
MEMORANDUM

TO: POLICY MAKER
FROM: COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF DELAWARE
SUBJECT: EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT SUMMARY
DATE: JANUARY 8, 2016

The 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed into law on December 10, is the first reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) since No Child Left Behind was passed in 2001. The ESSA scales back the role of the federal Department of Education and provides greater discretion for states to set their own goals and systems for students. In keeping with that approach, the ESSA eliminates dozens of smaller federal programs and consolidates their funding into larger buckets.

ESSA contains a number of opportunities for integrated student supports (ISS) to promote academic success by developing, securing and coordinating supports that target academic and non-academic barriers to achievement. The Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA) lacked explicit ISS language and, with some conflicting interpretations, limited the availability as well as discouraged local educational agencies (LEAs) and state educational agencies (SEAs) from moving forward with an ISS model. ESSA takes a positive step forward in addressing this lack of clarity and establishing ISS as a viable solution to help keep those students at the greatest risk of dropping out in school.

The funding for student support services is critical as our teachers and administrators can't do it all. They need specialized, and trained people to help provide non-academic and social emotional support to schools in the high need areas of our state. Some of the areas of focus include:

- Coordinating community and parent engagement
- Support services (Basic Needs) for children in poverty through Federal Title I funding.
- Expanded learning and enrichment activities (mentoring, after-school programs)
- Prepare students for success in school, college and the workplace (mentoring, job shadowing, early college credit)
- Turning around our lowest-performing schools.

Below are the sections of the bill that mention integrated student supports:

Title I

Section 1003. School Improvement, Page 25 (lines 3-10) – State education agencies, in efforts to support local educational agencies and carry out their system of statewide system of technical

assistance, may use funds to provide for integrated student supports. This is part of ESSA's Title I Part A's goal of improving basic programs operated by SEAs and LEAs:

"(B) may, with the approval of the local educational agency, directly provide for these activities or arrange for their provision through other entities such as school support teams, educational service agencies, or other nonprofit or for-profit external providers with expertise in using evidence-based strategies to improve student achievement, instruction, and schools."

Section 1008. Schoolwide Programs, Page 166 (lines 20-24) – LEAs can consolidate federal, state and local funds to improve the entire educational program of a school where more than 40 percent of the children are from low income families. This comprehensive plan is to be developed in consultation with teachers, school leaders, members of the community, and can be provided by outside providers:

"(d) Delivery of Services.—The services of a schoolwide program under this section may be delivered by nonprofit or for-profit external providers with expertise in using evidence-based or other effective strategies to improve student achievement."

Section 1009. Targeted Assistance Schools, P. 173 (lines 16-17) - Section 1009 explicitly allows Title I to fund integrated student supports as part of the Targeted Assistance School Program. This will allow LEAs to use ISS as a way to help children in need of assistance. ISS is one of the programs they list to help LEAs and targeted assistance schools provide for all of their students served and help them meet State academic standards.

Title IV

Section 4108. Activities to Support Safe and Healthy Students, P. 482 (Lines 5-10) - Local educational agencies are mandated a portion of their funding to develop, implement and evaluate comprehensive programs to help promote safe and healthy students:

"Establish learning environments and enhance students' effective learning skills that are essential for school readiness and academic success, such as by providing integrated systems of student and family supports"

Section 4624. Promise Neighborhoods, P. 606 - In the authorization of Community Support for School Success (Title IV Part F, Page 591), Subpart 2—Community Support for School Success—the Department of Education can provide grants related to education innovation and research. These funds are intended to improve the academic and developmental outcomes of children living in distressed communities as well as provide the planning and implementation of these programs. Under Section 4624 – Promise Neighborhoods, grant funds are allowed for coordinated services to help reach that goal of improving academic and developmental outcomes:

"(A) PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS.—The implementation of a comprehensive, effective continuum of coordinated services that meets the purpose described in section 4621(1) by carrying out activities in neighborhoods with "(i) high concentrations of low-income 10

individuals; (ii) multiple signs of distress, which may include high rates of poverty, childhood obesity, academic failure, and juvenile delinquency, adjudication, or incarceration; and “(iii) schools implementing comprehensive support and improvement activities or targeted support and improvement activities under section 1111(d).”

Implementing ESSA and Moving into 2016

While the legislation has been passed into law, the Department of Education and key stakeholders still need to figure out the details on the implementation of ESSA. This process has begun, and it will be imperative to capitalize on the opportunities to champion integrated student supports and the exemplary model that CIS offers. With the beginning of the regulatory process, it is important to engage both Department of Education staff along with key congressional contacts to ensure that the ISS language in ESSA comes to fruition.

The Department of Education issued a request for information and notice of meetings in the Federal Register on December 22nd. The Secretary of Education is soliciting advice on how to implement the programs under Title I of ESEA, as amended by ESSA, and hopes to have comments back by January 21, 2016. These comments are intended to help shape the regulations assist States, school districts, and schools to implement the new law. In addition, there will be two regional meetings at which interested parties may provide additional advice and recommendations. Both the opportunity to comment on the regulatory process and to participate in the regional meetings would be valuable to promote ISS. With the beginning of the regulatory process, it is critical to engage early on in the process and remain an active participant and resource for administrators and legislators as things move forward.

We propose a series of meetings with key members of Congress and their staffs in the first quarter of 2016 to update them on CIS’ view of the reauthorization and target support for the FY2017 budget and appropriations process. These meetings would provide key support for ISS and allow CIS to further its objectives and lay the groundwork for appropriations hearings and markups that will come later in the year.