

# Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Listening Tour

**Grand Junction, CO – May 4, 2016**

**Standards, Assessments, and Accountability**

**Discussion Question #1: How should we measure student progress toward meeting the standards?**

- **Feedback Forms:**
  - Various measurements – include CCCRS.
  - Not time bound – differentiation for student readiness.
  - Include language as a standard (not just a program) as all learners need to have strong language skills.
  - Overtime- not 1time testing.
  - True following of the standards and showing competency of each.
  - Allowing districts to create local benchmark assessments which are standards-based to measure academic progress. Districts would guarantee 100% participation.
  - Multiple, holistic measures that are local.
  - Different methods, performance-based using both summative and formative—value in both of these methods.
- **General Discussion Notes:**
  - Education is not confined to a test score- bring in the things we measure every day.
  - Growth is important - look at the whole child beyond math and literacy.
  - Should be multiple authentic measures and should have a greater weight.
  - Can students take the interim assessments instead?
  - Can students use STARs throughout the year instead of “once a year” test? This way we know where our students are throughout the year; what is missing from STARs that could be added so another test isn’t necessary? Parent Communication is a very important factor.
  - Question - where is last year’s PARCC data?
  - Monitoring tests and then planning instruction around results is a huge burden on teachers.
  - Pass threshold of change for assessments.
  - Incorporating a body of evidence. Particularly for a district that is considering a competency based system.
  - Then... SAT can be used to align to the body of evidence – complex demonstrations for mastery.
  - Remove time-bound elements - students move at their own pace.
  - Improve the state system to include multiple points of learning evidence.
  - Use the Assessment Pilot to roll this out.
  - Pilot some alternative assessments that validate mastery to help inform teaching and learning throughout the school year.
  - Need an assessment system that meets students at their readiness level.
  - Challenge: the assessment pilot could be a barrier for participation – due to double testing.



- Most of our community is past their threshold for change re: assessments – “just stop”. Can’t get buy-in when the target is always changing.
- Use different methods – there is great value in authentic assessments.
- State assessment system completely aligned with ESSA! Legislation issue – rurals would support this. Also, why are we going above and beyond in assessments when the STATE has not given us any more money!
- How do you help us with all the change? Not a fan of PARCC, dealing with change is difficult for the community. Don’t have districts do it a lot, all the change has an effect on data.
- District-wide dropout rate was very low this year.
- Leave the assessment alone, in order to have reliable data.
- Local Control: 1.5 years of interpretation of assessment is very difficult. It was hard to have deep understanding of standards.
- Meets or exceeds is in many laws for districts to follow, but districts don’t have the resources or have the funds when it comes to creating their own district assessments.
- Interim assessment: it’s hard to have it aligned to state standards.
- Please provide more flexibility with assessments – assessment pilot

**Discussion Question #2: What measures of school quality or student success should be included in the school accountability system?**

- **Feedback Forms:**

- Language should be a separate standard.
- What data will be collected and used for accountability to replace AMAO 1, 2, &3?
- Discipline #s, # of students, resource allotment, staff credentialing (HQ, Master’s Degree, etc.), # of students identified ESL/GT/SE Ed, # of students by sub-group in AP/IB/Honors classes.
- Not surveys – there is not a lot of validity in locally created elementary level student surveys.
- Social and Emotional.
- Demonstrations.
- Growth is important.
- Measuring the whole child.
- Using authentic assessment like TS GOLD.

- **General Discussion Notes:**

- There are many things you could measure but what are the consequences of these measures, such as school climate?
- Could the student survey be used for this purpose?
- Would performance based systems answer this question?
- More than just test scores, but it gets messy when talking about influence of extracurriculars, etc.
- Growth is important, not all children are on grade level but still need to make growth “whole child” is valuable, not just math and literacy.
- Other indicator: how do we create something that remains positive and doesn’t become a negative and becomes stigmatized? How does it continue to be something that...
- How can we measure the social emotional wellness of our students?



