



THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Title:	ESSA Update and Meaningful Differentiation	
As Related To:	<input type="checkbox"/> Goal One: Develop and support policies to close the achievement and opportunity gaps. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal Two: Develop comprehensive accountability, recognition, and supports for students, schools, and districts.	<input type="checkbox"/> Goal Three: Ensure that every student has the opportunity to meet career and college ready standards. <input type="checkbox"/> Goal Four: Provide effective oversight of the K-12 system. <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Relevant To Board Roles:	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy Leadership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> System Oversight <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Convening and Facilitating
Policy Considerations / Key Questions:	<p>Some key questions to consider in advance of the July meeting include the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How should the attainment of targets and goals factor into the identification of schools? • How should participation rates factor into the identification of schools? • How should the weighting of indicators be changed to reflect the additional measures required under the ESSA? • How might long-term goals be framed in the context of reducing achievement gaps? 	
Possible Board Action:	<input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Approve	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other
Materials Included in Packet:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Memo <input type="checkbox"/> Graphs / Graphics / Other <input type="checkbox"/> Third-Party Materials <input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint	
Synopsis:	<p>The Board will hear about the work of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Accountability System Workgroup (ASW) and about the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking posted by the U.S Department of Education in the Federal Register in May.</p> <p>The ESSA ASW has at least six major tasks to address to make accountability system recommendations to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). The ESSA ASW recommendations will involve changes to the school achievement Index and elements of meaningful differentiation that include long-term goals, new Index indicators, and new indicator weighting.</p> <p>At the time of the next SBE meeting in September, the work of the ASW could be nearing completion as the OSPI is anticipating or hoping for an early-mid fall submission of the state plan. The Board might choose to provide the ASW with a final version of guiding principles regarding the ESSA system of meaningful differentiation and your vision for the Index as framed by the key questions above.</p>	



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ANNUAL MEANINGFUL DIFFERENTIATION

Policy Considerations

RCW 28A.657.110 authorized the State Board of Education (SBE) to develop an achievement Index to identify schools for recognition, continuous improvement, and for additional state support. Section (4) further states that in coordination with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the SBE shall seek approval from the U.S. Department of Education (USED) for use of the Index to replace the No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress.

Summary and Key Questions

The Every Student Succeeds Act requires states to devise a system to meaningfully differentiate schools. Washington currently uses the Achievement Index (Index) to differentiate schools for state accountability. Per state law, it is anticipated that the OSPI will include the Index (with required modifications) in the ESSA-required state plan as a part of the state's system of school differentiation. The Board has an important role in ensuring that recommendations put forth by the Accountability System Workgroup (ASW) to the OSPI are aligned with the Board's vision for the Index.

The ESSA ASW discussed elements of school differentiation at each of the previous three ASW meetings but has not yet put forth a recommendation on the topic of annual meaningful school differentiation. The ASW is thoughtfully considering all aspects of meaningful differentiation which includes the role of long-term goals, indicator weighting, and the inclusion of new indicators in the Index. Again, the Board will want to help frame the ASW recommendations to the OSPI in a manner that is aligned with the Board's vision for the Index.

Since the May SBE meeting, the ESSA ASW met on three occasions. The agendas and meeting summaries can be accessed at <http://www.k12.wa.us/ESEA/ESSA/AccountabilitySystem/default.aspx>. By the time of the September SBE meeting, the work of the ESSA ASW will be nearing completion and preliminarily recommendations prepared for the OSPI. The Board may wish to provide the ASW with a final version of guiding principles regarding the ESSA implementation, the system of meaningful differentiation, and your vision for the Index.

Some key questions you may be thinking about in advance of the July meeting include the following.

1. How should the attainment of targets and goals factor into the identification of schools?
2. How should participation rates factor into the identification of schools?
3. How should the weighting of indicators be changed to reflect the additional measures required under the ESSA?
4. How might long-term goals be framed in the context of reducing achievement gaps?

