



The New Jersey Department of Education Requests Public Comment on the *ESSA* State Plan

For Immediate Release

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Trenton, NJ – Following months of conversations with stakeholders from around the state, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) today announced the release of New Jersey's proposed *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* State Plan for public comment. The proposed *ESSA* State Plan describes how New Jersey will comply with the new federal law, and represents some elements of the broader accountability systems in the state.

ESSA replaces *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* and reauthorizes the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* of 1965. *ESSA* requires states to ensure that all students have equitable access to high-quality educational resources and opportunities, and that all schools are improving overall student performance and closing persistent achievement gaps. Under *ESSA*, some federal requirements remain in place, including the requirement for statewide standards and assessments. A key change is that *ESSA* allows for greater discretion in how states identify the schools that need the most significant supports and resources, and provides flexibility for how states and districts may support those schools.

"We appreciate the tremendous input parents, educators, students and broader community members from across the state provided us as we developed this proposed plan, and we want more of the public to join us in the conversation by providing their comments," said Acting Education Commissioner Kimberley Harrington. "The development process of the New Jersey *ESSA* State Plan gives us the opportunity to build off New Jersey's strong educational foundation and reflect on ways to better ensure that all students have access to the high-quality education that they deserve."

The NJDOE will accept public comments on the proposed New Jersey *ESSA* State Plan until March 20, and the NJDOE expects to submit the plan to the U.S. Department of Education by April 3, 2017.

A draft of the proposed New Jersey *ESSA* State Plan, videos outlining key elements of the plan, a survey tool for stakeholders to provide feedback, and many supporting *ESSA* resources are all available in the new [ESSA section](#) of the NJDOE website.