- How do we get deeper into college and career ready?
- Broaden accountability beyond test scores.
- Multiple measures for career and college ready.
- Do districts really have the capacity and knowledge to do this work? Can CDE support a tool to help support this – such as the use of the Gallup Staff and Student Engagement as well as the Well Being surveys?
- As a parent: having kids graduate and go to college and having those kids taking remedial classes is not something we want.
- On the flip side: additional college credit is a valuable thing, the classes were rigorous.
- Dual enrollment: additional offerings and giving students a head start in college or careers.
- Accountability/Accreditation: a great school provides a lot of different offerings.
- Performance is connected with test scores, it doesn't include what other school offerings are available.
- Elective offerings are not part of the accreditation systems, but should be included.
- Redesigning the accreditation and accountability that does not only include test scores.
- Use the IEP as an alternate type of assessment - accountability measure.
- How do we provide timely and relevant information to parents? The yearly assessments do not do that.
- Can we do sampling rather than test every kid every year?

**Discussion Question #3: How should the state consider the 95% assessment participation requirement?**

- **Feedback Forms:**
  - How do parents and community members view assessment and its value? Are we listening? Are we educating our community? Are we consistent or do we constantly change which causes confusion? Do we include our community in the process?
  - State Board of Education and Feds need to get on the same page!
  - Currently districts are in a no win scenario and have an alternative assessment program.
  - More on measures other than the big summative—such as i-Ready, STAR, NWEA, etc.
  - State testing should mirror the ESSA.
  - Considerations around time for make-up of tests.
  - Helping parents understand how assessments are used, the benefit, and purpose.
- **General Discussion Notes:**
  - Do schools have the appropriate technology to implement the assessments that are mandated?
  - Work this as an assessment throughout the year.
  - Parent education/information would be key to promoting student participation. What are parents' perceptions around assessments?
  - Question around how do tests compare from state to state?
  - Time for make-up of tests, helping parents understand the use, benefit, and purpose of assessments
  - Option to offer paper/pencil for parents to relieve anxiety and encourage participation but then adds an extra workload on district.
  - Time constraints for testing, teachers don't buy into system.



- Lag time of finding out results make tests not meaningful.
- Participation rates should not be put on district's back. Puts district in between feds and states.
- The genie is out of the bottle regarding opting out.
- How can we communicate the value and the impact on teaching and learning?
- The current "post-mortem" process.
- Consider time for make-up of tests – help parents understand the benefits and purpose for the assessments.
- High opt-out rate due to perceptions.
- Needs to be a credible and useful test to teachers, parents, and students.
- Poor participation rate. Teachers don't buy into the system – parents don't buy in. Kids are getting immediate information from other district assessments.
- If federal law requires 95% participation – state law should align with federal law.

**Discussion Question #4: Should school improvement funds be awarded as formula or competitive grants?**

- **Feedback Forms:**

- Formula - majority. Competitive - some \*Give buying/spending guiding/requirements. Often, new or novice principals lead these buildings and may have limited knowledge about sound purchases.
- Formula.

- **General Discussion Notes:**

- Small districts don't have grant writers.
- CDE should take into account rural v. metro.
- Consensus at table was formula!
- Consensus – Formula – small districts don't have the capacity to apply.
- Formula grants because competitive puts too much work/pressure on rurals, small rurals, etc.
- CDE should facilitate collaboration between smaller and larger districts.
- School improvement funding. Research and discussion about "do dollars really make a change?" Answer is that it depends on how they are used and if you are trying to turn schools around, you need the dollars. Does it make sense that there is a blended model – every school that gets money needs a very clear plan, the critical need, and has an accountability plan to identify if it worked, didn't work, what data was used?
- Concern about being competitive is the hoops that we have to jump through. The capacity for rural districts of small BOCES is onerous and difficult to get to the grant writing. Often we don't have the talent and/or people to write the grants.
- Formula for school improvement funds, small/rural districts don't have the resources for writing competitive grants.
- Most small/rural districts see what larger districts are doing when it comes to competitive grants and just ask if they can use what the larger district created.
- Can CDE help the rurals and small BOCES to create the grant but still provide accountability through a competitive process? Also can CDE have a bit of a hammer for rurals to ensure they are working with ed prep and BOCES supports that are required for these supports?



