Connecting ESSA to School Libraries

Thursday, October 13, 2016

Information and Technology Educators of Minnesota

(ITEM)
This program is made possible through the matching funds provided by Follett School Solutions. Follett advocates for, and understands, the expertise and dynamic role school librarians play in making a difference in their district’s success.
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# Schedule

## October 13, 2016

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<td>Welcome Remarks</td>
<td>Linda Weatherspoon, AASL Region 3 Director</td>
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<td>1:00 – 1:30 pm</td>
<td>ESSA Overview</td>
<td>Emily Sheketoff, Executive Director of Washington Office of American Library Association</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Federal and State Timeline</td>
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<td>- Effective School Library Program Definition</td>
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<td>- Review of titles that include School Librarians</td>
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<td>- Connection of titles to school library role</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30-2:00 pm</td>
<td>Review of Minnesota DOE State Plan Timeline</td>
<td>Dawn French, ITEM Co-President</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00 -2:15 pm</td>
<td>• Review of Key Messages</td>
<td>Linda Weatherspoon, AASL Region 3 Director</td>
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<td>• Identifying Stakeholders</td>
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<td>2:15-2:30 pm</td>
<td>Coalition Development Plan</td>
<td>Linda Weatherspoon, AASL Region 3 Director</td>
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<td>2:30-2:45 pm</td>
<td>Report/Share Out</td>
<td>Linda Weatherspoon, AASL Region 3 Director</td>
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<td>2:45- 3:00 pm</td>
<td>Connecting message to stakeholders- Indiana messaging</td>
<td>Linda Weatherspoon, AASL Region 3 Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00-3:15 pm</td>
<td>Report/Share Out</td>
<td>Linda Weatherspoon, AASL Region 3 Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:15-3:30 pm</td>
<td>Elevator Speech Development</td>
<td>Linda Weatherspoon, AASL Region 3 Director</td>
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<td>3:30- 3:45 pm</td>
<td>Connecting ESSA to Practice</td>
<td>Linda Weatherspoon, AASL Region 3 Director</td>
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<td>3:45 – 4:00 pm</td>
<td>Elevator Speech Practice and Feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00 pm</td>
<td>Closing Remarks/Questions</td>
<td>Linda Weatherspoon, AASL Region 3 Director</td>
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CONNECTING ESSA TO SCHOOL LIBRARIES
Thursday, October 13, 2016
Information and Technology Educators of Minnesota (ITEM)

Welcome

Linda Weatherspoon
AASL Region 3 Director
Fulton, MO

Handbook
SHARE, SHARE, SHARE

Share the American Association of School Librarians' (AASL) content on Twitter and Facebook.

- Tag @aasl
- #ESSAlibraries
- Send photos to jhabley@ala.org

ESSA Webpage

http://essa.aasl.org/

ALA Washington Office

Emily Sheketoff
Executive Director of Washington Office of American Library Association

https://vimeo.com/183396897
The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) supports the position that:

An effective school library program has a certified school librarian at the helm, provides **personalized learning environments**, and offers equitable access to resources to ensure a **well-rounded** education for every student.

As a fundamental component of college, career, and community readiness, the effective school library program:

1. is adequately staffed, including a state-certified school librarian who
   a. is an instructional leader and teacher,
   b. supports the development of digital learning, participatory learning, inquiry learning, technology literacies, and information literacy, and
   c. supports, supplements, and elevates the literacy experience through guidance and motivational reading initiatives;
2. has up-to-date digital and print materials and technology, including curation of openly licensed educational resources; and
3. provides regular professional development and collaboration between classroom teachers and school librarians.
Title I

Title I – Improving basic programs operated by state and local educational agencies

Message: School librarians and access to effective school library programs, impact student achievement, digital literacy skills, and school climate/culture.

https://vimeo.com/183388920

Title II, Part A

Title II: Supporting effective instruction

Message: School librarians share their learning with other professionals when they attend conferences and workshops, applying the benefits of new techniques, strategies, and technologies to the entire district.

https://vimeo.com/183390785
LEARN

Literacy education for all, results for the nation (LEARN)

New literacy program that specifically authorized school librarians to participate in required activities.

https://vimeo.com/183392270

IAL

Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL)

New authorization that specially authorizes funds to be used for developing and enhancing effective school library programs.

https://vimeo.com/183393334

Title II, Part B

Title II, Part B: Literacy education for all, results for the nation (LEARN)/ Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL)

https://vimeo.com/183393643

Message: School librarians are uniquely suited to lead the effort in applying for competitive grants because of their expertise and access to strong professional learning networks.
Title IV, Part A

Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (Block Grants)

Message: School librarians increase access to personalized, rigorous learning experiences supported by technology, allowing equitable resources for all students.

https://vimeo.com/183394913

Minnesota ESSA Update

Minnesota Department of Education ESSA Page –

http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/essa/

Feedback or comments should be sent to -
mde essa@state.mn.us

Minnesota ESSA Updates

Included in handbook:
• Outreach material includes:
  – Overview
  – Timelines
  – Fact Sheets
Minnesota ESSA Updates

- Regional Meetings-
  http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/ESSA/state/stake/index.htm
- October 14: Rochester: Wood Lake Meeting Center, 210 Wood Lake Drive SE
- October 26: St. Cloud: Apollo H.S. Auditorium, 1000 44th Avenue N.
- November 3: Burnsville: Diamondhead Education Center - Eagan and Savage Rooms, 200 W. Burnsville Parkway
You do have to register-
http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/3048386/ba9f92885e44

Minnesota ESSA Updates

ESSA
Minnesota State Plan Development Timeline

Identifying Stakeholders
Coalitions

- Critical to identify stakeholders
  - Including at the school, district (LEA) and state (SEA) levels
- Form coalitions
  - Bring together groups and organizations that support libraries
- Think outside the box
  - Utilize relationships and connections with education officials and policymakers in support of the effort
- When anyone thinks of ESSA how do you get them to connect to school libraries
  - Be prepared to talk about positive impact of library programming in the community – How are you making a difference?

ESSA Stakeholder Engagement Required Participants

- Governor
- State legislature
- State boards of education
- Local educational agencies
- Representatives of Indian Tribes located in the state
- Teachers
- Principals & other school leaders
- Specialized instructional support personnel
- Paraprofessionals
- Administration & other staff
- Parents

State Support and Opportunities

- Must provide support to schools not meeting state-determined goals for student and school performance
- Must engage stakeholders and include them in the development of state plans to monitor student and school performance.
- School Librarians are among the list of stakeholders
- Be at the table!
Parents as Stakeholder Partners

- ESSA includes a provision for family engagement. Parents must be “meaningfully consulted” and involved in:
  - State and local Title I plans
  - Title II state and local applications
  - Title III state and local plans
  - Title IV-A local applications
  - Title IV-B state applications
  - State and local report cards
  - School improvement plans

Coalition Development Plan

- Name individual/organization/business
- What previous activities/news tie them to your efforts
- What stake do they have in school library funding
- What can they contribute to your plan
- What three things could you do today to strengthen a relationship with them
Coalition Development Plan

Connect Message to Stakeholder

Key Words/Phrases

- Specialized instructional support staff
- Digital literacy skills
- Academic achievement
- Personalized, rigorous learning experiences
- Adequate access to school libraries
- Use technology effectively
- Effective integration of technology
- Improve instruction and student achievement
Example

Key Message Development:

- School librarians are teachers, specialized instructional support staff, trained to teach library skills early and develop lifelong library users and supporters.
- The public library is an invaluable asset to students as they continue their work outside of school but a fully staffed and funded school library connects student personalized, rigorous learning experience, and library research, to academic achievement.
- Digital literacy skills are essential for success as students move into the work force that requires the effective use of technology and while there is a direct impact for parents to support a strong school library program there is tremendous value for the business and community too.

Connecting the Dots- Key Messages

SHARE

ESSA Elevator Speech

https://vimeo.com/183395638
Connecting the dots

- Four ESSA areas (Title I, Title II- Part A, Title II- Part B, and Title IV, Part A)
- Review the key messages on your message card
- Connect the dots to your work

Example

Title I: Improving basic programs operated by state and local educational agencies

Message: School librarians and access to effective school library programs, impact student achievement, digital literacy skills, and school climate/culture.

Conversation Response: Yes, the internet has certainly put information at your fingertips but do you believe everything you read on the internet? Students today have a hard time navigating such a vast amount of information and learning digital literacy skills is critical to their success in school and after when they navigate college or start a career.

ESSA Elevator Speech

Reminders:
- The intention is to educate not humiliate.
- What you do is important, so sound important.
- Practice
- You can start the conversation.
Elevator Speech Development

Step One: Make the connection from ESSA language to AASL’s school library talking points to your school library program.

Step Two: Practice

Step Three: Fine Tuning

Step Four: Practice Again
Elevator Speech Development

Step One: Make the connection from ESSA language to AASL's school library talking points to your school library program.

Step Two: Practice

Step Three: Fine Tuning

Step Four: Practice Again

Questions
ESSA Federal Legislation Timeline

1965  ESEA was enacted by Congress and signed into law.

1968  Congress expanded ESEA to include new programs (and titles) that serve at-risk children (migrants and neglected children). The Bilingual Education Act was also passed.

1994  The renewal of the ESEA called for states to develop standards and standards-aligned assessments for all students. States and districts were obligated to identify schools that were not making “adequate yearly progress” as detailed in the Improving America’s Schools Act (IASA).

2002  ESEA became NCLB (No Child Left Behind Act). NCLB shifted much of the decision-making and resource allocation away from states. NCLB also significantly expanded testing requirements.