Background and Other Information

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to implement provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act regarding accountability, data reporting, and consolidated state plans was made public through the Federal Register beginning on May 26th. A USED document summarizing the proposed regulations can be

accessed at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essaaccountabilitynprmsummary52016.pdf>. A summary of the proposed regulations forms Appendix A. On the important topic of accountability, the proposed regulations:

- Affirm that all students be held to college- and career-ready standards.
- Provide flexibility for states to incorporate new measures of school quality and student success into their accountability systems.
- Uphold the core expectation that states, districts, and schools work to improve the academic outcomes for all students, including individual subgroups of students.
- Asserts that while working with stakeholders, states, districts, and schools have new flexibility to choose interventions to turn around struggling schools and to intervene in schools where groups of students are consistently underperforming.

At the May meeting, the Board discussed some elements of the ESSA implementation and drafted a preliminary set of guiding principles for the ASW but did not adopt or vote on the document. The Board may wish to consider updating the preliminary document, attached at the end of this memo as Appendix B. To refresh your memory on the topic of meaningful differentiation, relevant excerpts from the ESSA and proposed regulations are included at the end of this memo as Appendix C. When the state plan required under the ESSA is approved, some RCWs and WACs may require updates or changes ranging from technical fixes to more substantial changes (Appendix D).

Discussion

Achievement Index

The Index currently uses achievement (proficiency) data from the statewide assessments (ELA, math, and science) and growth model data for non-high school differentiation, and achievement data, graduation data, and dual credit participation rates for high school differentiation (Table 1).

Table 1: Shows the current Index design with relative indicator weighing.

	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	Combined High School	Workgroup Status and Comments
Proficiency	40	40	48	32	Index currently uses ELA, math, and science assessments.
Growth	60	60		32	Index currently uses SGP, but inclusion of AGPs is anticipated as valid and reliable AGPs become available.
Graduation			48	32	Index currently uses the Extended (5-YR) Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) while the ESSA requires use of the On-Time (4-YR) ACGR at a minimum.
English Learner*					The English Learner Workgroup has not yet made a recommendation on measures to be derived from the ELPA 21.
Other Measure(s)*			4	4	The Index currently uses dual credit participation for high schools as another measure. The ASW has not yet made a recommendation on the measures.

*Note: Shaded cells indicate measures that are required by the ESSA but have not yet been included in the Index.

As required under the ESSA, the Index computes a rating for the school and for each student group for each of the indicators, and then computes a summative rating based on the combined measures following a predetermined weighting scheme. The current Index methodology meets most of the requirements included in the ESSA and the proposed regulations. Per state law, the Achievement Index and associated data elements are used to identify Title I and non-Title I schools for recognition, continuous improvement, and for additional state support.

