ESSA Local Leaders' Guide to Accountability Measures and Requirements

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The state accountability system has changed significantly as a result of the enactment of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).[1] This guide is designed to help local leaders understand why their schools have been identified for improvement, what steps the district is required to take, and the first steps recommended for local leaders.

How Districts are Notified

SED has released the new school accountability lists based on the state ESSA plan. This includes a change in how schools are identified and the nomenclature. Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools are the lowest five percent performing schools and high schools with graduation rates below 67%. Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) schools are schools with low performing student subgroups. Comprehensive Support and Intervention (CSI) schools are identified every three years, whereas Targeted Support and Intervention (TSI) schools will be identified annually. The state accountability system converts the results of each performance indicator to a one to four performance level. Level One (bottom 10%) is the lowest level on the scale. SED will provide a report to the district that includes an *"Accountability Status Data"* file. This report provides the performance levels earned for each accountability indicator, by sub-group, for each school in the district.

A "scenario table" details how the indicators are combined to identify schools for CSI or TSI status by identifying which scenario the school falls under. Any of the scenarios in the table below will result in CSI status for the "All students" group and TSI status for any subgroup - economically disadvantaged, major racial/ethnic groups, English Learners, and students with disabilities (SWD).

Scenario Table

Scenario	Composite Performance (Academic Achievement and Core Performance)	Student Growth (Elm/MS) Graduation Rate (HS)	Combined Composite/Growth or Composite/ Graduation Rate	ELP (English Language Progress)	ELA and Math Progress	Chronic Absenteeism Level	College, Career and Civic Readiness Level (for High Schools Only)
1	Both Level 1		Level 1	Any Level	Any Level		
2	Either Level 1		Level 1	None	Any One Level 1		
3	Either Level 1		Level 1	Level 1	Any Level		
4	Either Level 1		Level 1	Level 2	Any One Level 1		
5	Either Level 1		Level 1	Level 3 or 4	Any Two Level 1		

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[1] See the NYSUT ESSA Fact Sheet for general information about ESSA – a link is included in the resource section.

Understanding the Data

Federal law requires 5% of all schools plus all high schools with graduation rates below 67% as CSI schools. Most of the indicators are relative measures, how a school performs compared to others. It is also important to note that this type of system does not allow school leaders to identify some specific level of student achievement and know their schools will not be identified as low performing. However, indicator levels can still identify broadly where districts need to focus their efforts.

Role of "n" size- New York state will use an "n size" (minimum student count) of 30 for measuring student outcomes. However, this "n" size is based on number of results, not student counts as under the previous system. For example, a student taking the fourth grade ELA, mathematics and science assessments would count as three results toward the "n" size for the combined academic measures. This will have an impact on subgroup performance where there are less students and the performance of a few students can carry more weight.

Converting Raw Scores to Levels

Composite Performance – (Academic Achievement and Core Performance)
This indicator is a measure of academic achievement on state assessments in ELA, math and science. For high schools, this also includes state assessments in social studies. Several calculations and steps are used to create a composite achievement measure. These include: 1) calculating performance indices for each student results by converting the raw score to a 1-4 performance level; 2) weighting these indices (each level of performance is weighted differently); 3) calculating two sets of results, one based on all continuously enrolled students (average academic achievement) and one based on only those students that took the exam (core subject performance index); 4) combining these to create the composite. The final composite performance measure is then ranked against every other school. The final levels are assigned based on percentile rankings. Schools ranked in the lowest 10 percent are at risk for CSI/TSI status.[2]

Composite Performance Rank	Composite Performance Level
0-10%	1
10.1-50%	2
50.1-75%	3
>75%	4

Effect of opt-outs
The core subject calculation is intended to mitigate the chance that a school will be identified based on opt-outs rather than low achievement. However, the more students that opt-out, the lower the average academic achievement measure will be. In this calculation, students that opt-out would be included in the calculation as a level 1. The core performance calculation may not be enough to move the school to a higher level. [3] NYSUT had advocated for the higher number to be used. SED claims this was not allowed under the law. The higher of the average academic achievement measure or the core performance index is used only to break a tie.

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[2] The NYSUT ESSA fact Sheet includes a complete step-by-step description of this process.
[3] When reporting individual students that opt-out, districts use a code that indicates refusal and no score is reported for the child. These students will be considered to have no valid test score.

Student Growth – ELA and Math

The growth model is the same one used to create the school-wide ratings used to evaluate principals and some teachers under APPR but modified to include three years of data. Student's results are compared to all other similar students across the state, the sum is calculated for three years of ELA and math results and then divided by the number of results to create the mean growth percentile. This is intended to make the model less volatile. However, with any growth model, the majority of schools will cluster in the middle range of a bell curve. This means the performance level bands are very narrow and there is likely to be movement between levels year-to-year. Any school with a mean growth percentile at 45 or less will be assigned a level 1.

Mean Growth Percentile	Level
45 or less	1
45.1-50	2
50.1-54	3
>54	4

At the High School level, graduation rates are used instead of a growth model. Please see the third table below for how graduation rate levels are determined.

