Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Opportunities for Early Learning

February 18, 2016

Build
INITIATIVE
Strong Foundations For Our Youngest Children

The BUILD Initiative's Mission

The BUILD Initiative

supports state leaders to develop a comprehensive, equitable system (infrastructure, programs, policies and services) that meets the needs of young children and their families.

This **systems-building approach**

effectively prepares our youngest children for a successful future, while carefully using private and public resources.

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Two Goals for Today's Session

Goal 1: Provide an overview of early learning in ESSA

Goal 2: Discuss opportunities for engagement by early childhood stakeholders

Our Approach

- Themes & Opportunities

- Definition

- Overview

- Takeaways

Early Learning Themes

- **Suffused throughout ESSA**

- **Mostly discretionary, not mandated**

- **State Education Agencies (SEA) and Local Education Agencies (LEA) make key decisions**

- **New preschool section is a change from current Preschool Development Grants**

Opportunities for Engagement

- **Is your State Early Learning Council reviewing ESSA and developing action recommendations?**

- **Is your State Board of Education/Education Agency convening stakeholders to discuss approaches and plans?**

- **Do you have a local Early Learning Council or coalition to work with local districts?**

- **Are you briefing state and local legislators on opportunities for early learning?**

Key Early Learning Definitions

Early Childhood Education Program:

- Head Start Program or an Early Head Start program; or

- State licensed or regulated child care program; or

- A program that serves children from birth through age six that addresses the children's cognitive (including language, early literacy and early mathematics), social, emotional, and physical development; and is:

  i. A State prekindergarten program;

  ii. A program authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; or

  iii. A program operated by a local educational agency

Key Early Learning Definitions

Professional Development:

- specifically includes early childhood education program providers

SEA/LEA:

- State Education Agency
- Local Education Agency

Early Learning in ESSA

ESSA Title	Early Learning Focus for Today's Discussion
Title I — Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, Part A	Coordination and funding for early childhood; State support and coordination; Measuring progress; Family engagement
Teachers and Leaders Title II — Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, and Other School Leaders Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction	Professional Development
Teachers and Leaders Title II- Part B, Subpart 2: Literacy Education For All, Results for the Nation (LEARN)	Literacy
Title III — Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students	Dual Language Learners

Early Learning in ESSA

ESSA Title	Early Learning Focus for Today's Discussion
Title IV — 21st Century Schools Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers Part C: Expanding Opportunity Through Quality Charter Schools Part F, Subpart 2: Community Support for School Success; Promise Neighborhoods; Full-Service Community Schools Part F, Subpart 4: Ready to Learn Programming	Place-Based Early Learning Services
Title IX, Section 9212 — Preschool Development Grants	Pre-k; Strategic planning and needs assessment

State Coordination and Reporting for Early Childhood Education

[Title I — Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, Part A]

State Education Agencies (SEA)

- If Local Education Agencies (LEAs) invest in early childhood education, state must show how local effort is supported

- State report cards must include number and percentage enrolled in "preschool programs"

- New state-wide accountability measures with at least one indicator of school quality or student success. Indicators include:

  - student engagement
  - educator engagement
  - school climate and safety
  - other State-selected indicators

Local Funding and Support for Early Childhood Education

[Title I — Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, Part A]

LEA may invest in:

- **ECE programs (Section 1113(c)(5))**

  Note: Continues existing requirement around complying with Head Start performance standards

- **Parent and Family Engagement (Section 1616)**

  Options for parent and family engagement include joint professional development of early childhood educators and parents as well as teachers, principals, and other school staff

Local Coordination

[Title I — Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, Part A]

LEA coordination plans include:

- **How the LEA will support, coordinate and integrate ECE programs, including transition planning**

- **For Schoolwide Title I Programs and Targeted Assistance Schools, activities for all children**
  - especially children from low-income families
  - may include strategies for smoothing transitions and providing preschool programs

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Local Coordination with Head Start and Other ECE Programs

[Title I — Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, Part A]