2015  In December 2015, bipartisan support for the ESSA was high and the overdue reauthorization was finally signed into law.
## ESSA State Timing, Rules and Implementation

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 10, 2015</td>
<td>President Obama signs the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into law</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 22, 2015</td>
<td>U.S. Department of Education (ED) publishes request for information (RFI) re: regulations on Title I of ESSA</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 21 – April 19, 2016</td>
<td>ED holds three sessions of negotiated rulemaking (neg-reg) on assessment and supplement, not supplant (SNS) issues</td>
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<td>April 27, 2016</td>
<td>ED releases assessment regulations that were agreed to by the neg-reg committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 31, 2016</td>
<td>ED releases a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) on accountability and state plan issues under Title I</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 1, 2016</td>
<td>(1) ESEA waivers are null and void, per the statute, and (2) comments are due on the NPRM re: accountability and state plan issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 1, 2016</td>
<td>Effective date for competitive programs under ESSA, unless otherwise provided for in the statute</td>
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<tr>
<td>October/November, 2016</td>
<td>Final regulations published by ED</td>
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<tr>
<td>February/April, 2017</td>
<td>States submit plans for School Year 2017-2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>May/June, 2017</td>
<td>ED begins peer review and approves state plans</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1, 2017</td>
<td>Effective date for formula grant programs under ESSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August, 2017</td>
<td>New state plans take effect in schools at the start of the 2017-2018 school year</td>
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This document highlights library-related provisions in P.L. 114-95, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and provides an overview of initial next steps to help maximize opportunities for effective school library programming under the new law.

TITLE I, PART A – IMPROVING BASIC PROGRAMS OPERATED BY STATE AND LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES

Background

- Under Title I, Part A of ESSA, States (referred to as State Educational Agencies) and school districts (referred to as Local Educational Agencies) must develop plans to implement federally-funded education activities.

- States and school districts must develop their plans with “timely and meaningful consultation with” teachers, principals and other stakeholders, including “specialized instructional support personnel” which is defined under ESSA as specifically including school librarians.

Library Provisions

- ESSA includes new provisions that authorize – but do not require – school districts to include in their local plans how they will assist schools in developing effective school library programs to provide students an opportunity to develop digital literacy skills and improve academic achievement.

Next Steps

- Because the local application provision related to effective school library programming is allowable (not required from the federal level), it is critical that school district personnel be made aware of their ability to develop and implement effective school library programming.

- Contact and work with the superintendent’s office in developing the local plan under Title I, Part A to ensure that the school district takes into consideration:
  - The importance of developing and maintaining effective school library programs; and
  - How effective school library programs can help with the development of digital literacy skills and improve academic achievement.

- Contact and work with State and school district officials regarding the ability of school librarians to participate in both the State and school district planning and application process (as part of “specialized instructional support personnel”).
TITLE II, PART A – SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

Background

- Title II, Part A of ESSA provides funds for States and school districts to increase academic achievement through professional development.

Library Provisions

- ESSA includes new provisions that authorize States, as well as school districts, to use grant and subgrant funds for “supporting the instructional services provided by effective school library programs.”

Next Steps

- Because States and school districts can now use their Title II, Part A funds specifically to support effective school library programming, it will be important to make sure that school district and school personnel that develop and implement professional development activities are aware of the new uses of funds related to libraries.

- Work with school district and school personnel to encourage the use of Title II, Part A funds specifically for effective school library programming, as well as part of other professional development efforts taking place with these funds.

  o Note that under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), Title II, Part A funds were primarily used for professional development for “teachers” which made it difficult for other instructional support personnel to participate in activities. ESSA rectifies this by specifically authorizing funds to be used to support instructional services provided by effective school library programs.

TITLE II, PART B, SUBPART 2 – LITERACY EDUCATION FOR ALL, RESULTS FOR THE NATION (LEARN)

Background

- ESSA includes a new literacy program that provides federal support to States to develop, revise, or update comprehensive literacy instruction plans. States award competitive subgrants to school districts for activities that focus on children in kindergarten through grade 5 as well as children in grades 6 through 12.

Library Provisions

- ESSA specifically authorizes school librarians to participate in required grant activities that focus on children in kindergarten through grade 5 as well as activities that focus on children in grades 6 through 12.

- In addition, ESSA allows all local subgrants (that serve children in kindergarten through grade 5 and/or children in grades 6 through 12) to be used to provide time for teachers and school librarians to meet, plan and collaborate on comprehensive literacy instruction.
Next Steps

- Since this is a new competitive program under ESSA, it will be important to work with individuals responsible for literacy instruction and development at the State, school district, and school level.

- Encourage/assist appropriate State, school district, and/or school personnel in developing and applying for grants or subgrants.
  - Note that subgrants awarded for local uses of funds must include professional development for school personnel that specifically includes school librarians. Therefore, any grants awarded at the school district level under this program must provide professional development for school librarians.

TITLE II, PART B, SUBPART 2, SECTION 2226 – INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO LITERACY (IAL)

Background

- ESSA includes a new authorization of the Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program (previously funded through appropriations legislation) that provides dedicated funding to promote literacy programs in low income communities.
  - Note that while IAL activities have been funded over the past several years through appropriations bills, the “codification” (or explicit authorization) of this program in ESSA provides a specific “line item” to help better secure funding in future years.

Library Provisions

- ESSA specifically authorizes funds to be used for developing and enhancing effective school library programs, which includes providing professional development for school librarians, books, and up-to-date materials to high need schools.

Next Steps

- Since IAL is a competitive grant program that has been funded in the past (through appropriations), but is newly authorized under ESSA, it will be important to focus advocacy efforts at the federal level to ensure enough funds are appropriated to continue and possibly expand the IAL program.
  - Note that while efforts to fund IAL in the past have been successful, the lack of an explicit authorization for these activities has hindered advocacy efforts related to expanding the program. The specific authorization of IAL under ESSA will help with future funding as Congress has expressed its support for these activities under the most recent authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
TITLE IV, PART A – STUDENT SUPPORT AND ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT GRANTS
(BLOCK GRANT)

Background

- ESSA authorizes a new program to provide Student Support and Academic Enrichment activities (commonly referred to as the “Block Grant” under ESSA) to help States and school districts target federal resources on locally-designed priorities.
  - Funds are allocated to States and then school districts based on their share of Title I, Part A funding (formula grant allocated on the basis of poverty).

Library Provisions

- ESSA authorizes (but does not require) States to use funds to assist school districts in providing programs and activities that increase access to personalized, rigorous learning experiences supported by technology, including adequate “access to school libraries.”

- ESSA also authorizes (but does not require) States to use funds to assist school districts in providing school librarians and other school personnel with the knowledge and skills to use technology effectively, including effective integration of technology, to improve instruction and student achievement.

- In developing their local applications, school districts must consult with teachers, principals and other stakeholders, including “specialized instructional support personnel” which is defined under ESSA as specifically including school librarians.

- In addition, ESSA requires that school districts conduct a “needs assessment” prior to receiving funds from the State (that must be conducted every 3 years). The needs assessment must include access to personalized learning experiences (which may include access to school libraries).

Next Steps

- Because States are authorized (and not required) to support school districts by providing programs and activities that increase access to personalized learning experiences (which may include professional development for school librarians and better access to school libraries for students), it will be important to contact and work with State Educational Agency officials to make them aware of their ability to use funds in support of personalized learning experiences.

- Since school districts are required to consult with stakeholders that may include school librarians on the development and implementation of their local activities, it is critical to work with technology leaders at the school and school district levels to ensure that school librarians can adequately participate in the planning process.
**Title IV, Part A of ESSA: Student Support and Academic Enrichments Grants**

**Description of Grants**
The newly enacted bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) includes a flexible block grant program under Title IV Part A, which is authorized at $1.65 billion in FY 2017. Title IV, Part A authorizes activities in three broad areas:

1. Providing students with a well-rounded education (e.g. college and career counseling, STEM, arts, civics, IB/AP)
2. Supporting safe and healthy students (e.g. comprehensive school mental health, drug and violence prevention, training on trauma-informed practices, health and physical education) and
3. Supporting the effective use of technology (professional development, blended learning, devices).

**Distribution of Funds**
Each state will receive an allocation based on the Title I funding formula. Using the same Title I formula, the states will then allocate funds to school districts.

Any school district that receives a formula allocation above $30,000 must conduct a needs assessment and then must expend 20 percent of its grant on safe and healthy school activities and 20 percent on activities to provide a well-rounded education programs. The remaining 60% of the money can be spent on all three priorities, including technology. However, there is a 15% cap on devices, equipment, software and digital content.

If a district receives an allocation below $30,000, the law does not require a needs assessment or setting aside percentages for well-rounded and safe and healthy students programs. It must spend money on activities in at least one of the three categories. The 15 percent technology purchase cap would continue to apply.

**President’s FY17 Budget Request**
The President's FY 2017 budget proposal would provide $500 million for the Title IV flexible block grant, less than one-third of the authorized $1.65 billion level. The Administration also requested to include language in the appropriations bill that would allow states to distribute $50,000 per year to districts on a competitive basis and would allow states to limit their spending to just one of the three listed priorities, or specific activities within one of the priorities.

Since the Student Support and Academic Enrichments Grants program is the third largest authorized program in ESSA, failing to adequately fund it, as the President’s FY 2017 budget proposes to do, will undermine the bipartisan Congressional intent in passing this important law.

**Program Funding Need**
Strong evidence demonstrates the need for students to have access to health and safety programs, a diversity of academic programs, and modern technology.

- Evidence supports a direct correlation between physical and mental health and learning that is essential to academic success, school completion, and the development of healthy, resilient, and productive citizens. Schools are uniquely positioned to help students acquire life-long knowledge and skills through comprehensive health education, physical education, nutrition, comprehensive school mental and behavioral health services, counseling, and integration among all education and health programs.
- In order to prepare students to succeed, they need access to a well-rounded curriculum. Funds through the block grant will help schools expand music, art, STEM, computer science, accelerated learning, history, and civics courses, as well as expand access to college and career guidance and counseling.
• Federal investments in education technology ensure schools have technology-proficient educators, well equipped classrooms, sufficiently supported administrative structures, and a curriculum optimized to take advantage of the benefits technology offers to all students—such as closing the opportunity and learning gaps and providing students with essential modern workforce skills.

