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THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT: PENNSYLVANIA'S PLAN TO IDENTIFY SCHOOLS FOR SUPPORT AND IMPROVEMENT

In 2015, Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and titled the new law The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA requires every state to develop an accountability system for all public schools and local education agencies (LEAs) that includes the results of annual state assessments¹ and several other indicators.² ESSA requires states to use this accountability system to determine which Title I schools are in the greatest need of supports to improve.³ Title I schools with the greatest need must receive Comprehensive Supports and Interventions (CSI). In addition, other schools may receive Targeted Supports and Interventions (TSI) to reduce achievement gaps among specific student subgroups.

Pennsylvania's Process to Designate Schools for CSI

In its State Consolidated Plan, PDE defines the following six indicators for its accountability system:

- Percent of students who demonstrate proficiency on state standardized tests;
- Student growth as measured by state standardized tests;
- Growth toward proficiency for English learners;
- For high schools, graduation rate; and
- Two school quality indicators: chronic student absenteeism and student career readiness.⁴

Using these six indicators and following a three-step process, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) will determine which schools enter CSI.

¹ For more information about state assessment requirements under ESSA, see PSEA's Advisory, [The Every Student Succeeds Act: State and Federal Student Assessment Requirements](#).

² For information about state accountability requirements, see PSEA's Advisory, [The Every Student Succeeds Act: State Accountability System Requirements](#). States also must develop an annual school report card that includes the accountability indicators as well as additional indicators of school quality. In Pennsylvania, this report card is called the [Future Ready PA Index](#). For additional information about the Index and ESSA report card requirements, see PSEA's Advisory, [The Every Student Succeeds Act: State and Local Education Agency Report Card Requirements](#). For additional information about the Future Ready Index, see PSEA's Advisory, [The Every Student Succeeds Act: Future Ready PA Index](#).

³ For more information, see PSEA's Advisory, [The Every Student Succeeds Act: Pennsylvania's Consolidated Plan](#) and [The Every Student Succeeds Act: State Accountability System Requirements](#).

⁴ For more information about the use of chronic student absenteeism and student career readiness in Pennsylvania's school accountability system, see PSEA's Advisory, [The Every Student Succeeds Act: Pennsylvania School Quality Indicators](#).

To assign schools to each of these three categories, PDE will employ the following process:

1. ***Preliminary identification of schools based on academic achievement and growth.*** PDE will derive student achievement scores from a weighted average of the percent of students in a school who score proficient or advanced on state assessments of English language arts and mathematics over the most recent two years.⁵ Likewise, student growth on state assessments in English language arts and mathematics will be calculated using the most recent two years of state assessment data. By plotting achievement and growth scores for all Title I schools, PDE will determine the subset of Title I schools with the lowest scores. These schools are preliminarily identified for CSI.
2. ***Final identification of schools based on additional academic and non-academic indicators.*** All schools identified as low-performing in the preliminary identification process will be evaluated according to the remaining four accountability indicators: growth among English learners, graduation rate (for high schools only), chronic absenteeism and career readiness. Among these four indicators, graduation rate and growth among English learners are considered *substantially weighted indicators*, and chronic absenteeism and career readiness are considered *student success indicators*.

Preliminarily identified schools that also fall in the bottom quartile on one or both substantially weighted indicators or both student success indicators will be identified for CSI.⁶

3. ***Identification of additional high schools with low graduation rates.*** ESSA requires all states to identify for CSI all public high schools that fail to graduate one third or more of their students. Pennsylvania will calculate the weighted average of each high school's two most recent four- and five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate.

All high schools not identified in Steps 1 or 2 that have an overall graduation rate at or below two-thirds will be identified for CSI.

The figure below, taken directly from the [PA State Plan](#) (p. 54), provides examples of how schools will be assigned to CSI based on Steps 1 and 2.

⁵ PDE will calculate a score for schools with 20 or more students included in the calculation. Schools with fewer than 20 students included in a calculation will not receive a score.