Combined Composite Performance and Growth

The composite academic achievement and the growth measures or graduation rates, are combined to create a composite measure. These two measures are equally weighted. This means that growth can have a significant impact on whether a school is identified. All schools are ranked and those in the lowest 10 percent are level 1.

Percentile	Level
In the lowest 10%	1
Between 10.1-50%	2
Between 50.1-75%	3
Greater than 75%	4

English Language Proficiency

This indicator measures the progress of ELLs in meeting individual targets on the NYS English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). The state uses a matrix to determine if an individual student is making progress. The method compares a student's performance in the current year to the initial year of ELL identification and awards credit if a student remains on track based on the initial trajectory.

Success Ratio	English Language Proficiency Level
0-.49	1
.50-.99	2
1.0-1.24	3
1.25+	4

Academic Progress, Graduation Rate, Chronic Absenteeism; College/Career Readiness

These indicators are measured against a state long-term goal and state and school-specific measures of interim progress (MIP).

- Academic Progress measures student achievement on state assessments in ELA and math to determine if they are on track to meet the goals. In elementary and middle schools, this is based on all continuously enrolled students and is not adjusted to include the core performance measure (only those students that take the exams). Opt outs will also have an impact on this indicator.
- Graduation Rate – high school measure of four, five and six-year cohort. Graduation rates are lagged by one year. Schools with graduation rates below 67 percent must be identified as CSI.
- Chronic Absenteeism – measures the percent of students who miss 10 percent or more (based on the time a student is enrolled in the school not the school year).

- College, Career and Civic Readiness – high school measure of the percent of students who are prepared for college, career and civic readiness as measured by diplomas, credentials, advanced course credits and enrollment in career and technical education certificates and other similar indicators. Indicators are not all weighted equally.

	Did not meet long-term goal	Met long-term goal	Exceeded long-term goal
Did not meet either MIP	1	N/A	N/A
Met lower of state or school MIP	2	3	4
Met higher of state or school MIP	3	4	4

School Supports and Interventions

Under ESSA there is an increased focus on resource equity and local control. Some of the tools used by SED to intervene in CSI schools under the old system will continue but the State's role will shift from requiring specific interventions or models to providing technical assistance, training and monitoring progress. However, the State will escalate interventions if schools do not make progress and the Receivership law remains in place. SED will require many of the same procedures to evaluate TSI schools but will leave it to districts to determine the interventions.

Interventions –CSI Schools

Intervention	Requirements
Diagnostic Review	SED will appoint an Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) consisting of SED staff, a member from the district and an Outside Educational Expert (OEE) using the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) rubric to assist with a diagnostic review and development of the Improvement plan. The DTSDE rubric was used under the old accountability system (see below for a brief description.) The comprehensive review will still also require: • A review of the ESSA indicators and others that are considered important but not part of the accountability system, such as teacher absenteeism. • A resource audit that examines professional development, use of time, space and staff. • Parent, staff and student surveys.
Improvement Plan	The year a school is identified is considered a planning year to develop an improvement plan. • A specific model is not required. • The plan must address the findings of the needs assessment. • Annual Achievement Progression targets - The ESSA indicators and additional indicators selected by the state and the district must be included in the plan and will be assigned progress goals by the state. • There is no mandate for extended learning time, as there was previously for Priority schools. • The plan must be submitted for approval to the Commissioner by July 1st and be updated annually based on progress.

Funding	• The State will provide a base-level allocation to all CSI schools in year one. The state will establish a tiered funding system in years two and three.
	• Schools must either set-aside $2,000 in year one (this can go up to $6,000 by year three) to establish a Parent Participatory Budgeting Process that will give parents a voice in how these funds are spent; or, select other methods of increasing parent engagement from an SED approved list.
Evidence Based Intervention	The school must have at least one evidence based intervention that has demonstrated a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes. This is selected by the district. SED will serve as a resource to direct districts to clearinghouses that have identified evidence based interventions and will provide training on state-selected interventions but schools are not required to choose from these.
Professional Development/Training	Must be job-embedded, ongoing professional development, linked to the needs assessment, APPR and the school improvement plan
Teacher Transfers	Only Effective and Highly Effective teachers may transfer into the school. *(Note NYSUT objected to this provision as a violation of collective bargaining rights and filed a lawsuit in October 2018)*
Progress Reports	Schools review and report the implementation of the plan, this includes:
	• A quarterly report of progress on the indicators
	• Annual resource audit
	• Annual survey of parents, staff and students
	• Schools that are not making progress after year one must submit a Leadership Support and Needs Assessment. This is a structured review of how the district will support its school leaders and is not limited to principals.
	• Districts may also choose to do a more thorough comprehensive review in year two.
	• Schools that fail to make progress in year three are required to do a comprehensive review unless they did one in year two.
Parent, Teacher and Student Surveys	Districts may develop or select a survey instrument. This could be a SED approved survey but does not need to be.
Public School Choice	Public school choice is a district prerogative, unless a schools performance declines for two years, at that point, the district must offer school choice. If there are no schools in Good Standing, the district can offer a TSI school.
Exit Criteria	The school is not re-identified when the list is run again in three years; or the school has performed for two consecutive years above the levels that would cause it to be identified:
	• The school's composite performance index and growth or graduation index are both Level 2 or higher; or,
	• Both achievement and growth or graduation are higher than at the time of identification; and either growth/graduation or achievement is Level 2 or higher; and none of the other indicators are Level 1.
Receivership	Schools re-identified as a CSI school on the next list generated will be placed into Receivership.

