ELs have access to effective teachers and leaders” (Sec. 2101) and indicates schools may use funds to support teachers “to effectively teach ELs” (Sec. 2103). Title II also allows states to apply for Comprehensive Literacy grants (Sec. 2222).</p> <p>Title III allows states to reserve up to five percent of funds to support ELs and allows subgrants to LEAs working in partnership with institutions of higher education, education service agencies, and community-based organizations and allows states to develop and improve program content (Sec. 3115).</p> <p>Title IV encourages well-rounded educational experiences for children that are traditionally underrepresented and Section 9212 offers expanded access to Preschool.</p>	<p>In “Advancing Equity through ESSA: Strategies for State Leaders,” states and districts are encouraged to consider many opportunities that can positively impact English Learners, which is the fastest growing group of students in American public schools. With the opportunity to focus on ELs in Title I, states and districts must note that these changes are now considered, by federal policy, a “serious marker of continuous improvement.” Multiple provisions in ESSA can help ensure ELs receive a high-quality education and must be factored into state accountability and improvement plans. Arkansas can guide districts in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using evidence-based interventions • Identifying resource inequities • Accessing multiple sources of funding (such as Title I, Part A, Title II, Part A, Comprehensive Literacy Development Grants, Title III, Title IV) • Ensuring districts and schools are aware of and utilizing appropriate accommodations for state assessments for EL students • Expanding access to preschool through Preschool Development Grants

ForwARd Recommendations

Streamline regulatory burdens to reduce complexity and encourage a shift from compliance to a performance mindset and enable educators to focus on their most important roles. Focus regulations and support on highest-risk situations where compliance activities could be most helpful. Develop statewide district efficiency metrics to support spending transparency and set efficiency targets for schools needing intensive support. Drive greater efficiency without compromising outcomes. Sufficiently resource Arkansas’ schools to perform at the aspired level and invest in additional funding for excellence (Recommendations 1, 8, 9 and 10).

OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE EDUCATION IN ARKANSAS

ESSA & STATE SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

Resources

[Every Student Succeeds Act, Public Law No: 114-95](#)

[Forward: A New Vision for Arkansas Education](#)

[ISBE ESSA Public Bill Review Feb. 29, 2016](#)

[Title II, Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals, USDOE](#)

[Summary of Significant Spending and Fiscal Rules in the Every Student Succeeds Act, CCSSO](#)

Title I Funding

[Implementing Change: Rethinking School Improvement Strategies and Funding Under the Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#), Chiefs for Change, May, 2016.

[Non-Regulatory Guidance: Fiscal Changes and Equitable Services Requirements Under THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1965 \(ESEA\), as amended by THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT \(ESSA\)](#), USDE, November, 2016.

Innovation for School Improvement

[Getting Ideas into Action: Building Networked Improvement Communities in Education](#), Carnegie Foundation, July, 2011.

State Plans and Capacity

[USDE Draft ESSA Plan](#), Connecticut State Department of Education

[States as change agents under ESSA](#), Kappan, May, 2016.

[Arkansas Out Front, BSCPS.](#)

[Arkansas Department of Education, Public School Accountability](#)

[Maximizing ESSA Formula Funds for Students](#), CCSSO, April, 2016.

OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE EDUCATION IN ARKANSAS ESSA & STATE SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

[The SEA of the Future: Maximizing Opportunities Under ESSA](#), CRPE, November, 2016.

ESSA

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essafactsheet1127.pdf>

<http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2016/ESSA/CCSSODecisionGuideForESSAImplementation.pdf>

Equity

[Direct Student Services](#), Chiefs for Change, April, 2016.