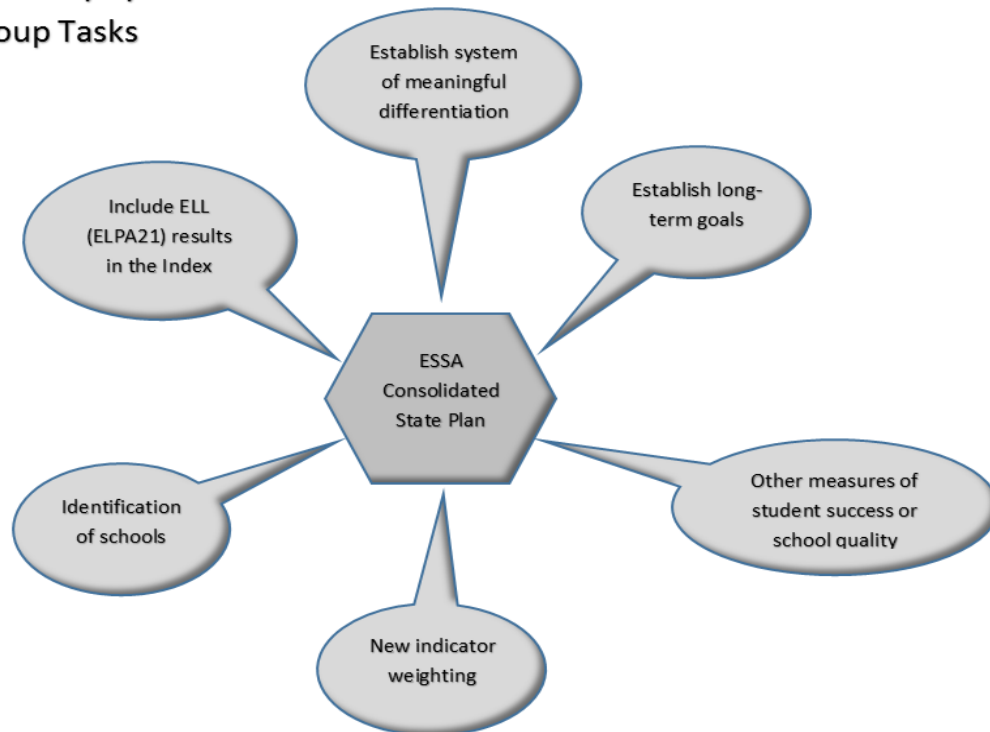
The ESSA requires that the state’s school rating system include at least one measure of English Learner progress in English language proficiency and at least one measure of student success and or school quality. The current Index design does not include the English Learner measure or the other measure of student success or school quality for non-high schools, so these elements need to be added to the Index. In addition, the indicators must be reweighted in a manner that is compatible with the ESSA and proposed regulations.

Meaningful Differentiation

The ESSA and proposed regulations clearly articulate that the meaningful differentiation of schools is undertaken for the purpose of identifying schools for recognition and support. The Index as currently designed and soon to be modified so as to include the additional required indicators would likely be approved by the USED for inclusion in Washington’s statewide accountability system. The ESSA ASW has been assigned to accomplish six overarching tasks and each is in some manner related to the system of meaningful differentiation (Figure 1). A seventh bullet included in the list below represents a task for the ASW but has not been emphasized as such in the presentations to the ASW thus far.

Figure 1: Shows the tasks of the ESSA Accountability System Workgroup.