Interventions - TSI Schools

Intervention	Requirements
Identification	The state will use the same methodology used to identify CSI schools, identifying the lowest % of schools, based on subgroup performance. However,

Intervention	Requirements
	TSI schools will be identified annually, not every three years.
Diagnostic Review	SED will appoint an IIT team to assist with the diagnostic review and development of the improvement plan. Districts complete a Comprehensive review that includes: • DTSDE review • Review of state-determined indicators • Resource audit that examines professional development, use of time, space and staff
Improvement Plan	The plan must address the findings of the needs assessment and is developed in consultation with stakeholders.
Periodic Review	The district is required to conduct an annual Progress Needs assessment or another comprehensive assessment.
Parent, Teacher and Student Surveys	Districts may develop or select a survey instrument. This could be a SED approved survey but does not need to be.
School Choice	Not required
Exit Criteria	Unlike CSI schools, a TSI school will not be removed from the list if they are not re-identified. To exit TSI, the school must be above the levels that caused the school to be identified for two consecutive years. There is no limit to the number of schools that can be identified for TSI.
Re-Identification	TSI schools that have not shown enough improvement over two years will be evaluated and could be identified as an Additional Targeted Support school. If a school remains an Additional TSI school after three consecutive years, it will be identified as CSI.

Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) Rubric

The DTSDE tool is a rubric that is divided into six areas of focus called tenets. The rubric will be used by the review team over a one to three day period (depending on the size of the school and accountability status) to identify areas of strengths and weakness. These will be used to create goals and to inform the improvement plan. The six tenets are:
- Tenet 1: District Leadership and Capacity
- Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions
- Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support
- Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions
- Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health
- Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

Below are some of the components of the review process that directly impact teachers and support staff:
- *Staff-Level Focus Groups.* The review process will include multiple focus groups. These include teacher meetings with a pre-selected group of teachers that should represent all grades across subject areas. Support staff will also participate in a focus group meeting that should include how the school is using its student support services along with core teachers to support student's social, emotional development and health, and how community services are engaged.
- *Observation of grade/subject-level teacher team meetings.* Reviewers will observe a meeting where teachers look at student work and create an action plan. The intent is for this to be a teacher-led discussion. The reviewers will ask clarifying questions prior to and after the meeting.
- *Classroom Visitations.* Each reviewer will visit seven to ten classes. After each visit the reviewer will ask the teacher two or three questions. The purpose is to ascertain how students are being

instructed and make connections to curriculum, strategies and practices compared to the goals set by the teacher and school. This is not linked to the APPR process.

- *Surveys.* Annual surveys of teachers, parents and students in Grades 3-5 and 6-12 are mandated under ESSA. The surveys are intended to provide feedback on each of the following areas: school-wide systems, organization and climate, school leadership, curriculum and instruction, social-emotional developmental health, and family engagement.

ESSA and Receivership

Identification as a CSI school does not have the same implications as Receivership, although it does put a building on the path to Receivership. The superintendent is not given authority to supersede Board of Education decisions, require changes to building staff or a Receiver collective bargaining agreement in a CSI schools. However, the State ESSA plan does not change the Receivership law, which is a State law. New CSI schools that are re-identified as CSI schools in three years will fall under Receivership. For the 2018-19 school accountability list, any school that was previously identified as a Priority School, that is now identified as a CSI school will enter Receivership.

Advice to Local Leaders

With the use of relative scales and a small "n" size, we can anticipate that this accountability system may be more unpredictable than we experienced under the old system. Schools we expect to be in good standing may be identified for CSI. Schools are likely to come off the CSI/TSI lists while others are added to these lists. In addition we expect the TSI school list to grow over time as there is no limit on the number of schools that can be identified and schools will be identified annually. NYSUT recommends that local leaders take the following steps:

- Review the data – know which indicators led to the school being identified.
- Prepare members for the DTSDE review and survey. Local leaders should be involved in decisions regarding who will participate in the focus groups.
- Intervention plans must be developed collaboratively – recruit members to serve that have expertise in the areas identified for improvement.
- Review the professional development plan for alignment to the improvement plan.
- Review the quarterly reports to know where you are making progress.
- Out-of-school suspensions will likely become an accountability indicator by 2020-21. In some districts, there may be pressure on members to keep disruptive students in the classroom. Review board policies regarding suspensions to ensure members are protected. If there is not an in-school suspension program, encourage the district to develop one or other alternatives to out-of-school suspension.

Other Resources

- NYSUT ESSA Fact Sheet https://www.nysut.org/resources/all-listing/research/fact-sheets/fact-sheet-essa-overview
- Link to SED DTSDE Tool and information: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/diagnostic-tool-institute/home.html
- SED ESSA webpage: http://www.nysed.gov/essa
- SED Receivership webpage: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/oisr/