

## Every Student Succeeds Act Committees

The Minnesota Department of Education asked students, parents, educators, community members and other interested stakeholders to participate in five committees to delve into specific topics. The five committees covered the following topics: accountability, assessment, English learners, school improvement, and educator quality. The purpose of the committees were to involve voices of Minnesotans to support the development of Minnesota's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan. All meetings were open to the public and documents were posted to the [ESSA committee page](#).

Members were expected to attend and fully participate in all meetings and to articulate their views and the views of their constituencies. Members were encouraged to strive to bridge gaps in understanding, seek creative resolution of differences which integrate the needs of all stakeholders. Members were encouraged to build consensus on options by integrating the perspectives and needs of all stakeholder groups. Members were encouraged to raise, reflect on, and find equitable solutions throughout the process and consider equity-focused recommendations. They were asked the following questions:

- What groups are impacted by the decision and what is the nature of the impact? Groups may include:
  - Students of color
  - American Indian students
  - Ethnic background
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students
  - Students with disabilities
  - Students in poverty
  - English learners
- Gender
- What are the potential positive, neutral or harmful impacts on the identified groups?
- Have representatives from these groups been collaboratively engaged on the decision?
- How will the decision advance equity, address structural barriers, and reduce or eliminate disparities?

Recommendations from the committees were forwarded to commissioner Brenda Cassellius for her consideration for inclusion in the ESSA state plan.

### Accountability Committees

ESSA provides states with an opportunity to strengthen our efforts to build a world-class system of public schools where all children succeed. Part of the new law allows states to design new accountability systems that are meaningful to students, educators and families, and that amplify Minnesota's work to increase overall student achievement and reduce opportunity and achievement gaps. To develop and implement a plan to reach these goals, three committees were created.

The **technical committee** was charged with doing the in-depth technical analysis necessary to identify and define the indicators that are in Minnesota's accountability system, the weights that are attached to those indicators, and the calculations required to determine whether schools meet the criteria for identification for

improvement. The committee consisted of 16 individuals with backgrounds in statistical analysis. [View technical committee member list](#). The technical committee met 15 times from July 2016 to May 2017.

The **advisory committee** provided advice and feedback to the technical committee. The purpose of the ESSA accountability system advisory committee was to support the development of Minnesota’s accountability system. The advisory committee was charged with ensuring the technical committee’s work remained true to the needs of all of Minnesota’s students and schools and to offer direction and advice with respect to the concepts and values the accountability system reflects. This includes advising on the choice of indicators and the criteria and categories for identifying schools. The committee consisted of more than 100 educators, parents, civil rights groups, community members and interested stakeholders. [View membership of the advisory committee](#). The advisory committee met 13 times from August 2016 to June 2017.

The **school quality and student success committee** identified what indicator(s) of school quality or student success should be included in the ESSA accountability system. The subcommittee was charged with ensuring the indicator(s) meet all applicable federal requirements. The committee consisted of 22 individuals. [View membership list](#). The school quality and student success committee met four times in the month of September 2016.

## **Assessment Committee**

ESSA calls for states to improve assessment transparency and ensure statewide assessments are of high quality and aligned to state academic standards. To develop a plan to reach these goals, a committee was established to collaboratively meet the requirements related to statewide assessment under ESSA. The assessment committee consisted of more than 70 individuals representing school districts, charter schools, higher education, educators, assessment coordinators and community members. [See membership information](#). The assessment committee met seven times from September 2016 to December 2016.

## **Educator Quality Committee**

ESSA provides states with an opportunity to strengthen our efforts to build a world-class system of public schools where all children succeed. An educator quality committee was established to support the development of Minnesota’s ESSA plan relative to ensuring access to high-quality teachers and ensuring that low-income and minority students are not disproportionately served by ineffective, out-of-field or inexperienced teachers (“equity gap”). Membership of the educator quality committee consisted of more than 50 individuals representing pre-K through grade 12 educators, higher education, civil rights communities, and business and community stakeholders. [View membership information](#). The educator quality committee met four times from September 2016 to May 2017.

## **English Learner Committees**

Over the past 20 years, the number of English learners (EL) in Minnesota has increased by 300 percent, making them Minnesota’s fastest growing student population. ESSA provides opportunities to more meaningfully include and support Minnesota’s EL students. The English learner committee focused on some of the EL-specific provisions of ESSA, ensuring that broader work around Minnesota’s ESSA plan remains true to the needs of

Minnesota’s English learners. The English learner committee offered direction and advice with respect to the concepts and values to reflect in Minnesota’s state plan. Membership of the English learner committee and working groups consisted of more than 50 individuals representing school districts and charter schools, educators, higher education, English learner stakeholders and community stakeholders, [see membership information](#). The English learner committee met five times from October 2016 to May 2017.

In addition to the English learner committee, three English learner working groups were created to work on procedures.

### ***English Learner Procedures Working Group***

The English learner procedures working group focused on some of the EL-specific provisions of ESSA; establishing standardized procedures, adopting a statewide *Home Language Survey*, and ensuring that entrance and exit criteria for ELs are systematic and remain true to the needs of Minnesota’s ELs. The EL procedures working group worked on recommendations as well as a protocol for entrance and exit of ELs in Minnesota’s state plan. This group met four times from February 2017 to April 2017.

### ***English Learner Proficiency Definition Working Group***

The English learner proficiency definition working group focused on creating a recommendation for a statewide English language development (ELD) proficiency level using ACCESS test scores. At the end of January, the working group evaluated different proficiency level definitions and drafted a proposed statewide definition for the commissioner’s consideration. The working group met twice in January 2017.

### ***Additional Standardized English Learner Criteria Working Group***

The additional standardized English learner criteria working group focused on creating recommended guidelines and procedures for teachers that will provide additional input when determining the English language proficiency of Minnesota’s English learners. The working group discussed potential sources of information in addition to ACCESS scores that could be used in determining English language proficiency. The input from this group was used to create recommendations for the commissioner’s consideration. The working group met twice from January 2017 to April 2017.

## **School Improvement Committees**

ESSA requires districts and the state to support schools identified as needing improvement. The law defines activities and types of supports that must be provided. To develop and implement a plan to develop state and local supports and requirements, two committees were established. The committees developed a theory of action to guide school improvement planning, and wrote recommendations in response to eight decision items identified from ESSA changes and requirements. All recommendations were accepted by the commissioner for implementation.

The **technical committee** worked with the Minnesota Department of Education to define Minnesota’s statewide system of support for identified schools. The group finalized language for the theory of action and

recommendations based on the feedback from the stakeholder advisory committee. The group made final decisions about recommendations based on stakeholder feedback. The committee consisted of stakeholders with a background in school leadership and school improvement. [View membership list](#). The group met three times from October 2016 to January 2017.

The **stakeholder advisory committee** informed the development of Minnesota's statewide system of support for identified schools. The committee was charged with ensuring the technical committee's work remained true to the needs of all of Minnesota's students and schools and to offer stakeholder feedback and information to inform recommendations from the technical committee and decisions in the state plan. The stakeholder advisory committee consisted of more than 120 individuals representing school districts and charter schools, educators, service cooperatives and education stakeholders. [See membership list](#). The stakeholder advisory committee met five times from October 2016 to May 2017.