- Supports formula distribution – particularly small rural who don't have the capacity to write grants.

**Discussion Question #5: What supports and services can CDE provide that would be helpful to districts with schools on improvement?**

- **Feedback Forms:**
  - Time and Energy resources for teachers.
  - Collaboration, planning, PD, observing + modeling with peers, grading/scoring.
  - PD resources on sound practices, web-based.
  - Equal ≠ equitable resource for schools.
  - Connecting PD (matrix) offered by CDE to CAS standards and EE rubric.
  - Menu of services available from CDE.
- **General Discussion Notes:**
  - At teacher level, supports and services for schools on improvement. Need schedules where teachers have to do learning, teach, collaborate, observe, grade/score but not totally in front of students.
  - We need a menu of options for instructionally sound projects, PD, modeling etc. Need strategic leadership and support for building leadership.
  - CDE can provide core elements from Ed. Effectiveness rubric for support/services.
  - Got little training on UIP as building leader.
  - We keep asking teachers to do more but we don't give them any additional time and resources.

**Discussion Question #6: What is an appropriate length of time before more intensive interventions should be required for “consistently underperforming” schools/subgroups?**

- This question was added to the presentation after the Grand Junction event was held, therefore there is no feedback to report here.

**Other comments about standards, assessments, and accountability:**

- **Feedback Forms:**
  - School UIP drafters must get professional development to write viable plans – currently at the District level only in my district.
  - Requiring a drafting log for completion (dates/times/participants) of UIPs (still done by one or two folks in isolation).
  - Reduce the amount of testing time but increase the window. Faster data turnaround on results.
  - School finance: K-12 funding flexibility, PD, larger class sizes, S.F. effects all of these answers.
- **General Discussion:**
  - Will the SAT be the high school test? - It may be.
  - Will we receive more funding for requirements above and beyond ESSA? - No.
  - How well aligned with SAT is with CO standards? - Greater alignment with PSAT.
  - Is assessments/comparability up to the state or part of local control? - Right now, state. May change by ESSA.
  - Can we use another test listed in lieu of state test for 95% participation? - No.



- Does the state law still have the district accreditation rates? Will districts still have accreditation? - Still a requirement at the state level, haven't heard anything yet about changes but conversation may happen.
- Lowest 5%? School or district eligible for those funds? - Money goes to district for direct grant to school.
- Note: we spent most of the conversation in the afternoon on teacher qualifications/preparation topics.
- What support can CDE provide? State mandate, having CDE support consortium and help facilitate small districts and the creation of competitive grant writing.
- Parent: Start tests at the beginning of the year include it throughout the year and at the end include the writing piece so every student can take it and that would result in less problems with participation.
- Higher Ed: what data can be used to prepare teachers?
- Aligned public school to what higher is looking for: writing, how a student access learning/knowledge, and what other extra-curricular activities they are involved in.
- Programs need to be available for students with autism, they need life skills.
- Shortage of teachers, people believe that they will become teachers but won't be able to teach. All the data analysis has to do with this.
- Assessments for ELs? AMAO 1 or 2?
- Not seeing Title III money at school level.
- Electronic assessments as state law? 2200 parent requests for exemptions (2015). Huge amount of time to take assessments, swapping computers across the district.
- Creditability is hampering the buy-in.
- Online window became huge so parents thought that their students were testing for the whole month.
- Online actually increased the anxiety because the window is so large – go back to paper and pencil.
- ESSA assessment requirements should align with the state requirements.
- If state law could get to allow parents to opt out but shouldn't have to tell them they can opt out.
- Dollars in themselves don't create improvement. One page, 20 options – choose 2.
- Assessment participation is not a monkey that should be on the districts back.
- Districts and schools did poorly (NM) in order to have access to SI funds.
- Kid comes home and begs the parent to get out of taking the test. We have "Stars" tests where we get feedback immediately.
- Participation is imbedded in what we do.
- Additional measures we're looking at the subjective side.
- We need the data in a form so HE can know what you need in your new teachers. We need a consistent message. We want to be involved. What do districts need to keep teachers in the system?
- My daughter had to go way beyond SATs to get a scholarship to Barretts Honors College. I opted my child out of the assessment because it did not fit into her goals. The annual assessment is not meeting the "end" we desire.
- My son is autistic – he has life skills needs rather than measuring academic progress.
- Students are saying that they want to go into teaching but they won't be allowed to teach because of all the requirements.



