



Every Student Succeeds Act

Families and Communities

Passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) ushers in a new era in public education for students, families, and educators, and closes the chapter on the formerly one-size-fits all approach. The ESSA will ensure every student has access to a high quality education, regardless of ZIP code, and that strategies to engage families and communities are central to school improvement efforts.

Key provisions

- Authorizes Statewide Family Engagement Centers to support and provide comprehensive training on parent education and family-school partnerships.
- Requires assurance that states will collect and disseminate to local educational agencies and schools effective parent and family engagement strategies.
- Provides resources to improve school climate, including school safety initiatives and activities to address bullying and harassment.
- Supports programs that reach parents and families where they are, including at home, in the community, and at school.
- Includes provisions for the Community Support for School Success program, which provides grants for Full-Service Community Schools. Programs may include: “High-quality early childhood education programs; High-quality school and out-of-school time programs and strategies; Support for a child’s transition to elementary school, from elementary school to middle school, from middle school to high school, and from high school into and through post-secondary education and into the workforce; Family and community engagement and supports including engaging or supporting families at school or at home; Activities that support workforce readiness including job training, internship opportunities and career counseling; Social, health, nutrition and mental health services and supports; Juvenile crime prevention and rehabilitation programs.”
- Authorizes a new \$250 million early childhood education program.
- Requires school districts to inform parents and guardians of opt-out policies, and allows them to have their children opt out of statewide standardized tests where state and local policies permit.