

COLORADO ESSA SUMMIT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

JANUARY 2017

Colorado ESSA Summit

Colorado's second statewide ESSA Summit took place on January 17, 2017 and brought together almost 200 educators from 39 school districts. The purpose of the ESSA Summit was to provide a meaningful opportunity to gather feedback from teachers, wellness specialists, school leaders, district leaders, and school board members to inform the development of Colorado's ESSA state plan. Districts were encouraged to bring a team comprised of these various roles. The event was hosted by six organizations: CASB, CASE, CEA, CBA, CEI, and PEBC.

ESSA Summit Event Structure and Data Collection

The event was designed to both capture feedback from the field, and to expeditiously develop an accessible summary of the feedback for key decision makers.

Following an overview of ESSA, participants attended breakout sessions focused on the following topics:

- Accountability: 'N' Size and Other Indicator
- Accountability: School Identification and Student Participation
- Assessment
- Effective Instruction and Leadership
- School Improvement

In each break-out session, stakeholders involved in the ESSA plan development process presented a brief summary of key decisions points. After discussing the decision points in small groups, each group captured feedback through an online survey platform. The online survey was designed to capture nuances from the small group discussions by providing an open text box after each question to document different perspectives that emerged regarding the decision points. After the event, the link to the online survey was emailed to attendees so they could provide additional comments or make the survey available to others who could not attend the summit.

Data Analysis and Reporting

Members of the Research and Impact team at CEI used the feedback submitted through the survey to create five separate summaries that synthesize quantitative and qualitative data on the key topic areas captured in the online survey. The visuals presented in the summaries represent the small group responses. The rates are calculated using the following method:

$$\frac{\text{number of small groups that selected each response option}}{\text{total number of small group survey submissions specific to the topic area}}$$

Most survey items allowed respondents to select all options, which is why rates do not total 100%. Individual responses submitted after the event were the same or similar to group responses and are reflected in the qualitative data.

Contact Information

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Overview and Participation

The information in the Effective Instruction and Leadership section of the Colorado ESSA Feedback Summary reflect perspectives regarding how to calculate teacher equity through defining what it means to be experienced and inexperienced; effective and ineffective; and in-field and out-of-field.

Nineteen surveys about the Effective Instruction and Leadership decision points were submitted by small groups during the break-out sessions. A few additional individuals took the opportunity to share feedback about the Effective Instruction and Leadership decision points although they did not attend the event. The summary provided after each question includes overarching themes and direct quotes that reflect the spectrum of responses provided by small groups and individual respondents.

Effective Instruction and Leadership

1. For the purposes of ensuring and reporting equitable access to teachers as required by ESSA, how should Colorado define the following:

Experienced/Inexperienced

There was a broad range of responses to how these terms should be defined. Most suggested that 0-2, or less than three years was an appropriate number of years to define “inexperienced”. Some preferred less than four years. Other comments and questions follow.

- 5 years equate experienced, because there is a body of research that suggests that it takes five years to begin to master the complexities of teaching.
- 0-2 years seems arbitrary, as does the requirement that the experience must be in teaching. Should also consider factors like instruction not in K-12, education background, other work experience.
- Some concern about connecting experienced/inexperienced to the effective and ineffective definitions.
- Wording of the definitions is confusing – need more clarity, especially when communicating with parents and schools.
- Questions about how these definitions will be used. For reporting? Recruiting?

Infield/Out of Field

Many responses on the submitted surveys suggested that infield should be defined as ‘licensed with credentials/endorsements.’ Others were concerned about teacher shortages and would like to see more flexibility. Additional comments and questions follow.

- Definition should not be tied to licensure – this hurts rural districts.
- Definition should be tied to subject-matter competency as opposed to licensure.
- Definition should consider whether teachers are working with students vs. not working with students.

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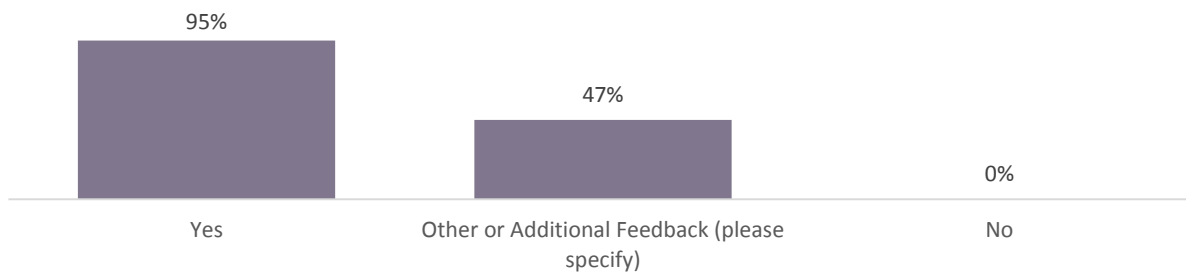
- Alternative licensure programs must be cost-effective and widely available across the state.
- Pay special attention to teachers who are double endorsed.
- Include definitions from higher education institutions.

Effective/Ineffective

The majority of respondents indicated that these definitions should be aligned to SB191. Other comments and questions follow.

- National Board Certified Teachers should also be reported as a subset of the effective category.
- Should lead with effectiveness – if a teacher is effective, experience and infield status does not matter.
- Effectiveness is measured in a variety of different ways, despite SB191.
- Please condense and streamline SB191.
- How would this impact schools who have a waiver on reporting teacher evaluation data?

2. Should CDE continue to include all schools when calculating equity?



The majority of submitted surveys indicated that all schools that receive public funds should be considered when calculating equity. Additional comments provided more context to the quantitative responses.

- Should also include private schools that receive vouchers.
- Disaggregate types of schools for reporting. Consider the rural context – schools with low student populations should not be compared to a large school in an urban area because demographics differ so greatly.
- Juvenile centers are not included.

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3. ESSA requires local education agencies to develop a plan for addressing any disproportionate rates if and when they are discovered. Currently, this plan requirement is met within the UIP. Should it remain in the UIP?



The majority of submitted surveys indicated that the UIP should be used. Additional feedback included:

- UIP process should include more stakeholder groups, not just administrators or limited leadership team.
- Some schools only have to report every other year; would this necessitate a yearly plan?
- How would mutual consent be affected by this?

4. What should the professional qualifications be for paraprofessionals?

Many respondents shared that the current requirements should remain (Associates of Arts (AA), 48 college credits, or passage of paraprofessional test), although some believe that LEAs should set the requirements. Additional context provided below.

- Candidates in rural districts may not have access to associates degree.
- There should be different qualifications for different roles: special education, preschool, instructional, safety/lunch. Also consider different pay rates for specialty paras.
- Rate of pay/access to training is important for equity.
- Need guideline about how much time students work with para's vs teacher of record.
- Paras should be required to take district professional development and receive a transcript for courses/trainings completed.
- Are paraprofessionals, who are often the least qualified, being used as interventions with the neediest kids? This is an equity issue.