**ESSA Accountability System
Workgroup Tasks**



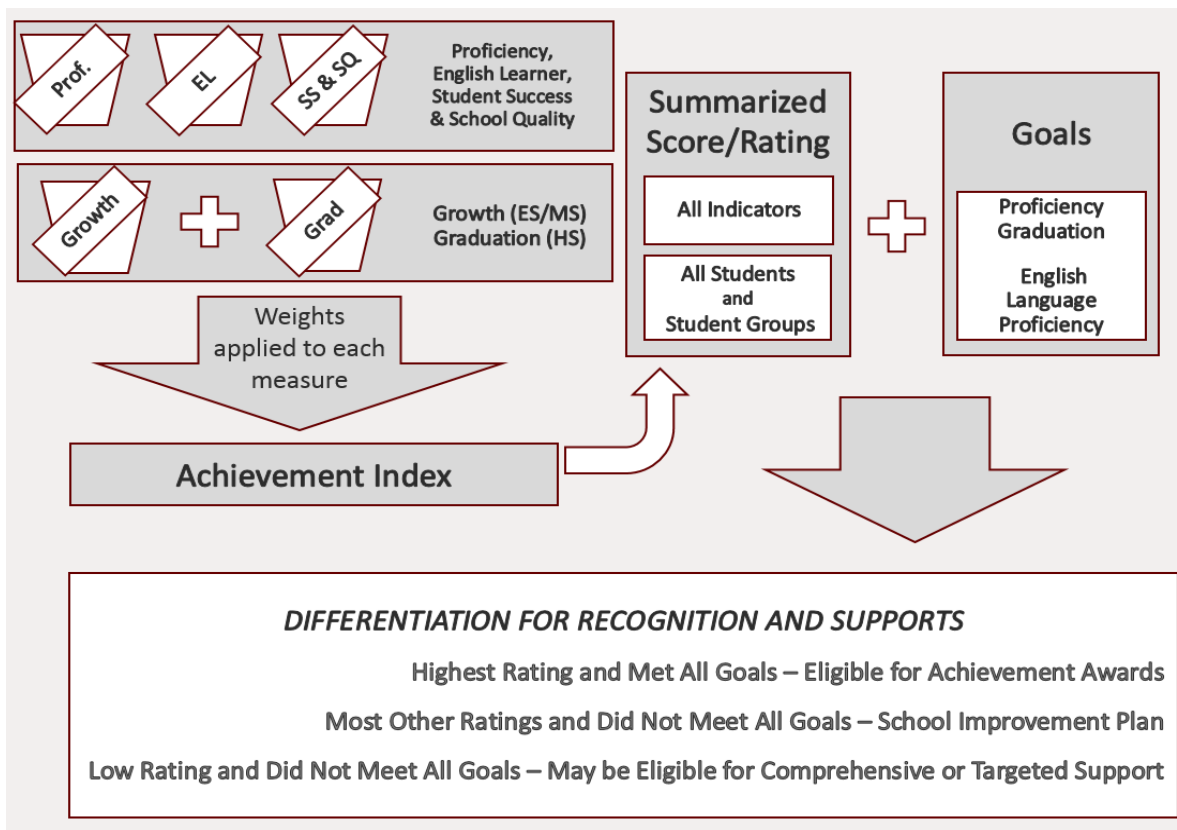
The broad tasks of the ESSA ASW shown in Figure 1 are described as follows.

- Establish measures of English Learner (EL) progress toward English language proficiency.
- Establish at least one measure of student success or school quality.
- Establish long-term goals for ELA and math (at a minimum) and high school graduation (4-Year Rate) for the school and student groups, and goals for EL language proficiency.
- Establish a weighting scheme for the required indicators.
- Establish a system to meaningfully differentiate schools through the use of a summative rating for the individual indicators and all indicators combined.
- Through the system of meaningful differentiation, identify schools for recognition and supports.
- Describe how (low) participation rates in the statewide assessments will factor into the accountability system.

The ESSA ASW has expressed some concern as to developing a clear picture of the connections and relationships between the accountability elements. Figure 2 is provided to visually show how the various elements are connected. The image shows that schools are identified for recognition or supports after summarizing the performance on the required indicators and comparing to the long-term goals.

The image is provided for illustrative purposes only and is not meant to imply that the ASW has made recommendations on the use of three levels of school classification. However, the three levels of school identification (eligible for recognition, improvement plan required, or eligible for targeted or comprehensive support) serve as a point to begin a discussion. Also, the image shows the computation of a summative school rating that is specified in the proposed regulations, but the idea of a summative rating is not entirely supported by all ASW members.

Figure 2: Shows how the Index, school ratings, and long-term goals factor into a possible system of meaningful differentiation.



Action

No Board action is required.

Please contact Andrew Parr at andrew.parr@k12.wa.us if you have questions regarding this memo.

Appendix A:

Summary of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for the ESSA

Statewide Accountability Systems

- The proposed regulations affirm that states **set their own ambitious goals, and measurements of interim progress**, for academic outcomes, while also ensuring that subgroups of students are making significant progress in closing gaps in statewide proficiency and graduation rates.
- The proposed regulations reinforce the statutory requirement that states have **robust, multi-measure, statewide accountability systems, while giving them the flexibility to choose new statewide indicators that create a more holistic view of student success.**
 - The proposed regulations include indicators of academic achievement, graduation rates (for high schools) or academic progress (for elementary and middle schools), and progress towards English language proficiency.
 - States would also have the opportunity to select new indicators of school quality or student success.
- The proposed regulations require states to assign a **comprehensive, summative rating** for each school to provide a clear picture of its overall standing. However, to ensure a nuanced picture of school success, states would also report a school’s performance on each indicator.
- To give states room to develop systems tailored to their individual needs, the proposed regulations **do not prescribe or suggest specific percentages for any of the indicators, or a range for weighting.** Rather, the proposed regulations include a variety of provisions to ensure that states are emphasizing the academic indicators that the law requires be afforded “substantial” weight individually and “much greater” weight in the aggregate.
- The proposed regulations **clarify that states choose their own indicators of school quality or student success.** Consistent with the law’s focus on equity, the proposal requires that states are able to compare subgroups of students on each measure. To maintain the focus on student learning, they also propose that the measures included within the indicators of Academic Progress and School Quality or Student Success be supported by research indicating that performance or progress on such measures are likely to increase student academic achievement or, at the high school level, graduation rates
- Recognizing the diversity of the English learner population, the proposed regulations ensure that states consider unique student characteristics, including students’ initial English language proficiency level, in setting goals, measurements of interim progress, and determining performance on the **indicator of progress in achieving English language proficiency.**
- States must factor into their accountability systems whether all schools have assessed at least 95 percent of all their students and 95 percent of each subgroup of students. The proposed regulations **do not prescribe how those rates must be factored into accountability systems**, but they do require states to take robust action for schools that do not meet the 95 percent participation requirement. **States may choose among options or propose their own equally rigorous strategy for addressing the low participation rate.** In addition, schools missing participation rates would need to develop a plan, approved by the district, to improve participation rates in the future.
- To ensure the statewide accountability system meaningfully **includes all students, especially historically underserved students**, the proposed regulations **ensure states consider each student subgroup separately.** A combined subgroup of students (super subgroup) cannot replace an individual subgroup.
- To ensure states hold all public schools accountable, the proposed regulations **ensure that states include all public charter schools in their accountability systems.**

- To provide states with flexibility to develop thoughtful accountability systems, the proposed regulations **allow states to update their accountability systems as they are able to include new measures within their indicators.**
- Under the proposed regulations, states must identify certain schools at least once every three years for **comprehensive support and improvement**, including:
 - the bottom 5% of Title I schools in the state;
 - high schools with graduation rates below 67% for all students based on the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate; and
 - Title I schools with chronically low-performing subgroups that have not improved after receiving additional targeted support.
- States must also identify schools for **targeted support and improvement**, including:
 - schools with a low-performing subgroup performing similarly to all students in the bottom 5% of Title I schools, identified each time the state identifies its schools for comprehensive support (these schools must be provided additional targeted support)
 - Title I schools with a consistently underperforming subgroup, as defined by the state, annually.
- The proposed regulations **provide suggested definitions of “consistently underperforming,” but allow states the flexibility to propose their own definitions** as long as they identify schools with subgroups that, based on the state’s indicators, underperform over two or more years.
- In place of prescriptive interventions required under No Child Left Behind, the proposed regulations **allow schools, districts, and states to select evidence-based strategies tailored to local needs.** They also would ensure that states set meaningful exit criteria so that schools implement additional actions where initial interventions do not work to improve student outcomes.
- In schools identified for comprehensive support or for additional targeted support, the proposed regulations would **require that their improvement plans review resource inequities**, including per-pupil expenditures and disproportionate access to ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers identified by the state and district, drawing on data already collected and reported under ESSA.
- Under the proposed regulations, **states must continue to direct funds set aside for school improvement** to schools most in need of support. Additionally, the proposed regulations reinforce the state’s key role in providing technical assistance, monitoring, and other support, including ongoing efforts to evaluate the use of these funds for evidence-based interventions to improve student outcomes.
- In order to provide time for an orderly transition to new ESSA accountability systems and to ensure there is not a gap in supports for students, the proposed regulations require that **all states identify schools for comprehensive and additional targeted support for the 2017-2018 school year**, with annual identification of schools with consistently underperforming subgroups for targeted support beginning in the 2018-2019 school year.