- **LEA required to coordinate with Head Start**

- **LEA may coordinate with other early childhood programs**

- **Coordination examples:**

Develop/implement process for receiving children's records

Communication between school, Head Start and early childhood education programs

Conduct meetings with parents, school teachers, Head Start and early childhood teachers to discuss the needs of individual children

Joint transition-related training of school staff, Head Start program staff and early childhood education program staff

Link LEA and Head Start educational services

Joint funding for pre-kindergarten and Head Start services at public schools

Takeaways State & Local ECE Investment/Coordination

[Title I — Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, Part A]

- **Required local coordination with Head Start; optional local coordination with other ECE programs**

- **Investment in early childhood education permitted but not required; historically Title I ECE investment is low**

- **States and locals must create Title I plans; ECE stakeholders can engage in these planning processes to advocate for inclusion and resources for early learning**

Professional Development

[Title II — Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, and Other School Leaders, Part A Supporting Effective Instruction]

SEA professional development plans may include Early Childhood Education

Example:

"Supporting opportunities for principals, other school leaders, teachers, paraprofessionals, early childhood education program directors, and other early childhood education program providers to participate in joint efforts to address the transition to elementary school, including issues related to school readiness."

Professional Development

[Title II — Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, and Other School Leaders, Part A Supporting Effective Instruction]

- **LEA professional development plans may include early grades teachers and principals and ECE staff**

- **Professional development examples:**

  - improving ability of principals and other school leaders to meet needs of children through age 8
  - early grades instructional knowledge and child progress measurement for teachers, principals & school leaders
  - joint learning and planning on transition for school staff and early childhood educators
  - other evidence-based activities

Takeaways Professional Development

- **Many options to include early childhood educators in state and local professional development plans**

- **Draws attention to importance of principals in understanding early learning**

- **Stakeholders should advocate with state agencies and school districts to use Title II professional development resources to support early learning**

Literacy

Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation (LEARN)

- **Comprehensive state literacy (reading and writing) plans and needs assessments**

- **Early education through grade 12**
  - birth to kindergarten entry (15%)
  - kindergarten through 5th grade (40%)
  - 6th through 12th grade (40%)

- **Priority for evidence-based literacy activities**

Literacy

- **Money goes from State to LEA, ECE programs or a combination**

- **Up to 5% of state funds can be used for:**
  - technical assistance to local grantees
  - coordinating with higher education to improve teacher preparation in literacy instruction
  - updating licensing standards for literacy
  - making information about promising approaches available to the public

Literacy

Birth to kindergarten allowable uses:

- **High-quality professional development for early childhood educators**

- **Evidence-based early childhood education literacy initiatives**

- **Family and early childhood educators involvement in literacy development of children**

- **Targeted early childhood comprehensive literacy instruction for high-need young learners brings together early childhood education programs, LEAs and public-private partners**

Literacy

[Title II — Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, and Other School Leaders, Part B Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation-LEARN

Kindergarten - 5th grade allowable uses:

- **Comprehensive literacy instruction plan**

- **Intervention in reading/writing for children below grade level**

- **High-quality professional development**

- **During, before and after the regular school day**

- **Coordination**

- **Engaging families in literacy**

Literacy

Kindergarten - 12th grade allowable uses:

- **Literacy coaches**

- **Connecting out-of-school and in-school learning**

- **Training families and caregivers to support adolescent literacy**

- **Multi-tier system of supports**

- **School literacy leadership teams**

- **Planning time for teachers and others on comprehensive literacy instruction**

Literacy

Pediatric Literacy

U.S. Department of Education may invest in pediatric literacy programs to include:

- Medical providers trained in research-based early language and literacy promotion

- Books for families and recommendations to parents about reading aloud

- Services during well-child visits

- Starting in infancy

Takeaways Literacy

- **Explicit support for early learning**

- **Allows cross-sector approach for health-care related literacy approaches, such as Reach Out and Read**

- **Great opportunity for ECE to advocate and work with state and local educators, health care community and other stakeholders across 0-5 and K-5**

Dual Language Learners

[Title III — Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students]

Competitive National Professional Development Project may include ECE:

- Higher education or public-private entities that work with consortia of State or Local education agencies

- Professional development focus-classroom instruction

- ECE is allowable

  "Strategies that promote school readiness of English learners and their transition from early childhood education programs, such as Head Start or State-run preschool programs, to elementary school programs."