- We are implementing an educator effectiveness can we get people to stay long enough on their measures of growth to demonstrate growth and improvement for the districts and schools so that we can use those data for reporting for grant development?
- How are students with special needs being factored into the decisions? Assessments? Standards?



## Quality Instruction & Leadership and Supports for Student Success

**Discussion Question #1: What supports should CDE provide to help teachers, schools, and districts provide effective instruction to students with specific learning needs?**

- **Feedback Forms:**
  - Time (more FTE) for professional development, peer collaboration, observations, planning, scoring, grading.
  - Requirements for professional development or credit learning specifically for special populations (SPED, ELL, Gifted/Talented).
  - Create High Flyer models/web-based chunks of learning; survey the district/staff to establish needs – get educator effectiveness data for needed support anonymously.
  - Create video and share them online with staff (gen-ed focus).
  - PD support for general education teachers.
  - Dual certification – or more coursework in SPED and ESL.
- **General Discussion Notes:**
  - 1 in 4 kids have specific learning needs. Teachers do not have the skills and resources necessary to support high needs kiddos (autism, etc.).
  - Provide general education teachers with professional development on special learning needs. The same for EL learners within general education content areas.
  - Currently the state test for math for teachers - why do teachers need to take a test if they will not use it in the school.
  - Rulemaking process: will align teacher test to Colorado academic standards.
  - How does ESSA influence alternative teacher assessment programs?
  - SPED.
  - Endorsement is 24 credit hours.
  - Criteria associated to charter schools.
  - Alternative licensure.
  - What states does Colorado have reciprocity with? - Reciprocity does not exist because you must meet the minimum standards. Evaluated regarding Colorado requirements not where you came from.
  - MOUs with other states. Post the question on the CDE website about reciprocity.
  - Have seen that highly qualified teacher is moving to PE because they are ineffective.
  - Given that 1 out of 4 students that have a diagnosed or undiagnosed special learning needs, CDE should provide more information about these students to general teachers.
  - Time needs to be built into the instructors schedules for meeting the needs of special subgroups of students. Professional development, etc.
  - Teachers are overwhelmed by rules, regulations and procedures and they just keep adding on and there is no extra time.

**Discussion Question #2: In addition to holding a license, should teachers be required to demonstrate competency in the subject area in which they teach?**

- **Feedback Forms:**
  - Adding endorsements also creates a financial burden for teachers and districts.