Data Reporting (Report Cards)

- The proposed regulations require states and districts to **consult with parents in designing the report cards**, and make them publicly available no later than December 31st each year. These report cards serve to inform parents and community members about how students and schools are doing in a timely way.
- The proposed regulations ensure that **report cards include a full set of accountability information** (including student assessment outcomes and graduation rates) in an easily

accessible manner, so that stakeholders can fully understand school performance and better participate in developing solutions that target the specific needs of schools and students.

- The proposed regulations clarify requirements for new provisions, **including how students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who earn alternate diplomas may be included in graduation rate calculations.**
- The proposed regulations ensure **more transparency for parents, educators and community members around resource equity measures**, such as access to preschool, access to rigorous coursework, and school discipline.
- The proposed regulations clarify that state and local **report cards must include specific information about district-and school-level per-pupil** expenditures calculated based on uniform, state-developed procedures, to ensure parents and educators have transparency into school funding.
- The proposed regulations **improve the quality of postsecondary enrollment data** included on report cards, so that stakeholders have greater insight into student preparation for programs of postsecondary education.

Consolidated State Plans

- The proposed regulations would **require broad, robust, transparent engagement with a diverse, representative group of stakeholders** at multiple points during the design, development, and implementation of a consolidated state plan. Stakeholders must include superintendents, educators, parents, community leaders, civil rights organizations, representatives of Indian tribes, and others.
- The proposed regulations reinforce the ESSA’s strong emphasis on **equitable access to resources for all students**, particularly those who are traditionally underrepresented (including foster children, homeless students, and English learners). States must put forward plans to ensure that states meet the needs of all learners, including providing access to a well-rounded education that incorporates rigorous coursework such as STEM, history, foreign languages, music, and computer science.
- To ensure that educators have the training and support they need to best support their students, the proposed regulations ask **states to describe their strategies to support and develop excellent educators**, including efforts to enhance and expand their systems of professional development, retention, and advancement.
- To build upon the administration’s Excellent Educators for All initiative, **“Educator Equity Plans” will be integrated into the consolidated application** to operationalize ESSA’s requirement that low-income and minority students in Title I schools not be taught at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers.

Appendix B

The ESSA Guiding Principles shown below was discussed at some length by the Board at the May SBE meeting, but no action was taken on the document. The text shown below was not finalized and many of the bulleted points were still being addressed. Bullet 2 is a good example, as the inclusion of an aspirational goal of 100 percent was discussed but was not agreed upon by the Board. The Bullet 2 text had not been edited to a point of agreement and remains in draft form. The draft version of the document is provided here to refresh the memories in the event further discussion occurs on this topic.

DRAFT – ESSA Guiding Principles – DRAFT

(From May 12-13, 2016)

1. Supports the establishment of long-term goals for schools and districts utilizing interim targets that instill a sense of urgency and ownership.
2. Is open to moving beyond the current end point goal of 100 percent attainment model by establishing long-term ambitious but attainable goals with an end point goal of less than 100 percent attainment, provided achievement gaps are reduced.
3. Believe that the achievement gap should be the central focus of the long-term goals for the purpose of reducing and ultimately eliminating achievement gaps.
4. Prefers that the long-term goals be simple, clear, and understandable to a broad audience.
5. Supports the exploration of indicators beyond those currently in use with careful consideration given to the additional resources associated with collecting new data.
6. Believes it is important to establish long-term goals that are meaningful to alternative schools and re-engagement schools in new and innovative ways.
7. Believes that the identification of and reporting on opportunity gaps is a crucial part of a statewide accountability system, and necessary for reducing achievement gaps.
8. Seize the opportunity to reimagine our measures for current English Language Learners to appropriately take into account their level of language acquisition.