Given the elimination under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of numerous programs that support the overall health and safety of students, the investments in education technology, as well as helping districts ensure access to a well-rounded education, a robust federal investment in support of these programs is absolutely essential through Title IV Part A. Without a significant investment in Title IV, Part A, districts will be forced into choosing which of the priorities to invest in—even though an ample investment in all three is necessary to providing students with a comprehensive education.

For further information, or if any questions arise, please contact Sunil Mansukhani at The Raben Group, smansukhani@rabengroup.com or Jon Bernstein at Bernstein Strategy Group, jbernstein@jbernsteinstrategy.com.
ESSA
Every Student Succeeds Act

Minnesota State Plan Development Timeline

December 2015: Every Student Succeeds Act signed into law.

January - November 2016: Stakeholder meetings and public feedback on State Plan.
The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) will engage stakeholder groups and the public in conversations around ESSA implementation in Minnesota. Feedback will be gathered and incorporated into plan development.

April - May 2016: Topical informational meetings.
Share the ESSA law in 10 topic areas. The purpose is to share and clarify the ESSA law, gain input, and better understand stakeholder priorities.

August - December 2016: Committees convene.

March 2017: Submit Minnesota State Plan to U.S. Department of Education.

MDE will draw on educator and stakeholder expertise to create Minnesota’s State Plan for implementing ESSA.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the nation’s latest pre-kindergarten through grade 12 education law, was signed into law in December 2015. ESSA is the newest version of the 50-year-old federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act and replaces the 2001 reauthorization known as No Child Left Behind. ESSA emphasizes equity and gives states and schools more latitude to innovate, while maintaining a focus on accountability and an emphasis on state and local systems of improvement.

The Minnesota Department of Education will work closely with stakeholders to ensure Minnesota’s students, educators, schools and districts experience a clear and orderly transition to the new law.

What ESSA means for Minnesota

The Minnesota Department of Education must submit a plan outlining Minnesota’s strategy to implement ESSA’s requirements for assessments, accountability and supports based on community and educator input. ESSA allows us to ask the question: How can we build on our successes and make improvements so that our system works better for every student, regardless of their background?

We are committed to maintaining an education system that works to close achievement and opportunity gaps, improves teaching and learning, boosts the graduation rate, improves and transforms underperforming schools, and ensures high-quality educational leadership. Opportunities in ESSA and state law will guide the department’s focus on these important goals.

Timeline

- **Spring 2016**  Informational topic meetings to share the law and begin to collect feedback.
- **Summer 2016**  Additional feedback is gathered from stakeholder groups to inform focus areas.
- **Summer-Winter 2016**  Stakeholders convene in certain topic areas to make recommendations.
- **Fall-Winter 2016**  Regional listening sessions.
- **January 2017**  Draft plan made available for public comment.
- **March 2017**  Final plan submitted to U.S. Department of Education.
How the community can get involved in Minnesota’s ESSA plan

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) will be holding meetings in communities around the state summer through winter 2016 to engage the community in locations and at times that are varied and convenient. Visit http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/ESSA for the current schedule of conversations.

Additionally, you can call 651-582-8800 or send your thoughts to mde.essa@state.mn.us or to:

Minnesota Department of Education, 1500 Highway 36 West, Roseville, MN 55113

We need your input to ensure our plan will ensure that all students, regardless of background, get the best possible education.

What is ESSA?

The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 includes many protections for vulnerable students. It creates tools and opportunities for parents, communities and other advocates to continue to support equity and accountability for all students.

Breaking down the key points:

1. Eliminating disparities and creating opportunities for better student outcomes.

2. Academic standards that align with college entrance requirements and prepare students for the working world.

3. Annual testing to provide data on how students are performing in school.

4. Reporting data to the public on outcomes and opportunities for all students.

5. Statewide accountability systems that include gap-closing goals for student outcomes, ratings based on the progress of all students and each group of students, and the expectation of action when any school has low performance or low graduation rates.

6. State strategies to intervene and support low-performing and high-poverty schools.

7. Addressing inequitable access to effective, in-field and experienced teachers.
ESSA requires that states identify schools for improvement based on the following five components:

- Academic achievement on state tests.
- Academic growth over time.
- Graduation rates.
- Progress toward English language proficiency (for English Learners).
- At least one indicator of school quality or student success.
  - Examples in the law include student engagement, college and career readiness, school climate and safety, access to and completion of advanced coursework.

The first four indicators above must be assigned “much greater weight” than the indicators of school quality or student success.

Test indicators need to include the performance of every student group.

ESSA also requires that states identify schools for improvement if they are:

- In the lowest 5% of Title I schools.
- High schools with graduation rates below 67%.
- Particularly low-performing in any student group.

ESSA Updates

- States must determine how school participation rates on state tests below 95 percent will be factored into the accountability system. In addition, schools with low participation rates must have students counted as “not proficient” for the purposes of accountability calculations.
- Options for states to phase in the use of test results for newly-arrived English Learners.
- States may include the test results of former English Learners for up to four years after they exit their English Learner status.
- Allows an option to assign dropout students to the graduation rate at the school where they spent the majority of their grade 9-12 career.

For more information, visit the ESSA page of the MDE website or contact mde.essa@state.mn.us.
Overview: Assessments

Assessment Policies

1. Math and reading or language arts assessments will be required in grades 3-8 and once in grades 9-12. These assessments must be aligned with state standards.

2. Science assessments will be required once in each of: grades 3-5, grades 6-9, and grades 10-12. These assessments must be aligned with state standards.

3. For all K-12 students identified as English Learners (EL), annual English language proficiency assessments are required in each of: reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

4. One percent statewide cap on participation in alternate assessments for students with severe cognitive disabilities (i.e. MTAS). Under No Child Left Behind, this cap applied at the district level. A student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) team should still determine which assessment is most appropriate for each student with an IEP; these decisions should not be based on concerns about accountability calculations.

5. The state of Minnesota and all Minnesota schools are still expected to reach 95 percent participation for each student group. The consequences for schools missing that target are up to the state.

6. The Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) system will be eliminated. A new accountability system will be developed to include scores from academic and English language proficiency assessments.

7. States may set a limit on time spent testing.

8. Adaptive assessments, such as the current online Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs), are still permitted.

Implications for Minnesota

- Minnesota’s current assessment structure will be largely unaffected by ESSA.
- The new one percent statewide cap on alternate assessment participation will require some consideration.
- Minnesota stakeholders are developing a new accountability system. The system will use test scores as well as other measurements, and it must identify the consequences for schools not meeting the required 95 percent participation rate for each student group.

For more information, visit the ESSA page of the MDE website or contact mde.essa@state.mn.us.
Overview: Early Childhood in ESSA

ESSA Early Childhood Policy Mandates

1. State Title I plans must describe how they will (a) support district and charter schools that choose to use Title I funds to support early childhood programs (Sec 111(g)(1)(A) and (b) provide information on effective parent and family engagement strategies (Sec 111(g)(2)(F).

2. The Title I state plan must also be coordinated with programs under the Head Start Act and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (Sec 1111(a)(1)(B)).

3. MDE’s plans under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act must include strategies to ensure that homeless children have the same access to MDE- or district- and state-approved charter school-funded public preschool programs as other children (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Sec 722(g)(1)(F)(i)).

4. Title I state report cards must include number and percentage of students enrolled in preschool programs, presented in the same manner that these data are submitted to the U.S. Department of Education/Office for Civil Rights (Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii)(II)(aa))

5. District and Charter schools (and schools who opt to provide early childhood programming in their schoolwide model) are required to create agreements to coordinate services with Head Start agencies, and must ensure that ESSA-funded early childhood services comply with Head Start performance standards.

ESSA Early Childhood Policy Opportunities

1. MDE may consider including evidence of Pre-K-3rd grade classroom quality or student progress as an indicator in their revised state accountability systems.

2. As MDE continues to revise their educator evaluation systems, they may create new tools, methods or guidance on how to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of PreK-3rd grade teachers.

3. As MDE revises their school improvement and support efforts, they may incorporate data on Pre-K-2nd grade learning opportunities/student progress in school-level needs assessments, and use of evidence-based early childhood interventions (such as a high-quality prekindergarten program) to assist their lowest performing schools.
1. Title I funds may be used for early childhood programing. MDE must provide guidance to district and charter schools choosing to use Title I funds to improve or expand early childhood programs (Sec 1111(g)(1)(Sec 1007(3)(A) and Sec 1008 (1)(c)) as well as providing information on family engagement and child development to early childhood and K-12 teachers and principals.