- Licensure 1st years demonstration, sharing/leadership.
- Exemplary categories should not all be lumped together for rating, but celebrated in chunks of accomplishment.
- Yes. Teachers/schools/districts should be able to have voice and choice in what proficiency looks like (Praxis); lesson delivery (similar to National Board).
- High School only; K-8 license; 7-12 license.
- No required endorsement or decreased number of credits.
- Yes, I'm licensed, but I am not necessarily competent if asked to teach Chemistry or Calculus—however, in elementary licensure implies competency to teach all subjects so getting an endorsement in each subject is out of the question.
- Yes- K, 1, 2- Teachers should have ECE endorsement or 24 credit hours.
- **General Discussion Notes:**
  - How does ESSA influence alternative licensure programs? - We'll need to identify.
  - Place test is offered so seldom it creates a huge problem (bottle neck) to getting folks tested.
  - Adding an endorsement piece rather than just 24 semester hours would create a huge problem.
  - Endorsements are a much larger burden than the general requirements of HQ.
  - Charter schools waiver of licensure. How will this impact the ESSA requirements? There are a lot of charter schools in the state so we need an answer to how this will impact us soon.
  - I'm an engineering major- knew all the math. Had to take undergraduate algebra courses because my transcript didn't have algebra. Use common sense – if you have an engineering degree you can probably do algebra.
  - Which states does Colorado have reciprocity with? Can we increase the number of states? - Reciprocity does not exist because you must meet the minimum standards. We evaluate you regarding Colorado requirements not where you came from.
  - Anything we can do to simplify teachers moving from one state to another would be greatly appreciated.
  - How can we fund recruitment efforts to make it easier to afford moving to Colorado? We have to get creative. We're hemorrhaging teachers out of this profession.
  - Competency is just a part of the picture – don't put too much emphasis on this.
  - Teachers should know one course well. Teacher prep programs have over emphasized the content and pedagogy has taken a bit of the back seat. We are working to build a better balance.
  - Need to look at rules/qualifications for hard-to-fill positions. Look at endorsements and equal qualifications.
  - Endorsement requirement for all teachers would be extremely difficult and some districts will lose teachers.
  - The place test for math (and praxis) we have teachers that are doing a good job that do not need to do place or praxis in order to get the job done. We then get into hiring unqualified teachers that have passed these tests.
  - Adding rules for hard to fill positions puts districts in a very difficult position.
  - Place test for math - we have middle schools teachers teaching math that do not need this test in order to teach math; other areas such as science, and special education.



- What constitutes and Highly Qualified CTE teacher? Define!
- Licensure; The nexus between licensure and competencies is a big issue.
- Will this require changes for charter schools – hiring practices?
- There is a tension between teacher qualifications and filling the jobs.
- Determining effectiveness of a teacher is a good sound bite but hard to implement.
- The license meets just the basic criteria. How do we measure/ensure quality?

**Discussion Question #3: How should CDE modify current EL Identification, Re-designation, and Exit guidance to meet the ESSA state plan requirements? What additional criteria should be considered?**

- **Feedback Forms:**
  - What will replace AMAO 1, 2, 3 for accountability? If AMAO moves to district versus ESL program, then how will the district be held accountable?
  - Home language survey and W-APT Placement test are already in place for entrance.
  - Exit criteria = 3 bodies of evidence: 1 reading, 1 writing, 1 ACCESS testing 5 (or close to) overall and literacy.
  - We already have this. CDE’s language and cultural office provided this formal document via email today. We also use W-APT and have used this the past 3 years. Why is this question being asked?
  - Definitely needs to include a body of evidence for both entrance and exit. Also need to address the Interrupted Formal Education situations.
  - Consider the research to learn a 2nd language (7+ years).
  - Consider if child is in bilingual program.
- **General Discussion Notes:**
  - Establishing entrance and exit criteria is misleading- criteria is already established.
  - Need to clarify the statewide entrance and exit criteria for English Language Learners.
  - Exit/entrance criteria for ELs? Statewide with documentation now, guiding question is misleading. Should not be “establishing”.
  - This is misleading as there is already a clear entrance and exit criteria for ELs so what is CDE looking for?

**Discussion Question #4: What does well-rounded and healthy students mean to you?**

- **Feedback Forms:**
  - Students who love to learn, who see learning as an asset, who are 21st century trained to be ready to succeed as citizens in our society.
  - Academically growing, socially-emotionally well, engaged and empowered stakeholders.
  - SEL.
  - Includes social and emotional skills, life skills, technology skills, higher-level thinking skills.
- **General Discussion Notes:**
  - No responses given

**Discussion Question #5: Should CDE reserve 3% of Title I, Part A funds for direct student services grants?**

- **Feedback Forms:**



- Yes. Grants allow schools/districts to specifically meet their needs, this allows support for LEAs to get supplemental support in specialty areas (WIDA LADDER grant).
- Yes.
- **General Discussion Notes:**
  - 3% - don't pull it out. It would be such a little amount that it doesn't make sense.
  - Small rural sites, 3% doesn't help site so don't pull.
  - It would be a mistake for the state to provide the direct student services.
  - The state should not withhold the additional 3%.