Dual Language Learners

[Title III — Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students]

State Education Agencies may invest in ECE:

"Developing and implementing new language instruction educational programs and academic content instructional programs for English learners and immigrant children and youth, including early childhood education programs, elementary school programs, and secondary school programs."

Takeaways Dual Language Learners

[Title III — Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students]

- **Supporting the early childhood workforce to work with DLLs is an option**

- **Funding level is low- advocacy needed for additional federal investment**

- **Home language and bilingual education not well supported**

Place-Based Early Learning

[Title IV — 21st Century Schools]

Federal to State to Local Resources

- **21st Century Community Learning Centers (Part B)**

  - **Allotments go to state**

  - **Competitive competitions for local eligible entities**

  - **Expanded learning can provide students at least 300 additional program hours before, during, or after the traditional school day**

Place-Based Early Learning

[Title IV — 21st Century Schools]

Expanding Opportunity Through Quality Charter Schools (Part C)

- **Charter schools that serve early childhood, elementary school, or secondary school students**

Community Support for School Success (Part F, Subpart 2)

- **Promise Neighborhoods - requires some funds be used for "pipeline services"**
- **Full-Service Community Schools- plan must include description of "pipeline services"**
- **Pipeline services includes:**
    - high-quality early childhood education programs
    - support for a child's transition to elementary school, as well as other transition points
    - family and community engagement and supports
    - social, health, nutrition, and mental health services and supports

Place-Based Early Learning

[Title IV — 21st Century Schools]

Ready to Learn Programming (Part F, Subpart 4)

- **Grants for education and training materials, including interactive programs & distance learning technologies, to:**

  - promote school readiness; and

  - promote materials among parents, family members, teachers, principals and other school leaders, Head Start providers, family literacy services, child care, early childhood educators, teachers, public libraries, and after-school program personnel caring for preschool and elementary school children

Takeaways Place-Based Early Learning

[Title IV — 21st Century Schools]

- **Many opportunities for early learning**
- **Stakeholders should engage with state agencies and school district to ensure inclusion of early learning; some programs may allow direct provider application**
- **Collaboration and pro-active engagement by the early childhood community is key**
  - **consider role of State Early Learning Council**
  - **consider local council or coalition to support the effort**

Other Opportunities for K-3rd Grade (and maybe pre-K depending on state)

Title II: Educators

- **Revisiting pre-service preparation and licensing/certification standards**
- **Developing alternative routes: residency programs and "teacher preparation academies"**
- **Improving equitable access to strong teachers for low-income and minority students**
- **Being more flexible with teacher evaluation systems**

Other Opportunities for K-3rd Grade (and maybe pre-K depending on state)

Title IV: 21st Century Schools (Part A)

- **Providing all students with a well-rounded education**
- **Improving school conditions for student learning**
- **Using technology to improve students' academic achievement and digital literacy**

Preschool

[Title IX, Section 9212 — Preschool Development Grants]

New Preschool Section

- **Three-fold purpose**
  - Support strategic plan for high-quality early learning
  - encourage partnerships to deliver programs
  - maximize parental choice
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is the lead in partnership with Dept. of Education**
- **States receive funds and subgrant to locals**
- **Two types of grants: Initial grants (1 year) and Renewal Grants (up to 3 years if awarded)**

Preschool

[Title IX, Section 9212 — Preschool Development Grants]

Initial Grants:

- **Conducting a needs assessment- availability and quality of existing programs**

- **Developing a strategic plan**

- **Maximizing parental choice and knowledge about programs and providers**

- **Emphasis on mixed-delivery system**

- **Sharing best practices among ECE providers, including improving transitions to kindergarten**

- **After completing previous activities, improving the overall quality of early education programs**

Preschool

[Title IX, Section 9212 — Preschool Development Grants]