2. MDE may use Migrant Education funds for early childhood, preschool, and family literacy programs. (Title I, Part C)

3. The agency’s professional development plans may include early childhood education and school readiness as priorities and may provide training for early childhood education teachers and administrators. The Act specifically authorizes support for joint efforts to address the transition to elementary school, including issues related to school readiness. (Title II, and specifically section 2101(c)(4)(B)(xvi))

4. MDE may apply for Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation (LEARN) grants, which include a set-aside of 15 percent of funding for birth-to-kindergarten activities, with a priority for evidence-based activities. (Title II, Part B, Subpart 2)

5. MDE, districts and charter schools may invest in early childhood education programs for English Learners (ELs), Dual Language Learners (DLLs) and may apply in consortium with institutions of higher education or other entities for National Professional Development Project grants that may support early childhood professional development. (Title III)

6. Programs for American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaskan Native students may support early childhood education programs. (Title VI, Sec 6115(a)(3), 6121(b)(7), 6205(a)(3)(A), and 6304(a)(3)(C))

7. MDE may support early childhood education through 21st Century Community Learning Centers (Title IV, Part B, Expanding Opportunity for Quality Charter Schools (Sec 4310((2)(M)), Promise Neighborhoods (Sec 4624), Full-Service Community Schools (Sec 4625), and Ready to Learn Programming. (Sec 4643) (Title IV)

8. MDE may apply for Preschool Development Grants to support one year of statewide needs assessment, strategic planning and initiatives to enhance parental choice, followed by three years of support to expand access and improve the quality of early education programs. Current grantees are eligible to compete for renewal grants. (Title IX, Section 9212)

9. Under the Education for Homeless Children and Youth program, MDE and district and charter schools may serve preschool-aged homeless children and youth. (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Sec 722(d)(2)))

Reference and additional resources can be found at:
http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/Every_Student_Succeeds_Act.html

For more information, visit the ESSA page of the MDE website or contact mde.essa@state.mn.us.
Overview: Educator Quality

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements regarding highly qualified status no longer apply. No data about highly qualified status needs to be reported, and no notifications need to be made to parents when their child has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified. Teachers must meet state laws and rule to be appropriately licensed for their assignment. This means that all active Minnesota teachers must hold a valid Minnesota teaching license and/or special permission, as defined by Minnesota licensing statutes and Minnesota licensure rules, and be teaching within the assignment and grade range of the valid license and/or special permission.

Educator Quality Provisions

• States must now address disparities in access to ineffective, inexperienced, and out-of-field teachers, and describe the measures they will use to evaluate and publicly report progress towards elimination of those disparities.
• Educator evaluation systems are permitted but not required.
• The Title II formula (a source of educator effectiveness funding) was modified to target states with higher concentrations of students from low-income families.

Implications for Minnesota

• Minnesota’s teacher equity plan set forth strategies to close equity gaps related to teacher experience and qualifications. ESSA also requires states to consider ineffective teachers.
• Minnesota’s state and local teacher and principal evaluation systems do not require any changes under ESSA.
• Minnesota’s Title II allocation is projected to decrease.

For more information, visit the ESSA page of the MDE website or contact mde.essa@state.mn.us.
Overview: English Learners

Over the past 20 years, the number of students who are English Learners (EL) in Minnesota has increased by 300 percent, making them Minnesota’s fastest growing student population. Federal and state policy and practice must recognize the needs and diversity of ELs in an effort to close the ongoing achievement gap between them and other students.

English Learner Updates

- Accountability measures for ELs are moved out of Title III and into Title I, further emphasizing the importance of English language development.
- Option to include former ELs in the EL student group for up to four years in the accountability system.
- Standardized EL entry and exit procedures and criteria.
- Options for phasing newly-arrived ELs into the accountability system.
- Replaces “Limited English Proficient” with “English Learners.”
- Adds student groups to reporting requirements for Title III:
  - EL with disabilities.
  - Long-term EL (LTEL): EL who have not achieved proficiency after 5 years of being initially classified as an EL.
- Option to conduct academic assessment in student’s native language.
- Title III Formula Grant Program:
  - Increase English language proficiency by providing effective language instruction educational programs.
  - Provide effective professional development to teachers, principals, administrators and other school or community members.
  - Provide and implement effective activities and strategies that enhance or supplement language instruction educational programs.
- Promote parental, family and community participation in language programming.

Implications for Minnesota

Minnesota will bring together stakeholders to design the state’s accountability system under ESSA. This is also an opportunity to align state and federal accountability efforts (WBWF and MMR) and to build off and improve our current systems to more meaningfully include Minnesota’s English Learners.

For more information, visit the ESSA page of the MDE website or contact mde.essa@state.mn.us.
Overview: Family Engagement

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) defines family engagement as the meaningful and culturally responsive collaboration of families, schools and communities which share ownership of children’s challenges and successes from birth through college and career.

ESSA Policy Mandates

• ESSA requires the state to have meaningful consultation with the governor, members of the state legislature, local education agencies, Indian tribes, teachers, principals, paraprofessionals and parents prior the submission of their plan to U.S. Department of Education. Section 1111(a)(1)(a)

• The state plan must assure that MDE will provide information on effective parent and family engagement strategies. Section 1111(g)(2)(F)

• Each district must establish its expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family involvement. Section 1116(a)(2)

• Each district that receives a Title I, Part A allocation over $500,000 must reserve at least 1 percent of its allocation for family engagement activities. At least 90 percent of these funds must be distributed to Title I schools, with priority given to high need schools. Section 1116 (a)(3)

• Districts must notify parents that they may request that their child opt out of state testing. Section 1112 (e) (2)(A)

• Districts must let parents and families know information on each assessment required by the state, for each grade served. Section 1112(e)(2)(B)

ESSA Funding Opportunities

• Statewide organization or consortia of organization may apply for a Statewide Family Engagement Center grant, that would provide training and technical assistance that support family-school partnerships. Section 4502 (a)

• MDE may apply for Literacy Education of All, Results for the Nation (LEARN) grants which include kindergarten through 12th grade literacy that supports family literacy. Section 2224 (c)(5)

For more information, visit the ESSA page of the MDE website or contact mde.essa@state.mn.us.
Overview: McKinney-Vento and ESSA

The McKinney-Vento Act is designed to address the challenges that homeless children and youth face in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under the McKinney-Vento Act, state educational agencies (SEA) ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as all children and youth.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Highlights

- Children and youth who are in and awaiting foster care are removed from the definition of homeless children and youth under ESSA.
- All local educational agencies (LEA) that receive Title I Part A funds must reserve funds to support homeless students. Title I funds reserved for homeless children and youth may be used for services not ordinarily provided by Title I, including local liaisons and transportation to the school of origin.
- State report cards must include disaggregated information on the graduation rates and academic achievement of homeless children and youth, and children and youth in foster care.
- SEA and LEA must adopt policies and practices to ensure that homeless liaisons participate in professional development and other technical assistance activities.
- Homeless children and youth must be enrolled in school immediately, even if they have missed enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness. SEA and LEA must develop, review and revise policies to remove barriers to the identification, enrollment and retention of homeless students in school, including barriers due to fees, fines and absences.
- Homeless children and youth who meet the relevant eligibility criteria do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs, if such programs are available at the State or local levels.
- SEA and LEA must have procedures to identify and remove barriers that prevent students from receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school, in accordance with state, local and school policies.
- Local liaisons must ensure that unaccompanied homeless youth are informed of their status as independent students for college financial aid and may obtain assistance to receive verification for the FAFSA.
- The definition of school of origin includes preschools.
- Schools must treat information about a homeless child’s or youth’s living situation as a student education record, subject to all the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Local homeless liaisons are authorized to affirm whether children and youth meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definition of homelessness, to qualify them for HUD homeless assistance programs. Liaisons must refer homeless families and students to housing services, in addition to other services.

For more information, visit the ESSA page of the MDE website or contact mde.essa@state.mn.us.
Overview: School Improvement

School Improvement Provisions

- Comprehensive support and improvement plans, approved by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and the Local Education Agency (LEA), are required for:
  - The lowest 5 percent of schools on the accountability system.
  - High schools with graduation rates of less than 67 percent.
  - Schools where any student group (based on race/ethnicity, disability status and economic status) routinely performs at the same level as schools in the lowest 5 percent.

- Targeted support and improvement plans, to be developed with, approved and monitored by their LEA, are required for schools where student groups are “consistently underperforming” (a term that requires federal clarification).

- Support and improvement plans must be based on a school needs assessment, include evidence-based interventions, and identify resource inequities. Stakeholders must be involved in planning.

- Identified schools may use the first year of identification as a planning year before implementation.

- School Improvement Grant (SIG) program eliminated. The state set-aside for school improvement increases from 4 percent of Title I funds to 7 percent, of which 95 percent must go to support low-performing schools.

- MDE may permit differentiated improvement activities for high schools primarily focused on dropout and/or credit recovery, and may exempt those with less than 100 students.

Implications for Minnesota

- Supports for identified schools already include a support and improvement plan based on a needs assessment. Minnesota can continue using the Regional Centers of Excellence (RCE) without major changes. New improvement plan requirements can be incorporated into the RCE model.

- No state competitive grant program for districts for school improvement like the SIG program will be required.

- Little change in the amount of federal funds available for school improvement. The 7 percent set-aside is roughly equivalent to the sum of SIG funds and the 4 percent set-aside under NCLB.

- Additional engagement and deliberation will be needed to determine under what circumstances Minnesota will differentiate improvement activities for and/or exempt dropout/credit recovery high schools.
Overview: Well-Rounded Education

ESSA Updates

- Throughout ESSA, states and school districts are encouraged to emphasize the need for every child to receive a well-rounded education when providing support to students.

- The focus on well-rounded education moves away from a previous term, “core academic subjects,” which included: English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography.

- “Well-rounded” is defined 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.

- In addition to encouraging all programs to support a well-rounded education, ESSA creates Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants. These will be small block grants meant to improve student success by increasing state and local capacity to provide, among other things, students access to a well-rounded education. The grant program is a consolidation of several smaller programs.

Implications for Minnesota

Requirements of Student Support and Academic Grant recipients:

- Districts are asked to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to identify the needs of their unique populations and make investments to address those needs.

- Local school districts must prioritize the distribution of funds to schools with the greatest need including those that have high numbers of children in poverty.

- By not limiting the use of the Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant to a specific subject area, local districts are free to emphasize any of the multiple subjects listed in the definition of “well-rounded.”