**Other comments about quality instruction & leadership and supports for student success:**

- **Feedback Forms:**
  - 4 years for ESL monitoring: does this mean formal monitoring or 4 years versus 2 years now OR does this mean after 4 years of exit monitoring from as ESL program, that students are no longer tracked as ELL on school data?
  - Offer endorsements as an incentive for teachers (= \$) from state.
- **General Discussion Notes:**
  - Where is accountability in Title III? - In Title I
  - Please revise slide to indicate that Title III is not going away or being absorbed in Title I, just accountability is under Title I.
  - ELPA continuing? - ELPA is state money so that is different.
  - Supplemental versus supplanting is not well-understood in the Title I world.
  - EL proficiency measure/accountability? - Measured by AMAO 1
  - What about reciprocity? - MOUs with states.
  - Licensure and recruitment sites, incentives? Lots of questions surrounding these aspects.
  - Expand on this section of the law, not very clear as to what this means.
  - Add something in the Title III slide that explains that this will not be absorbed into Title I. This can cause confusion in the field. Title III is not going away there is still money for Title III.
  - How will this impact students with disabilities and their families?
  - What does ESSA say about the 9th grade assessment?



# ESSA Listening Tour – Event Feedback

## How can we strengthen our process to involve parents, educators, and other stakeholders in developing our state plan for ESSA?

- You may want to present at the District Accountability Committee meetings. These groups are required to include community members.
- Perhaps offer a live video feed for those who can't physically attend the sessions.
- I think the current format is productive.
- This was a good first step in the process.
- This session was not parent friendly. I think there should be another layer for parents and community.
- Online opportunities would be most beneficial.
- Better understanding of the interplay between state law and federal mandates would be helpful, though it is understood that is not entirely possible at this time.
- Record the presentation so other groups can see it on different dates/times/locations.
- Advertise better to parents (i.e., newspaper, radio, tv).
- Better communication about dates and purpose of state plan for ESSA. Written in common language not educational jargon.

## What additional opportunities should we create for stakeholders to provide input?

- I would like to see opportunities for a more in-depth analysis by category such as licensing, endorsement, and highly qualified. The curriculum piece I could only speak to as a parent.
- Just continued updates on the progress.
- I think there should be another layer for parents and community.
- It would be helpful to have a follow up listening tour to hear about what CDE has gathered as input & compiled for the plan moving forward.
- Online surveys. Targeted invitations to superintendents.
- Allow questions responses to taped presentations.
- Online.
- Newsletters or threads to update us on where the process is and opportunities to comment during process.

## How do you plan to involve parents and other stakeholders in local ESSA planning decisions?

- Staff meetings, board meetings.
- Forward to them any information that I receive from CDE and other sources.

## What aspects of the ESSA Listening Tour session do you feel were particularly successful?

- The input from participants. Being able to talk in small groups, share out, and have the conversation expand with the whole group.



- Information about changes/comparisons from NCLB to ESSA, conversations from other people in the field about what works for them.
- The licensure piece.
- Access to employees at CDE to ask questions.
- The discussion portions.
- The open Q&A, high-level overview of changes from NCLB.
- Overall message.
- Location/time was good, presenters were knowledgeable.
- Information sharing and the fact that we feel we were really listened to.

### **What can CDE do to improve the ESSA Listening Tour?**

- Block the trainings according to subject matter.
- I would have liked more discussion about the possibility of sample testing for all PARC tests.
- We only received notice on Monday of that week - more lead time would be very helpful. I thought the mix of people available was helpful and well chosen.
- Just keep us informed, no improvements needed.
- Stop using Grand Junction as the guinea pigs. Assessment trainings, READ Act trainings, K. Readiness, and so much more are always held on this side of the state before CDE has figured out how to deliver the message. Consider providing follow up information to the earlier listeners.
- Potentially offer more locations.
- Rephrase the ESL entrance/exit question.
- Just keep doing them...throughout the entire process.
- I like that you offered the tour at two different times giving opportunity to choose which work best in our busy days.

