



The New Jersey Department of Education Submits Final ESSA State Plan

For Immediate Release

Contact: David Saenz

Date: April 3, 2017

609-292-1126

Trenton, NJ – After nearly a year of conducting conversations and meetings with stakeholders from across the state and receiving feedback from thousands of New Jersey educators, students, parents and broader community members, the New Jersey Department of Education submitted New Jersey's final *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* State Plan to the U.S. Department of Education. New Jersey's plan builds on the state's strong education system and ensures that students are prepared for their life experiences after high school.

To create an *ESSA* State Plan that was developed by New Jerseyans with the best interests of New Jersey students in mind, the Department received public input on all sections of the plan. In particular, the Department heard several requests to place greater weight on students' academic growth when the Department measures and reports on school and district performance. The Department agreed that looking at students' progress from year to year, regardless of their starting point, provides a clear and objective measure of how school systems are helping students.

"This is great day for New Jersey's students because this plan truly represents the state's collective vision for how to continually improve and support student learning," said Acting Education Commissioner Kimberley Harrington. "Based on feedback on the proposed plan, we will further emphasize student academic growth when looking at schoolwide performance. We will continue to engage with stakeholders as we work to implement the plan and ensure schools provide all of our students regardless of their race, economic status, disability or zip code, with the high-quality education they deserve."

The *ESSA* State Plan describes just part of New Jersey's education work. The Department is committed to improving all of its systems of support so schools that need the most help receive coordinated and targeted assistance. Feedback gathered from this process, along with future stakeholder engagement activities, will help the Department identify more ways to provide communities the information they need to work collaboratively at the school, district and state level.

The U.S. Department of Education has 120 days to review and notify the state whether the plan has been approved. The *ESSA* State Plan, along with other *ESSA* resources and information, are available in the [ESSA section](#) of the Department's website.