For more information, visit the ESSA page of the MDE website or contact mde.essa@state.mn.us.
Overview: Title I Accountability Goals and Measurements

Title I ESSA Updates

- Instead of Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) toward Annual Measureable Objectives (AMO), each state must set its own ambitious long-term goal with interim progress measurements for all student groups. This is similar to the World’s Best Workforce (WBWF) legislation.

- Core accountability measurements must include:
  - Academic achievement on state assessments.
  - Growth or another academic indicator for elementary or middle schools.
  - Graduation rates for high schools.
  - Progress on English Language proficiency for English Learners (previously under Title III), with flexibility for the recently arrived.
  - At least one measure of school quality or student success (e.g., student engagement, college/career readiness, school climate and safety, advanced coursework access and completion, etc.).

- States are allowed to create opt-out provisions and to determine the consequences for testing participation rates below 95 percent.

Implications for Minnesota

- Minnesota will bring together stakeholders to design the state’s accountability system under ESSA. This is also an opportunity to align state and federal accountability efforts (World’s Best Workforce and MMR) and to build off and improve our current systems.

- The new accountability system will need to include progress in achieving English Language proficiency (measured on the ACCESS for ELLs test) and whichever measure(s) of school quality or student success are identified as well as variations on its existing components.

- Additional engagement and deliberation will be needed to determine what steps the state will take to support a 95 percent participation rate in testing.

For more information, visit the ESSA page of the MDE website or contact mde.essa@state.mn.us.
“Ask Me How School Librarians Ensure Student Success”

Title I
Improving basic programs operated by state and local educational agencies

Message
School librarians and access to effective school library programs, impact student achievement, digital literacy skills, and school climate/culture.

Title II
Supporting effective instruction

Message
School librarians share their learning with other professionals when they attend conferences and workshops, applying the benefits of new techniques, strategies, and technologies to the entire district.

Title II, Part B
Literacy education for all, results for the nation (LEARN)/ Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL)

Message
School librarians are uniquely suited to lead the effort in applying for competitive grants because of their expertise and access to strong professional learning networks.

Title IV, Part A
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (Block Grants)

Message
School librarians increase access to personalized, rigorous learning experiences supported by technology, allowing equitable resources for all students.
Coalition Development Plan

Of course there are some “assumed” coalition groups- teachers, parents and administrators. But this is an opportunity to think outside the box and garner support from the community at large. Who in your community would have a stake in local school district plans to ensure that school library programs provide students an opportunity to develop digital literacy skills and improve academic achievement? Who needs to have college and career ready individuals graduating today?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual/Organization/Business Name</th>
<th>What previous activities, news or accomplishments tie them to your efforts?</th>
<th>What stake do they have in school library funding?</th>
<th>What can they contribute to your plan?</th>
<th>What three things could you do today to strengthen a relationship with them?</th>
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Message Development

You’ve determined who your audience is (refer back to Coalition Development Plan), and you have key message points from ESSA related to school library funding (refer back to Key ESSA Message Points), but do not assume that communicating the key messages verbatim to your potential coalition partners will yield results. You must transform the message into a language that will appeal to your potential coalition members.

While you need to adjust messaging to fit the audience there are still key words that you do not want to remove—bolded below. It is important that when anyone is talking about ESSA, even if they are not directly referencing school library program, they are connecting these words to the school library.

- **Specialized instructional support staff.** ESSA specifically includes school librarians in the definition of specialized instructional support staff.
- School library programs support the development of **digital literacy skills and academic achievement.**
- Title IV Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant (Block Grants), allocated based on Title I eligibility, authorizes states to use funds to assist school districts in providing programs and activities that increase access to **personalized, rigorous learning experiences** support by technology, including **adequate access to school libraries.**
  - Block Grants also authorize states to use funds to assist school districts in providing school librarians and other school personnel with the knowledge and skills to **use technology effectively,** including **effective integration of technology,** to **improve instruction and student achievement.**
- Reference the “Ask Me How School Librarians Ensure Student Success” message cards
  - Title I – School librarians and access to effective school library programs, impact student achievement, digital literacy skills, and school climate/culture.
  - Title II, Part A – School librarians share their learning with other professionals when they attend conferences and workshops, applying the benefits of new techniques, strategies, and technologies to the entire district.
  - Title II, Part B, Subpart 1 – School librarians are uniquely suited to lead the effort in applying for competitive grants because of their expertise and access to strong professional learning networks.
  - Title IV, Part A - School Librarians increase access to personalized, rigorous learning experiences supported by technology, allowing equitable resources for all students.
Take one row in your Coalition Development chart and create a key message for middle three blocks, incorporating the message points and key words. Example:

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<td>Local public library</td>
<td>Summer reading programs, marketing regarding access to information and technology for community</td>
<td>School libraries create knowledgeable library users; school libraries fill a specific role in connection to curriculum and without would create a gap between services</td>
<td>General public awareness; engaging non-parents, but library friends in efforts</td>
<td>1. Meet with staff to provide information. 2. Ask to hold an information session at public library for general public 3. Ask to present to their friends group and in return offer time with school parents group</td>
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Key Message Development:

- School librarians are teachers, **specialized instructional support staff**, trained to teach library skills early and develop lifelong library users and supporters.

- The public library is an incredible asset to students as they continue their work outside of school but a fully staff and funded school library connects student **personalized, rigorous learning experience**, and library research, to **academic achievement**.

- **Digital literacy skills** are essential for success as students move into the work force that requires the **effective use of technology** and while there is a direct impact for parents to support a strong school library program there is tremendous value for the business and community too.
## Message Development Worksheets

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Key Message Development:

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Elevator Speech Development

You’ve found yourself faced with the questions, “Are there really any libraries left?” and “What with e-books and Internet are they necessary?” You’ve been asked these questions in a situation in which you know a true conversation is not possible, so how do you make the most impact in the least amount of time? Develop your messages now, and practice!

**Step One:** Make the connection from ESSA language to AASL’s school library talking points to your school library program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESSA Language</th>
<th>School Library Talking Point</th>
<th>Answer To Questions</th>
<th>How This Is Seen In Your Library</th>
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<tr>
<td>Title I: Improving basic programs operated by state and local educational agencies</td>
<td>School librarians and access to effective school library programs, impact student achievement, digital literacy skills, and school climate/culture.</td>
<td>(Example) School librarians and access to effective school library programs, impact student achievement, digital literacy skills, and school climate/culture. Students today have a hard time navigating such a vast amount of information, and learning digital literacy skills is critical to their success in school and after when they navigate college or start a career.</td>
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<td>ESSA Language</td>
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<td>School librarians increase access to personalized, rigorous learning experiences supported by technology, allowing equitable resources for all students.</td>
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Glossary

The following are definitions that appear in either AASL board approved position statement or as defined under the US Department of Education.

**Appropriate Staffing** (for school libraries):

1. The library program is serviced by one or more certified school librarians working full-time in the school library.

2. The specific number of additional school librarians is determined by the school’s instructional programs, services, facilities, size, and number of students and teachers.

3. In addition to library-degreed professionals, highly trained technical and clerical support staff are necessary for all library programs at every grade level. Each school should employ at least one full-time technical assistant or clerk for each school librarian. Some programs, facilities, and levels of service will require more than one support staff member for each professional.

4. The school district is served by a district library supervisor who provides leadership and support for the building-level school library programs by providing resources, professional development, and leadership in developing and implementing the district’s school library program. The district library supervisor is a member of the administrative team and helps determine the criteria and policies for the district’s curriculum and instructional programs. The district library supervisor communicates the mission, strategic plan, goals, and needs of the school and district library programs to the superintendent, board of education, other district-level personnel, and the community.

**Collaboration:**

Working with a member of the teaching team to plan, implement, and evaluate a specialized instructional plan.

**Community Readiness:**

The ability to be a productive, active, engaged member of a democratic society.

**Digital Learning:**

Learning materials and resources displayed on a digital device and shared electronically with other users. Digital learning content can be both open and/or commercial content (U.S. Dept. of Education 2016).
Digital Literacy:

The ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills (ALA 2013).

Effective School Library Program:

1. is adequately staffed, including a state-certified school librarian who
   • is an instructional leader and teacher,
   • supports the development of digital learning, participatory learning, inquiry learning, technology literacies, and information literacy, and
   • supports, supplements, and elevates the literacy experience through guidance and motivational reading initiatives;

2. has up-to-date digital and print materials and technology, including curation of openly licensed educational resources; and

3. provides regular professional development and collaboration between classroom teachers and school librarians.

Information Literacy:

A set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information (ACRL 2000).

Information Technologies:

Modern information, computer, and communication technology products, services, or tools, including the Internet, computer devices, and other hardware, software applications, data systems, and other electronic content (including multimedia content) and data storage.

Learning Community:

A group of people (can include students) who share common academic goals and attitudes who meet regularly to share expertise and work collaboratively to improve instruction and the academic performance of students.

Local Education Agencies (LEA):

A public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.
**Specialized Instructional Support Personnel** (school librarians):

Under ESSA, perform a wide range of activities in schools, including a broad array of prevention and intervention services that promote effective teaching and learning and promote school success. SISP also collaborate with teachers and school staff to ensure that students receive high quality instruction responsive to their diverse academic, physical, social, emotional, and mental health needs.

**State Education Agencies (SEA):**

A formal governmental label for the state-level government agencies within each U.S. state responsible for providing information, resources, and technical assistance on educational matters to schools and residents.

**Virtual Resources:**

Resources that are not physical in nature, such as computer hardware platforms, operating systems, storage devices, computer network resources, electronic databases, and e-books.
Definition for Effective School Library Program

POSITION:

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) supports the position that an effective school library program has a certified school librarian at the helm, provides personalized learning environments, and offers equitable access to resources to ensure a well-rounded education for every student.