Appendix C

Section 1111 (c)(4)(C) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires the state plan to include the following.

Establish a system of meaningfully differentiating, on an annual basis, all public schools in the State, which shall—

- (i) Be based on all indicators in the State’s accountability system under subparagraph (B), for all students and for each of subgroup of students, consistent with the requirements of such subparagraph;
- (ii) With respect to the indicators described in clauses (i) through (iv) of subparagraph (B) afford—
 - (I) substantial weight to each such indicator; and
 - (II) in the aggregate, much greater weight than is afforded to the indicator or indicators utilized by the State and described in subparagraph (B)(v), in the aggregate; and
- (iii) Include differentiation of any such school in which any subgroup of students is consistently underperforming, as determined by the State, based on all indicators under subparagraph (B) and the system established under this subparagraph.

Proposed regulations further clarify the annual meaningful differentiation as follows.

Each State must establish a system for meaningfully differentiating all public schools in the State each year. The system of annual meaningful differentiation must be based on all of the indicators in the State accountability system, for all students, and for each subgroup.

- Must include at least three levels of performance for schools on each indicator that are clear and understandable to the public, and set those performance levels in a way that is consistent with the school’s attainment of the State’s long-term goals and measurements.
- Provide information on each school’s level of performance on each indicator in the accountability system separately and is included as part of LEA report cards
- Result in a single rating from among at least three distinct rating categories for each school, based on a school’s level of performance on each indicator, to describe a school’s summative performance and include such a rating as part of the description of the State’s system for annual meaningful differentiation on LEA report
- Inform the State’s methodology to identify schools for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement described.

Appendix D

Passage of the ESSA requires the OSPI to submit a new statewide accountability plan to replace the accountability requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act and Adequate Yearly Progress. The draft regulations developed by the USED include the provision that SEAs may include new accountability elements in the statewide system as they become available and are shown to be valid and reliable. This is consistent with current practice that requires the SEA to periodically review the accountability system for changes not previously described in the Accountability Workbook.

After the USED approval of the Washington accountability plan, the OSPI is expected to update the Accountability Workbook per the approved plan. Once the plan is approved, RCW and WAC should be scrutinized for the updates needed to be compatible with the ESSA and approved plan. It is anticipated that a number of RCWs and WACs will need to be updated to varying degrees (Table D1). While it is prudent to anticipate the possible updates, taking action on rule changing should occur after the USED approves the state plan.

Table D1: Shows the RCW and WAC that may require updating pending approval of the state plan required under the ESSA.

RCW or WAC	Explanation of Possible Changes
WAC 180-105-020	Technical Change: Update school and district improvement goals to reflect new assessments, grades tested, and ESSA.
WAC 180-105-060	Technical Change: Update minimum graduation rate goal to 66.667 percent to reflect the ESSA
RCW 28A.655.140	Technical Change: Update reference in (2)(c) from Washington assessment of student learning to the “statewide assessments.”
RCW 28A.657.020	Identification criteria for PLAs and Challenged schools – may need updating pending description of statewide accountability in ESSA state plan.
RCW 28A.657.030-105	Required action – may need updating pending description of statewide accountability in ESSA state plan.
WAC 180-17-020	RAD dates – this is a good opportunity to change dates to reflect practice, but changes are not necessarily required.
WAC 180-17-100	Guiding Principles on accountability framework - To me, looks OK but might wish to update to reflect the new set of principles (if adopted).
WAC 392-501-715	Technical Change: update reference to priority and focus schools – section (4) does not reference Former ELLs
WAC 392-501-715	Technical Changes as above: February 1 date should be changed to reflect reality, eliminate reference to ‘writing’, grad rate minimum shows as 60 percent for extended rate but should be increased to at least 66.667 percent for on-time rate.
WAC 392-501-715	ID process for RADs - may need updating pending description of statewide accountability in ESSA state plan.