

V.I.

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO BE PROPOSED:

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education receives the Draft of Connecticut's ESSA State Plan, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of _____ this first day of March, Two Thousand Seventeen.

Signed: _____
Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Secretary
State Board of Education

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell
Commissioner of Education

DATE: March 1, 2017

SUBJECT: Current Draft of Connecticut’s ESSA State Plan

Executive Summary

Introduction

The purpose of this summary is to provide the State Board of Education (SBE) with a summary of public comments on the final draft of Connecticut’s ESSA State Plan.

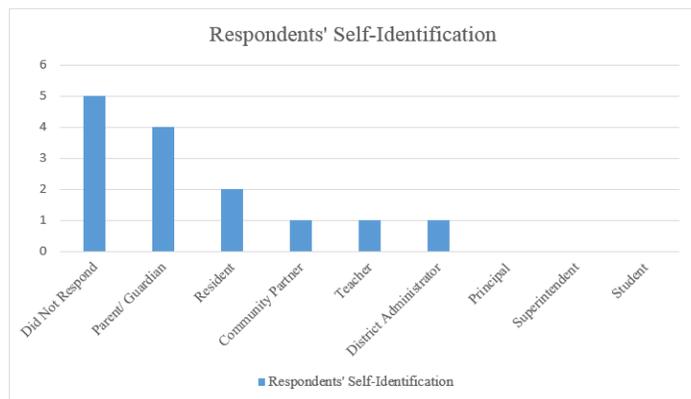
History/Background

In December 2015, President Obama signed into law the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The title of the reauthorized legislation, which replaced the No Child Left Behind Act, is the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The 2016-17 school year is a transition period and currently, the implementation of state plans under ESSA is still slated for the start of the 2017-18 school year.

Summary of Public Comment in Response to the Posted ESSA State Plan

Respondent Demographics

The Connecticut ESSA State Plan has been posted prominently on our website, accompanied by a public comment survey where comments can be collected, collated, and reported. The survey



has been shared with the public via press release and social media posts. Notice of the posting has been sent to our Family/Community Engagement network and to educational organizations such as CAFE, CAPSS, CAS, etc.

As of Friday, February 17, 2017, a total of 14 individuals responded to the ESSA Public Comment Survey. Nearly 36

percent (5) of respondents chose not to identify with a specific demographic group; 29 percent (4) of respondents were parents and guardians; 21 percent (3) of respondents identified as residents and community partners; and 14 percent (2) respondents were teachers and district administrators. To date, we have received zero responses from principals, superintendents, and students. Respondents reside, teach, and lead in Coventry, Lebanon, Bolton, Guilford, and Stratford.

Summary of Responses by Section of State Plan

Section 1: Long-term Goals

- Hold charter and magnet schools to the same standards as traditional public schools.
- Ensure that a well-rounded education includes music, physical education, and art, as these subjects sometimes keep kids in school.

Section 2: Consultation and Performance Management

- There were no responses to this section.

Section 3: Academic Assessment

- Focus less on state testing and more on relationships and differentiated learning.
- There are no “core” subjects under ESSA, which results in some subjects being treated “disrespectfully.” Despite this, these “disrespected” subjects are integral to student achievement and outcomes.

Section 4: Accountability, Support, and Improvement for Schools

- Stop hurting teachers and administrators with punitive, invalid, and unreliable teacher evaluations.
- School integration, both socioeconomic and racial, should be included as a metric given the copious research that demonstrates the benefits of integration.
- This section is heavy on growth and designating schools of distinction may be a bit misleading since the growth metric fluctuates from year to year. Consider weighing growth and absolute performance equally when designating schools of distinction.

Section 5: Supporting Excellent Educators

- The 5 percent of teachers who are performing poorly should not result in extra work for the 95 percent of teachers who are doing a good job.
- Excellent teachers should be rewarded with one year off of SEED.

Section 6: Supporting All Students

- A well-rounded education should include physical education (not recess, but physical education as physical literacy), art, and music more often than one day per week. Students should have PE at least 2-3 times per week.
- On page 63, use family partnership rather than family engagement because the former connotes the family as a partner in their child’s education.
- In addition to offering trainings for family support workers you should also offer more districts resources for family support initiatives.
- Expand funding for family resource centers beyond the districts that have traditionally received monies.

On February 22, 2017, the Senior Leadership Team of the CSDE met to review the public comments received to date. The team discussed the feedback and agreed that the ESSA plan, as designed, was consistent with the major trends in feedback received both in Stakeholder Engagement Phase I (input through focus groups and a survey) and Phase II Stakeholder Engagement (responses to posting of the completed draft of the state plan).

Next Steps Regarding Connecticut’s ESSA State Plan

The next steps following the SBE consideration of this item is to forward the plan to the Governor’s office for consultation and signature. On February 10, 2017, the CSDE received a communication from the new Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos. In it, Secretary DeVos states that “due to the regulatory delay and review, and the potential repeal of recent regulations by Congress, the Department is currently reviewing the regulatory requirements of consolidated State plans, as reflected in the current template, to ensure that they require only descriptions, information, assurances, and other materials that are “absolutely necessary” for consideration of a consolidated State plan, consistent with section 8302(b) (3) of the ESEA. In doing so, the Department, in consultation with SEAs as well as other State and local stakeholders, will develop a revised template for consolidated State plans that meets the “absolutely necessary” requirement by March 13, 2017.” Upon receipt of the new template the CSDE will immediately transfer the Connecticut State Plan to the new template.

Prepared by: _____

Ellen E. Cohn
Deputy Commissioner

Approved by: _____

Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell
Commissioner of Education