As a fundamental component of college, career, and community readiness, the effective school library program:

1. is adequately staffed, including a state-certified school librarian who
   a. is an instructional leader and teacher,
   b. supports the development of digital learning, participatory learning, inquiry learning, technology literacies, and information literacy, and
   c. supports, supplements, and elevates the literacy experience through guidance and motivational reading initiatives;

2. has up-to-date digital and print materials and technology, including curation of openly licensed educational resources; and

3. provides regular professional development and collaboration between classroom teachers and school librarians.

Effective school libraries are dynamic learning environments that bridge the gap between access and opportunity for all K–12 learners. Under the leadership of the school librarian, the school library provides students access to resources and technology, connecting classroom learning to real-world events. By providing access to an array of well-managed resources, school libraries enable academic knowledge to be linked to deeper, personalized learning. The expanded learning environment of the school library ensures the unique interests and needs of individual students are met. In this way, effective school library programs prepare students for college, career, and community.

Under the leadership of a certified school librarian, the effective school library program delivers a well-rounded educational program (AASL 2009). This program focuses on accessing and evaluating information, providing digital learning training and experiences, and developing a culture of reading. The program uses a variety of engaging and relevant resources. Robust school libraries have high-quality, openly licensed digital and print resources, technology tools, and broadband access. This environment is essential to providing equitable learning opportunities for all students. More than 60 studies in two dozen states show that the “levels of library funding, staffing levels, collection size and range, and the instructional role of the librarian all have a direct impact on student achievement” (Gretes 2013).

In an effective school library program, the school librarian serves as an instructional leader, program administrator, teacher, collaborative partner, and information specialist (AASL 2009). Working with classroom teachers, the school librarian develops information literacy and digital literacy instruction for all students. Serving as an instructional leader, the school librarian contributes to curricular decisions and facilitates professional learning. Additionally, as the library program administrator, the school librarian oversees and manages the program and works with school and community partners. These partnerships result in expanded and improved resources and services for all students.
An effective school library program plays a crucial role in bridging digital and socioeconomic divides. School library programs staffed with state-certified professionals provide an approachable, equitable, personalized learning environment necessary for every student’s well-rounded education.

BACKGROUND:
The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) includes language for “effective school library programs” in the provisions of Title I, Part A; Title II, Part A; Title II, Part B, Subpart 2; Title II, Part B, Subpart 2, Section 2226; and Title IV, Part A. The definition of an effective school library program provides guidance to administrators, school boards, and school librarians in implementing ESSA.

DEFINITIONS:
- **Collaboration**: Working with a member of the teaching team to plan, implement, and evaluate a specialized instructional plan.
- **Community Readiness**: The ability to be a productive, active, engaged member of a democratic society.
- **School Librarian Instructional Role**: Instructional Role of School Librarians Position Statement

REFERENCES:


DISCLAIMER:
The position taken by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) represents the organization and cannot be applied to individual members or groups affiliated with the association without their direct confirmation.

APPROVAL/REVISION DATES: June 25, 2016
Appropriate Staffing for School Libraries

POSITION:
The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) supports the position that every student in every school, including independent schools and public charter schools, should have access to an updated school library with a certified school librarian. The success of a school library program, no matter how well designed, ultimately depends on the quality and number of personnel responsible for managing the instructional program and the library’s physical and virtual resources. A certified school librarian, supported by technical and clerical staff, is crucial to an effective school library program. Every student, teacher, and administrator in every school building at every grade level should have access to a fully staffed library throughout the school day.

The following minimum school library staffing requirements define an effective school library program structured to transform teaching and learning throughout the school community:

1. The library program is serviced by one or more certified school librarians working full-time in the school library.
2. The specific number of additional school librarians is determined by the school’s instructional programs, services, facilities, size, and number of students and teachers.
3. In addition to library-degreed professionals, highly trained technical and clerical support staff are necessary for all library programs at every grade level. Each school should employ at least one full-time technical assistant or clerk for each school librarian. Some programs, facilities, and levels of service will require more than one support staff member for each professional.
4. The school district is served by a district library supervisor who provides leadership and support for the building-level school library programs by providing resources, professional development, and leadership in developing and implementing the district’s school library program. The district library supervisor is a member of the administrative team and helps determine the criteria and policies for the district’s curriculum and instructional programs. The district library supervisor communicates the mission, strategic plan, goals, and needs of the school and district library programs to the superintendent, board of education, other district-level personnel, and the community.

BACKGROUND:
The staffing of school libraries will be guided by the language for effective school library programs in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A certified school librarian is essential to an effective school library program, yet only two-thirds of school libraries are staffed with certified school librarians (Davis 2010).

DEFINITIONS:
- Effective School Library Program: Definition of an Effective School Library Position Statement

REFERENCES:

**RECOMMENDED READING LIST:**


**DISCLAIMER:**

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**APPROVAL/REVISION DATES:** June 25, 2016
Instructional Role of the School Librarian

POSITION:
The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) supports the position that school librarians are instructors as well as collaborators with fellow educators in the pursuit of student learning in school libraries, classrooms, learning commons, makerspaces, labs, and virtual learning spaces. School librarian instruction results in students who read and utilize print and digital resources for curricular and personalized learning needs. School librarians teach students how to be inquiring learners who evaluate and use both print and digital information efficiently, effectively, and ethically, with the goal of developing lifelong learning and literacy skills (AASL 2007). School librarians lead the way in digital learning and literacies by teaching and providing professional development in their school communities and districts.

The role of the school librarian is to guide students and fellow educators through the intersection of formal and informal learning. The instruction the school librarian offers is integral to a well-rounded education. As educators and instructional partners school librarians are critical to teaching and learning in the school community. The school librarian plays a prominent role in instructing students, faculty, and administrators in a range of literacies, including information, digital, print, visual, and textual literacies. As leaders in literacy and technology, school librarians are perfectly positioned to instruct every student in the school community through both traditional and blended learning.

BACKGROUND:
In the ever-changing information and education landscape, the instructional role of school librarians is vitally important for staff and students. As print and digital literacies, inquiry, and reading motivation have become crucial elements of teaching and learning, school librarians as educators and information specialists play a key instructional role in successful schools.

DEFINITIONS:

- **Digital Learning:** Learning materials and resources displayed on a digital device and shared electronically with other users. Digital learning content can be both open and/or commercial content (U.S. Dept. of Education 2016).

- **Digital Literacy:** The ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills (ALA 2013).

- **Information Literacy:** A set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information (ACRL 2000).

REFERENCES:


RECOMMENDED READING LIST:
   www.ala.org/aasl/advocacy/legislation/essa.
   School Library Research 15.
   www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org.aasl/files/content/aaslpubsandjournals/slr/vol15/SLR_School_Librarians_as_Technology_Integration_Leaders_V15.pdf.

DISCLAIMER:
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APPROVAL/REVISION DATES: June 25, 2016
Role of the School Library Program

POSITION:

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) supports the position that an effective school library program plays a crucial role in preparing students for informed living in an information-rich society. The school library program provides learning opportunities that enable students to become efficient, effective, and creative users of information. Further, the school library program encourages students to examine the authority of authors and the bias of sponsors; to assess the importance of currency of information to the topic at hand; to determine the scope and relevance of information to meet their needs; and to create and share new ideas, resources, products, and information. This instruction occurs best in the context of the school curriculum where students are guided by a standard of excellence set by their classroom teachers in collaboration with the school librarian.

The school library program is not confined by the school library walls, but rather, with the use of technology and online resources, connects to the community and branches throughout the entire school. The school library program provides the mechanism for students to access the resources they need 24/7, whether in the library, in the classroom, or in the student’s home.

Beyond its curricular role, the effective school library program gives each individual member of the learning community a venue for exploring questions that arise out of personalized learning, individual curiosity, and personal interest. As part of the school library program, the school librarian provides leadership and instruction to both students and staff on how to use information technologies constructively, ethically, and safely. The school librarian offers expertise in accessing and evaluating information and collections of quality physical and virtual resources. In addition, the school librarian possesses dispositions that encourage broad and deep exploration of ideas and responsible use of information technologies. These attributes add value to the school community.

School library programs also provide opportunities for learners to read for enjoyment. School librarians’ skills in the selection and evaluation of resources are critical in providing students, staff, and families with open, non-restricted access to a high-quality collection of reading materials that reflect personal interests and academic needs in multiple formats. School librarians take a leadership role in organizing and promoting literacy projects and events that encourage students to become lifelong learners and readers.

The school library program is based on long-range goals developed through strategic planning that reflect the mission of the school. The school librarian participates fully in all aspects of the school’s instructional program, including federally mandated programs and reform efforts. The school library program provides flexible and equitable access to collections, technology, and a state-certified school librarian for all students and staff, physically as well as virtually. The collection includes materials that meet the needs of all learners, represents various points of view on current and historical issues, and offers a wide variety of interest areas. Policies, procedures, and guidelines are developed to maintain the effective school library program. The school library staff and budget are sufficient to support the school’s instructional program and meet the needs of the school library program’s goals.

For students, the school library represents one of America’s most cherished freedoms: the freedom to speak and hear what others have to say. Students have the right to choose what they will read, view, or hear and are expected to develop the ability to think clearly, critically, and creatively about their choices, rather than allowing others to do this for them.
BACKGROUND:
Citizens of this information world must have the skills and dispositions to access information efficiently and to critically assess the sources they rely upon for decision making, problem solving, and generation of new knowledge. The effective school library program plays a critical role in schools in instructing students on how to access information efficiently and critically assess resources.

DEFINITIONS:

- **Effective School Library Program:** Definition of Effective School Library Position Statement
- **Learning Community:** A group of people (can include students) who share common academic goals and attitudes who meet regularly to share expertise and work collaboratively to improve instruction and the academic performance of students.
- **Information Technologies:** Modern information, computer, and communication technology products, services, or tools, including the Internet, computer devices and other hardware, software applications, data systems, personal electronic devices, and other electronic content (including multimedia content) and data storage.
- **School Librarian Instructional Role:** Instructional Role of the School Librarian Position Statement
- **Virtual Resources:** Resources that are not physical in nature, such as computer hardware platforms, operating systems, storage devices, computer network resources, electronic databases, and e-books.