- **Renewal Grants available to:**
  - states that received an Initial Grant
  - pre-ESSA Preschool Development or Expansion Grant states

- **Renewal grant allowable uses:**
  - continue activities started under Initial Grant
  - support programs in a mixed delivery system across the state for low-income and disadvantaged children to:
    - implement program improvement activities
    - expand access to existing or new programs in a mixed delivery system
    - funds will supplement, not supplant, other public funds

Preschool

[Title IX, Section 9212 — Preschool Development Grants]

Restrictions

The federal government may not specify, define, or prescribe:

- Early learning & development guidelines standards or specific assessments

- Specific measures or indicators of quality early learning and care, including:

    - the systems that states use to assess the quality of early childhood education programs and providers, school readiness, and achievement; and

    - the term "high-quality"

- Early learning or preschool curriculum, programs of instruction, or instructional content

Preschool

[Title IX, Section 9212 — Preschool Development Grants]

Restrictions

The federal government may not specify, define, or prescribe:

- Teacher and staff qualifications and salaries

- Class sizes and ratios of children to instructional staff

- Any new requirement that an early childhood education program is required to meet that is not explicitly authorized in this section

- The scope of programs, including length of program day and length of program year

- Any aspect or parameter of a teacher, principal, other school leader, or staff evaluation system within a State, local educational agency, or early childhood education program

Preschool

[Title IX, Section 9213]

Requires review of federal early childhood education programs to:

- **develop a plan to eliminate overlap**

- **determine if PDG funds led to better utilization of resources**

- **make recommendations for streamlining programs**

Takeaways Preschool

[Title IX, Preschool Development Grants]

- **A very different approach from the current program of the same name, i.e. no longer standards-based**

- **Allows for systems planning for initial grants and service delivery after systems planning is addressed; does not seem to support "systems" work that was part of Early Learning Challenge**

- **Supports mixed delivery system**

- **Engaging with Head Start at a different level**

- **Many unknowns about the implementation approach**

Closing: Key Themes and Opportunities for Early Learning in ESSA

- **Be pro-active!** Create and pursue state and local approaches and recommendations for early childhood within ESSA

- **Think about all parts of ESSA!** Early learning is suffused throughout ESSA

- **Early Learning mostly discretionary, not mandated or required!** Many decisions will be made by State Education Agencies (SEA) and School Districts

- **Work with your state and local agencies to maximize early childhood opportunities in ESSA**

  - Examples: State Early Learning Councils; Local coalitions and councils; Recommendations to local and state elected officials; etc.

ESSA Resources

Laura Bornfreund, Every Student Succeeds Act and Early Learning, 12/9/2015
http://www.edcentral.org/every-student-succeeds-act-early-learning/

Rachel Demma, Early Care and Learning in the Every Student Succeeds Act, 12/11/2015

http://mccormickcenter.nl.edu/early-care-and-learning-in-the-every-student-succeeds-act/

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First Five Years Fund, Summary and Analysis of the Early Learning Provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act, 2/4/2016, http://ffyf.org/resources/eceinessa2015/

Migration Policy Institute, Taking Stock of ESSA's Potential Impact on Immigrants and English-Learner Students, 1/26/2015, http://www.migrationpolicy.org/events/taking-stock-essa-potential-impact-immigrant-and-english-learner-students

Continued

ESSA Resources

National Association of Elementary School Principals, Brief Summary, n.d.
http://www.naesp.org/brief-summary-every-student-succeeds-act

National Conference of State Legislatures ESSA Summary, n.d.
http://www.ncsl.org/documents/capitolforum/2015/onlineresources/summary_12_10.pdf

Elliot Regenstein, Maia Connors, Rio Romero-Jurado, Valuing the Early Years in State Accountability Systems Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, 2/16/2016
http://www.theounce.org/what-we-do/policy/policy-conversations

Albert Wat, The Every Student Succeeds Act: A half-full or half-empty glass for early education?, 1/11/2016 http://earlysuccess.org/blog/every-student-succeeds-act-half-full-or-half-empty-glass-early-education

Thank you!

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