



## ESSA IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

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### ESSA Subcommittee Meeting – Schools and District Improvement

**Date, Time:** Wednesday, September 14, 2016, 1:30 p.m.

**Location:** 135 South Union Street, Suite 215

**ALSDE Facilitator:** Dr. Catherliene Williamson

**Members present:** Dr. Williamson, Nancy Beggs, Susan Kennedy, Terri Boman, and Senator Clyde Chambliss

**Members absent:** none

**Summary:** Julie Woods and Stephanie Aragon from the Education Commission of the States presented. Dr. Williamson lead discussion as the subcommittee discussed the following key decisions:

- 1a. The beginning of the fourth year that a school is identified as low performing, the school should go into intervention (takeover) status.
- 1b. Target Schools: How long will be a school be categorized as “targeted support” before the schools falls into the “comprehensive” school category?

**Next meeting:** Friday, October 7, 9 a.m., 135 South Union Street, Suite 215

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## Detailed Notes

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*All notes below are comments with committee members and the ALSDE facilitator.*

### **Julie Woods and Stephanie Aragon with the Education Commission of the States, Presentation**

- Changes in ESSA/NCLB
  - Evidence based – broadens the type of strategies to turn around schools
  - Not tied to a particular model
  - No grants or separate funding
- How will the state support districts?
- How will the school improvement strategies used affect parents, teachers, students?
- How is the state engaging stakeholders?
- What is the current state plan?
- What are other states doing?
  - Innovation Zones(turnaround)- IN,TN, and MA
  - Recovery Districts (takeover) -LA,TN,MI
  - Receiverships (takeover)-MA,PA, NY \*Lawrence County school district in MA

### **Subcommittee Discussion**

#### Key Decisions

1a. The beginning of the fourth year that a school is identified as low performing, the school should go into intervention (takeover) status.

- Committee members recommended that every school be placed on a continuum of support to ensure that schools receive support before being identified for takeover; also recommended that schools also be allowed to move along the continuum as they make progress.
- Supports should focus on building capacity within the district and school.
- Develop an evaluation where districts and schools are made aware of the exit criteria that includes:
  - Exit Criteria
  - Financial Evaluation
  - Opportunity Gap Audit (programs include AP, IB, Dual-Enrollment)
  - Curriculum Audit
    - Is the curriculum culturally appropriate?
  - Formative Assessments
    - Give schools/districts the autonomy to select which tools to use. If no progress is shown, schools lose autonomy and formative assessments will be a nonnegotiable.
- It was discussed that there will always be a bottom 5%. Failure should not be an option. Why not close the districts that are chronically underperforming? We need to encourage schools to be innovative, do things differently.



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*Key Decisions Continued...*

- It was discussed that there will always be a bottom 5%. Failure should not be an option. Why not close the districts that are chronically underperforming? We need to encourage schools to be innovative, do things differently.
- Look at the data from those districts that are implementing innovative practices.

1b. Target Schools: How long will be a school be categorized as “targeted support” before the schools falls into the “comprehensive” school category?

- It is recommended by the subcommittee that after a school has been identified for targeted support for two full years, upon beginning the third year, a school should fall into the comprehensive support category.
- Are there any qualitative pieces of data to support triggers? Case studies, focus group interviews with students/teachers/principals?
- Topics to think through as trigger:
  - Qualitative/quantitative factors and a time for entrance and exit criteria
  - Parental involvement: how to increase?
  - Tutoring: Is there a program? What is the participation rate? How to increase?
  - Night school as a means of extra academic support
  - Feeder pattern trends
  - Leadership, looking from the top down: Board members, superintendents and faculty of a failing system
    - Explore offering incentive pay
- Possible triggers for school identification:
  - Have you been identified in the bottom 5% for 3 years?
  - Are you currently in takeover?
  - Do you have an F in student achievement on the Report Card?
  - Case studies: interviews with principals, teachers, students, parents
  - Teacher turnover
  - Culture/climate
  - Attendance for both students and teachers

Next Steps:

- Identify the breakdown of schools per district by grade span to determine the criteria for identifying a takeover district
- Review the current failing school list
- Review the 3 Turnaround Models
- Side-by-side comparison of Alabama, Arizona, and Indiana- support of schools
- Determine triggers for entrance/exit criteria
- Recommendations concerning community engagement in schools

\*\*Committee members are responsible for presenting the bulleted items at the scheduled next meeting, Friday, October 7, 2016 at 9 a.m.