RECOMMENDED READING LIST:

DISCLAIMER:
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APPROVAL/REVISION DATES: June 25, 2016
Preparation of School Librarians

POSITION:
The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) supports the position that, in addition to meeting state certification requirements, school librarians hold a master’s degree or equivalent from a program that combines academic and professional preparation in library and information science, education, and technology. The graduate degree is earned at a college or university whose program is recognized by appropriate bodies such as the American Library Association (ALA), the American Association of School Librarians/Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), or state education agencies. The academic program of study includes directed field experience coordinated by a college/university faculty member and takes place in an effective school library program under the direct supervision of a certified, full-time school librarian.

BACKGROUND:
In order to address the critical need for a reading-rich environment in the ever-changing information landscape, the preparation of school librarians is vitally important. As technology has become a crucial element of teaching and learning, school librarians as educators and information specialists play a key role in the success of schools.

DEFINITIONS:
- **Information Technologies:** Modern information, computer, and communication technology products, services, or tools, including the Internet, computer devices, and other hardware, software applications, data systems, and other electronic content (including multimedia content) and data storage.
- **School Librarian Instructional Role:** [Instructional Role of the School Librarian Position Statement](https://www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org.aasl/files/content/aasleducation/schoollibrary/2010_standards_with_rubrics_and_statements_1-31-11.pdf)

REFERENCES:


**DISCLAIMER:**

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**APPROVAL/REVISION DATES:** June 25, 2016
July 26, 2016

Meredith Miller
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 3C106
Washington, DC 20202-2800

Dear Ms. Miller:

On behalf of the American Library Association (ALA) and the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Department’s proposed regulations governing accountability and State plans under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The mission of ALA, the oldest and largest library association in the world, is “to provide leadership for the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.” The mission of AASL, the ALA division focused on school libraries, is “to empower leaders to transform teaching and learning.” To help accomplish this mission, AASL supports effective school library programs that have a certified school librarian at the helm, provide personalized learning environments, and offer equitable access to resources to ensure a well-rounded education for every student.¹

School libraries are a safe learning environment where all students have equal and equitable access to learning, support, and information for personal and educational purposes. As poverty rates across America remain high, our schools must serve as an “equalizer” to provide all students with equal and equitable access to the resources, support, and instruction necessary to succeed academically and become productive and engaged citizens in a democratic society. Research confirms that effective school library programs are a wise investment for our children’s education and workforce readiness.

ALA has been disheartened by the lack of support for effective school library programs and comprehensive literacy instruction at the Federal, State, and local levels over the years. Data² available from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) highlights the lack of support for too many of our students in thousands of schools across the country. NCES data reveals that approximately 8,830 public schools across the nation do not have a school library and for those schools that do have a library, nearly 17,000 schools do not have a full or part-time school librarian on staff.

Accordingly, ALA and AASL were pleased to support the bipartisan conference agreement on ESSA and we are encouraged that the updated law provides opportunities to recognize the key role effective school library programs play in improving student academic achievement and ensuring that students are adequately prepared for college and success in the workforce.

¹ For additional information see AASL definition of “effective school library program.”
² For additional information from NCES, see http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables_list.asp#2012.
To help build on these efforts under ESSA, our comments on the proposed regulations focus on consultation requirements under §299.15 and activities to support all students under §299.19.

§299.15 – Consultation and Coordination

Under ESSA, a State may continue to submit a consolidated State plan in lieu of individual, program-specific plans. As part of the consolidated State plan, the proposed regulations would require the State Educational Agency (SEA) to engage in timely and meaningful consultation with stakeholders as part of the design and development of the plan. Specifically, §299.15(a)(6) of the proposed regulations provides that stakeholders consulted during the development of the State plan must include “teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals, specialized instructional support personnel, and organizations representing such individuals.”

Under ESSA, the statutory definition of the term “specialized instructional support personnel” includes qualified professional personnel such as school librarians. To help ensure consistency with the statutory provisions under ESSA, we recommend that language under §299.15(a)(6) be clarified to highlight the statutory ability of school librarians to participate in the consultation process with the SEA in the development and implementation of the State consolidated plan.

We believe it is important to specifically highlight school librarians as part of the consultation process because they make the whole school more effective. School librarians serve as instructional leaders, program administrators, teachers, collaborative partners, and information specialists. They work with every student in the school, teaching them to think critically, providing the resources and support they need in school and beyond, and nurturing their creativity. They are also an essential partner for all classroom teachers, providing print and digital materials that meet diverse needs and collaborating to deepen student learning and drive success. Finally, school librarians are leaders in the school, helping to develop curriculum and connecting other educators to current trends and resources for teaching and learning.

§299.19 – Supporting All Students

As part of the consolidated State plan, each SEA must describe its strategies, its rationale for the selected strategies, timelines, and how it will use funds under the programs included in its consolidated State plan to ensure that all children have a significant opportunity to meet challenging State academic standards and graduate with a regular high school diploma. §299.19(a)(1)(iv) of the proposed regulations requires that such strategies and descriptions include “the effective use of technology to improve academic achievement and digital literacy of all students.”

Literacy skills have always been a critical component of our education systems. Today, the attainment of digital literacy – for both students and educators – can help to ensure that all students graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary education or the workforce without the need for remediation.

School libraries are places of opportunity. Effective school library programs play a crucial role in bridging digital and socioeconomic divides. They foster a safe and nurturing climate during the day and before and after school, to serve as critical learning hubs for instruction and use of technology, digital, and print materials (including curation of openly licensed educational resources) to better prepare students for success for school and the workforce:
• **Avery County High School** – In Avery County High School (Newland, NC), the school librarian trains students and teachers on how to become a responsible consumer of information. The school library provides instruction on how to document resources; the importance of following copyright laws; safe use of online resources, including potential dangers of online sharing; and an awareness of the digital footprint all online users leave.

• **Weddington Hills Elementary School** – At Weddington Hills Elementary School (Concord, NC), digital literacy instruction is provided through the school library program. Students in kindergarten and first grades are learning skills such as keyboard recognition, how to access PowerPoint, how to obtain digital images following copyright requirements, and the importance of citing sources. Students in second and third grades are using various technologies to research, collect information, synthesize, and create new products, including a focus on academic honesty and copyright issues. By fourth and fifth grades, students are exploring digital tools for collaboration, multi-media presentations, analysis of data, and interaction with people and events beyond their own communities.

• **Centerville Elementary School** – From kindergarten up students are exposed to digital learning platforms and computers at Centerville Elementary School (Frederick, MD). From lessons on internet safety to proper citation of web sources to their digital footprints and cyberbullying, the students are receiving weekly lessons to help make them true 21st century learners.

• **Mooresville Intermediate School** – At Mooresville Intermediate School (Mooresville, NC), students receive digital literacy training in the school library related to accessing information sources, taking notes appropriately, citing sources, finding copyright-friendly images for projects, and using digital tools to share their learning in new, innovative ways.

To better encourage the effective use of technology to improve academic achievement and digital literacy in ways that support all students, we recommend that §299.19(a)(1)(iv) be clarified to highlight the critical support school libraries provide with regard to improving the digital literacy of all students.

An effective school library program plays a crucial role in bridging digital and socioeconomic divides and focuses on accessing and evaluating information, providing digital learning training and experiences, and developing a culture of reading. The school library program uses a variety of engaging and relevant resources. Robust school libraries have high-quality, openly licensed digital and print resources, technology tools, and broadband access. This environment is essential to providing equitable learning opportunities for all students.

By providing access to an array of well-managed resources, school libraries enable academic knowledge to be linked to deeper, personalized learning. The expanded learning environment of the school library ensures the unique interests and needs of individual students are met. In this way, effective school library programs prepare students for college, career, and community.

Therefore, as the Department considers recommendations on the proposed regulations governing accountability and State plans under ESSA, we respectfully ask that the final regulations specifically include school librarians and school libraries under §299.15.
(Consultation and Coordination) and §299.19 (Supporting All Students) to ensure that implementation of ESSA includes adequate consultation and an appropriate focus on the role of school libraries in using technology to improve academic achievement and digital literacy of all students.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide recommendations; please do not hesitate to contact Emily Sheketoff from ALA at (202) 628-8410 or Sylvia Knight Norton from AASL at (312) 280-4388 if you have any questions or if there is anything we can do to assist with implementation of ESSA.

Sincerely,

Emily Sheketoff
Executive Director
Washington Office
American Library Association

Sylvia K. Norton
Executive Director
American Association of School Librarians
American Library Association
SUMMARY OF PROGRAM

**Overview** – ESSA authorizes a new flexible block grant program – Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants under Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1 – to increase the capacity of States, LEAs, schools, and local communities to:

1. Provide all students with access to a well-rounded education;
2. Support safe and healthy students; and
3. Support the effective use of technology.

**Authorization Level and Funding** – ESSA authorizes the program at $1.65 billion for FY2017 through FY2020.

- The Administration’s FY2017 budget request included $500 million for Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants.

- Prior to the August 2016 recess, the Senate Appropriations Committee provided $300 million and the House Appropriations Committee provided $1 billion in their respective bills for Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants.

- The funding level will be finalized as part of negotiations to fund the Federal government for FY2017.

**Allocation of Funds by Formula** – Each State, and subsequently each LEA, receives an allocation based on their State or local share of the ESSA Title I funding formula.

- States reserve 5 percent of their allocation for State-level activities and 95 percent of funds are provided for local awards to LEAs.

