

STATE PLAN CONSIDERATIONS: TEACHER AND LEADER QUALITY

As research has shown, teachers and leaders are the most important school-based factors in ensuring student success. Under ESSA, states have a number of opportunities to continue to build an education workforce system to attract, prepare, develop and retain educators effective in advancing learning, especially for low-income students, minority students, English learners, students with disabilities and other learners who are members of groups persistently showing gaps in school performance.

The plan considerations below identify how an educator workforce system could be laid out and what a state must do or could do under ESSA within each category. This document is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all ESSA requirements pertaining to teacher and leader quality, but instead highlights the major new requirements under the law and opportunities provided.

Key Considerations in Teacher and Leader Quality

Build an education workforce system to attract, prepare, develop and retain educators effective in advancing learning.

ESSA Requirements

Each state MUST...

- Report out on the ineffective, out of field, and inexperienced teachers serving students to continue to address that high poverty, English learners and minority students are not disproportionately affected.
- Report out on the inexperienced principals and other school leaders serving students to continue to address that high poverty, English learners and minority students are not disproportionately affected.
- Determine how to use the 1% reserved administrative funds under Title II-A to carry out SEA responsibilities.
- Make a determination on reserving up to 5% of Title II-A funds for state activities (including administration).
- States must decide if they will reserve the optional 3 percent set-aside for strengthening school leadership activities for principals or other school leaders and, if so, how to use those funds.

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Opportunities for State Leadership

Each state COULD...

▪ **ATTRACT**

- Develop or assist LEAs in developing differential pay or other incentives to recruit and retain teachers in high-need academic subjects and teachers, principals, and other school leaders in low-income schools and districts
- Help LEAs attract qualified people from other fields to teach and lead schools, including providing support as they continue to learn.
- Help LEAs attract underrepresented groups to the education workforce, including providing support.
- Help LEAs recruit and prepare candidates—those with BA or Master’s degrees; paraprofessionals working in district; military personnel, mid-career changers.

▪ **PREPARE**

- Support reform in educator preparation to allow for more time for candidates to learn in schools (e.g. year-long residencies); revise licensure systems to be based on performance, set higher preparation program approval standards, incentivize partnerships between districts and preparation programs, develop performance assessments of teacher and leader candidates, establish data systems.
- Develop or expand alternative routes for high needs areas such as students with disabilities, English learners, and science, technology, engineering and math or other shortage areas.
- Use state set-aside to collaborate with other states on workforce initiatives like a voluntary, portable teaching license.
- Establish Teacher and Leader Academies (no more than 2% of total state allocation) to prepare candidates for high-needs schools with a year-long residency. May partner with other states on such academy.
- Apply for the competitive Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grants to revise licensure standards to require literacy instruction for all K12 educators and engage pre-service preparation to provide evidence-based literacy methods.

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Opportunities for State Leadership

Each state COULD...

▪ **DEVELOP**

- Invest in teacher and leader evaluation systems; use Title II and competitive grant opportunities to refine and revise these systems to support continuous improvement of instructional practice.
- Provide training for principals, other school leaders, coaches, mentors, and evaluators on how to accurately differentiate performance, provide useful and timely feedback, and use evaluation results to inform decision-making.
- Implement new teacher, principal, and other school leader induction and mentoring programs.
- Develop or provide assistance to LEAs on delivery of high-quality professional development for teachers, principals, and other school leaders, with specific attention to topics identified in ESSA such as child sexual abuse, integrating technology into instruction, blended learning, STEM, CTE, understanding of student data and privacy, better support for students with disabilities and English learners.
- Develop or assist LEAs in developing strategies that provide teachers, principals, and other school leaders with the skills, credentials, or certifications necessary to educate students in postsecondary education coursework such as early college and dual enrollment.
- Provide training and support for teacher leaders and principals or other school leaders who are recruited as part of instructional leadership teams.
- Apply for the competitive Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grants for comprehensive literacy instruction to train and support literacy coaches and support K12 teacher and leader development in teaching literacy.

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Continued.

Opportunities for State Leadership

Each state COULD...

- Apply for STEM Master Teacher Corps grant to elevate the status of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics teaching profession. The funds can be used to select candidates and offer opportunities to work in scholarly communities or for professional development, and for higher compensation, particularly in high need and rural schools.
- Apply for a Supporting Effective Educator Development competitive grant to provide pathways for teachers, principals, and other school leaders from nontraditional preparation programs to underserved local educational agencies;

▪ **RETAIN**

- Develop or assisting LEAs in developing career opportunities and advancement initiatives that promote professional growth and emphasize multiple career paths, such as instructional coaching and mentoring (hybrid roles that allow teachers to remain in the classroom), school leadership, and involvement with school improvement and support.
- Apply for Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program (competitive grant) to develop, implement, improve, or expand either a comprehensive performance-based compensation system or talent management system for teachers, principals, or other school leaders in high-need schools who raise student academic achievement and close the gap between high and low-performing students. Funds can be used for teacher and leader evaluation and support as part of either system.

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- How will you ensure that Teacher and Leader Quality investments made with ESSA funds address the needs of specific groups of students—low income, minority, English learners, and students with disabilities?
- Is your talent management system attracting candidates for the positions available?
- Are teacher candidates learner-ready day one? Are leader candidates school-ready on day one?
- Is your talent management system developing all teachers and leaders throughout their career?
- Is your talent management system retaining the most effective teachers and leaders?