

ESSA Implementation: Key Questions for Charter School Advocates

Standards and Assessments

- How will your state align its standards to entrance requirements for credit-bearing coursework? Community colleges? Four-year institutions?
- How does your state plan address any streamlining of state and local assessment requirements?
- Will your state permit school districts to use a nationally recognized high school assessment in lieu of the state high school assessment?
- Will your state apply for the assessment innovation grant?
- How will any local assessment flexibility apply to charter schools?

Accountability

- What changes, if any, will there be to reporting on state accountability metrics during the transition years? States are no longer required to report progress on their NCLB annual measurable objectives for 2014-15 and 2015-6.
- What non-academic indicators is the state considering using?
- Will charter schools have flexibility to weigh state indicators in a way that aligns with the mission of their school, particularly for schools undergoing a charter school restart?
- How will the state or district provide students in underperforming schools with options to find seats in high quality schools?
- How will your state address alternate high schools that serve under-credited youth?
- Will your district reserve 5 percent of its Title I funds for school choice and transportation?
- Will the state allocate funds for school improvement by formula or competitively (or both)?
- What opportunities will charter school operators who want to engage in improving underperforming schools have to apply for these funds or to partner with the SEA or LEA?
- For authorizers – what are the implications of changing state metrics for charter performance frameworks?

Title I allocations

- What is your state's definition of a significantly expanding charter school?
- Is your SEA aware of the requirement to allocate Title I funds to new and expanding charter schools, and that Title I hold harmless requirements apply to all charter school LEAs?

Direct Student Services

- Does your state plan to elect to reserve up to 3 percent of Title I funds to make awards to districts to provide Direct Student Services? These services include supplemental educational courses, tutoring, choice, choice transportation.

Charter School Grants

- What entity is planning to apply for the next CSP competition in 2017? What lines of communication are in place, or need to be developed, to ensure that eligible entities coordinate to ensure that a high quality application is submitted on behalf of charter schools in the state?
- The CSP permits feeder patterns and permits weighted lotteries unless prohibited by state law. Does your state law permit pattern enrollment preferences? Where does it stand on weighted lotteries?

- Who has the authority to oversee authorizers and implement the new CSP quality provisions, including the 7 percent set-aside?
- The definition of expansion in the CSP is now one or more grades – a lower bar than current ED guidance. How will this affect CSP grants in your state?

Title I Teacher Credentials

- Highly qualified teacher requirements are no longer in effect. How has your state implemented this change in the law?
- If your state permits certification waivers or other flexibility under state charter school law, will it ensure that those teachers are considered to have met requirements for purposes of Title I credential and parental notification requirements?
- Are charter school leaders in your state being consulted in the process of defining ineffective or inexperienced teachers? How will this affect charter school teachers?

Student Academic Enrichment Grant

- For district authorized charter schools: How is your district planning to spend these funds when they become available (and assuming the program is funded)? ESSA requires that charter school teachers and other charter leaders be consulted on the development of LEA application for this grant. At least 20% must be spent on well-rounded educational opportunities, another 20 percent for safe and healthy students, and an unspecified amount for the effective use of technology.