- Each LEA that receives a formula allocation must conduct a “needs assessment” and then must use:
  - Not less than 20 percent of funds to support well-rounded educational opportunities;
  - Not less than 20 percent of funds to support safe and healthy students; and
  - A portion of funds (not defined under ESSA) to support the effective use of technology.

- Remaining funds at the local level can be used by the LEA to support any of the three aforementioned categories of activities.

**State-Level Activities** – States are authorized to use their share of funding (5 percent) for State-level activities and programming designed to meet the purposes of the program, including:
• Monitoring, training, technical assistance and capacity building for LEAs;

• Identifying and eliminating State barriers to the coordination and integration of programs, initiatives, and funding streams so that LEAs can better coordinate with other agencies, schools, and community-based services and programs; and

• Supporting LEAs in providing programs and activities that:

  o Offer well-rounded educational experiences to all students, which may include:

    ✓ STEM courses;
    ✓ Music and arts education;
    ✓ Foreign languages;
    ✓ Accelerated learning programs that provide postsecondary level courses accepted for credit at institutions of higher education (such as Advanced Placement courses);
    ✓ American history, civics, economics, geography, social studies, or government education;
    ✓ Environmental education; and
    ✓ Other courses, activities, programs or experiences that contribute to a well-rounded education.

  o Foster safe, healthy, supportive, and drug-free environments, which may include:

    ✓ Reducing exclusionary discipline practices in schools;
    ✓ Mental health awareness training and school-based counseling;
    ✓ Integrating health and safety practices into school and athletic programs; and
    ✓ Disseminating best practices and evaluating program outcomes to promote student safety and violence prevention.

  o Increase access to personalized, rigorous learning experiences supported by technology, including:

    ✓ Providing technical assistance to LEAs to identify and address technology readiness needs, which specifically includes “access to school libraries”;
    ✓ Supporting schools in rural and remote areas to expand access to digital learning opportunities;
    ✓ Supporting the delivery specialized or rigorous academic courses and curricula through the use of technology, including digital learning technologies and assistive technology.
    ✓ Disseminating promising practices related to technology instruction, data security and the acquisition and implementation of technology tools and applications;
    ✓ Providing teachers, paraprofessionals, school librarians and media personnel, specialized instructional support personnel, and administrators with the knowledge and skills to use technology effectively; and

1 Under ESSA, the term “digital learning” is defined as any instructional practice that effectively uses technology to strengthen a student’s learning experience and encompasses a wide spectrum of tools and practices, including: (1) interactive learning resources, digital learning content (which may include openly licensed content), software, or simulations, that engage students in academic content; (2) access to online databases and other primary source documents; (3) the use of data and information to personalize learning and provide targeted supplementary instruction; (4) online and computer-based assessments; (5) learning environments that allow for rich collaboration and communication, which may include student collaboration with content experts and peers; (6) hybrid or blended learning, which occurs under direct instructor supervision at a school or other location away from home and, at least in part, through online delivery of instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path, or pace; and (7) access to online course opportunities for students in rural or remote areas.
✓ Making instructional content widely available through open educational resources, which may include providing tools and processes to support LEAs in making such resources widely available.

**Local Consultation** – In developing the local application, an LEA is required to consult with parents, teachers, principals, specialized instructional support personnel (which specifically includes school librarians under ESSA) and other stakeholders with relevant and demonstrated expertise in programs and activities designed to meet the purpose of the program.

- In addition, LEAs are required to engage in “continued consultation” with such stakeholders to improve local activities and to coordinate programming with other related strategies, programs, and activities being conducted in the community.

**Local Needs Assessment** – Prior to receiving funds under the program, LEAs must conduct a “comprehensive needs assessment” (that must be conducted every 3 years) to examine needs for improvement of:

- Access to, and opportunities for, a well-rounded education for all students;
- School conditions for student learning in order to create a healthy and safe school environment; and
- Access to personalized learning experiences supported by technology and professional development for the effective use of data and technology.

  - **Note:** Under State Activities, States are authorized to support local efforts to increase access to personalized learning experiences by providing technical assistance to LEAs to identify and address technology readiness needs, which specifically includes “access to school libraries” under the statute.

- LEAs that would receive an allocation of less than $30,000 are not required to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment.

**Local Uses of Funds** – As part of the local application, LEAs must provide assurances that funds will be prioritized to schools that have the greatest need, the most low-income children, are identified under the accountability system or identified as persistently dangerous. Similar to activities authorized at the State-level, LEAs are authorized to use their share of funds (95 percent) to:

- Develop and implement programs and activities that support access to a well-rounded education and that:
  - Are coordinated with other schools and community-based services and programs;
  - May be conducted through partnerships; and
  - May include programs and activities, such as:
    ✓ College and career guidance and counseling;
    ✓ Activities that use music and the arts as tools to support student success;
    ✓ Activities to improve instruction and student engagement in STEM (including computer science);
    ✓ Efforts to raise student academic achievement through accelerated learning programs
✓ Activities to promote traditional American history, civics, economics, geography, or government education;
✓ Foreign language instruction;
✓ Environmental education;
✓ Activities that promote volunteerism and community involvement;
✓ Activities that support educational programs that integrate multiple disciplines, such as programs that combine arts and mathematics; or
✓ Other activities and programs to support student access to, and success in, a variety of well-rounded education experiences.

• Support safe and healthy students through the development, implementation and evaluation of programs and activities that:
  o Are coordinated with other schools and community-based services and programs;
  o Foster safe, healthy, supportive, and drug-free environments that support student academic achievement;
  o Promote the involvement of parents;
  o May be conducted through partnerships; and
  o May include programs and activities, such as:
    ✓ Drug and violence prevention activities;
    ✓ School-based mental health services;
    ✓ Health and safety practices for schools and athletic programs;
    ✓ Support for healthy, active lifestyles, including nutritional education and regular, structured physical education activities;
    ✓ Prevention of bullying and harassment;
    ✓ Mentoring and counseling for all students;
    ✓ Dropout recovery programs;
    ✓ Training for school personnel related to suicide prevention, crisis management, conflict resolution and school-based violence prevention strategies;
    ✓ Child sexual abuse awareness;
    ✓ Reducing exclusionary discipline practices; and
    ✓ Pay for success initiatives.

• Use technology to improve the academic achievement, academic growth, and digital literacy of all students – including by addressing shortfalls identified in the local needs assessment conducted prior to receiving funds – which may include:
  o Providing educators, school leaders, and administrators with the professional learning tools, devices, content, and resources to personalize learning and to administer computer-based assessments and blended learning strategies;  

2 Under ESSA, the term “blended learning” is defined as a formal education program that leverages both technology-based and face-to-face instructional approaches that include an element of online or digital learning, combined with supervised learning time, and student-led learning, in which the elements are connected to provide an integrated learning experience; and in which students are provided some control over time, path, or pace.
o Building technological capacity and infrastructure, including procuring content and purchasing devices, equipment, and software applications in order to address readiness shortfalls (as identified under the comprehensive needs assessment);

✓ Note: There is a 15 percent cap under ESSA related to the purchase of technology infrastructure under the program.

o Developing or using effective strategies for the delivery of specialized or rigorous academic courses through the use of technology, including digital learning technologies and assistive technology;

o Blended learning projects;

o Professional development in the use of technology (which may be provided through partnerships with outside organizations) to enable teachers and instructional leaders to increase student achievement in STEM (including computer science); and

o Opportunities for students in rural, remote, and underserved areas to take advantage of high-quality digital learning experiences, digital resources, and access to online courses taught by effective educators.

SUMMARY OF LIBRARY PROVISIONS

- ESSA authorizes (but does not require) States to use their share of funds to assist LEAs in providing programs and activities that increase access to personalized, rigorous learning experiences supported by technology, including adequate “access to school libraries.”

- ESSA authorizes (but does not require) States to use their share of funds to assist LEAs in providing school librarians and other school personnel with the knowledge and skills to use technology effectively, including effective integration of technology, to improve instruction and student achievement.

- In developing their local applications, LEAs must consult with teachers, principals and other stakeholders, including “specialized instructional support personnel” which is defined under ESSA as specifically including school librarians.

- ESSA requires that LEAs conduct a “needs assessment” prior to receiving funds from the State (that must be conducted every 3 years). The needs assessment must include access to personalized learning experiences (which may include access to school libraries).

NEXT STEPS – ADVOCATE FOR INCLUSION OF LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

State-Level Advocacy

- Because States are authorized (but not required) to support LEAs in providing programs and activities that increase access to personalized learning experiences (which may include and professional development for school librarians and better access to school libraries for students), it will be important to contact and work with education officials at the State-level (State Educational Agency) to make them aware of their ability to use funds in support of personalized learning experiences, including ways in which effective school library programs can contribute to personalized learning activities in schools.
• Since States are authorized (but not required) to support LEAs in the delivery of specialized or rigorous academic courses and curricula through the use of technology, including digital learning technologies, it will be important to contact and work with State education officials to ensure that such activities include effective school library programs that provide digital learning technologies.

Local Advocacy

• Since LEAs are required to consult with stakeholders – which may include school librarians – on the development of their local activities, it is critical to contact and work with leaders, administrators and technology educators at the school and LEA level to ensure that school librarians can adequately participate in the development and implementation of programming.

• Since LEAs must conduct a “comprehensive needs assessment” that includes access to personalized learning experiences supported by technology and professional development for the effective use of data and technology, it is essential to contact and work with leaders, administrators and technology educators at the school and LEA level to ensure that “access to school libraries” is considered as part of the local needs assessment.

• Since LEAs are authorized (but not required) to support the delivery of specialized or rigorous academic courses and curricula through the use of technology, including digital learning technologies, it will be important to contact and work with leaders, administrators and technology educators at the school and LEA level to ensure that such activities include effective school library programs that provide digital learning technologies.