⁶ If Steps 1 and 2 of the CSI designation process lead to the identification of more or less than 5 percent of Title I schools, PDE will adjust cut points in Step 2 in consultation with its Technical Advisory Committee.

School Example	Substantially Weighted Indicators		School Quality and Success Indicators		Result
	<i>ELP Progress</i>	<i>Graduation Rate</i>	<i>Chronic Absenteeism</i>	<i>Career Readiness</i>	
Grades served; school characteristics					
K-5; EL subgroup meets N-size ⁷		N.A.; not a high school			Not CSI
1-6; EL subgroup does not meet N-size	N.A.	N.A.			CSI
6-8; EL subgroup meets N-size		N.A.; not a high school			CSI
6-9; EL subgroup does not meet N-size	N.A.	N.A.			Not CSI
9-12; EL subgroup meets N-size					CSI
10-12; EL subgroup does not meet N-size	N.A.				Not CSI

Pennsylvania’s Process to Designate Schools for TSI

Schools will be identified for TSI if one or more subgroups of students⁸ consistently performs below CSI thresholds for academic proficiency, growth, and either: 1) one or both substantially weighted indicators; or 2) both student success indicators. In other words, Pennsylvania will modify the CSI identification process to consider student subgroup performance to identify schools for TSI. Unlike CSI, there is no required percent of schools that must be designated for TSI.

School Improvement Strategies and Supports

A school in CSI or TSI must develop a school improvement plan and implement school improvement strategies that are likely to improve student outcomes as measured by the accountability criteria. PDE

⁷ A school must have 20 or more EL students to include in the ELP Progress indicator (called the N-size) for a score to be included in the accountability calculation.

⁸ For accountability purposes, PA will disaggregate by school for the following student subgroups: race/ethnicity (including white, African American/black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native, and multi-racial), English learner, economically disadvantaged, sex, and student with a disability.

will provide support and assistance that includes: leadership coaching; on-site technical assistance, professional learning communities, guidance on use of school improvement funding, annual monitoring of plan implementation and impact, professional development, and school improvement partner development. In addition, PDE continues to promote Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) as evidence-based student interventions.

Funding to support school improvement will be formula-driven for the first year of identification. A second year of formula-driven disbursement will be allocated for schools who are making progress on their plan and providing timely reports to PDE. After that point, a competitive-driven approach will be considered to more appropriately differentiate the needs of different schools.

Criteria to Exit CSI or TSI Status

In order to exit CSI or TSI, Pennsylvania schools must meet the following criteria:

1. Show continued progress on at least the academic achievement indicator and, in the case of high schools, the adjusted cohort graduation rate, such that the school contributes to the state's progress toward both interim and long-term goals;
2. Show continued progress on the school quality or student success indicator(s) for which the school was identified;
3. Exceed the identification standards for CSI/TSI that were applied the year of initial identification, as well as the standards from the most recent round of annual meaningful differentiation;
4. Submit an updated improvement plan that details LEA and school activities that focus on sustainability and continued improvement, including a focus on phase-out of school improvement funds and phased withdrawal of intensive supports; and
5. Participate in PDE-sponsored technical assistance activities throughout the duration of CSI status.

Schools that fail to exit CSI after four years will be required to revise the school improvement plan to include more rigorous interventions. Schools that fail to exit TSI will be identified for CSI.

Timelines

<i>Late Fall 2018</i>	Schools are identified by PDE for CSI and TSI
<i>Spring 2019</i>	Identified schools conduct needs assessment and develop improvement plans
<i>Summer/Fall 2019</i>	Identified schools begin implementation of the plan
<i>2019-2022</i>	Improvement cycle to demonstrate progress
<i>Late Fall 2021</i>	New cohort of CSI schools identified and cycle begins again

For More Information

For more information regarding accountability under ESSA, visit PSEA's [ESSA Resource Page](#). PSEA members also may contact Brad Hull (bhull@psea.org) in PSEA's Education Services Department for specific information about accountability requirements in Pennsylvania's Consolidated State Plan. For specific questions about ESSA implementation in a particular school or district, PSEA members should contact their UniServ Representative.

