



MEXICO ACADEMY & CENTRAL SCHOOL

Inspiring Excellence and Leadership in All!

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CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

The US Department of Education approved New York's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan in January 2018. In developing the plan, the New York State Education Department engaged diverse groups of stakeholders to solicit recommendations on how to craft an ESSA plan that best meets the needs of the students, schools, and communities in New York State. The plan emphasizes fostering equity in education for all students and expands measures for school accountability and student success. If you would like to learn more about Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), visit <http://www.nysed.gov/essa>.

As part of this accountability process, our District is one of many school districts that have been recently designated as a Targeted District (TD) under ESSA. The reason for that designation is related to lack of overall student growth and performance of some specific subgroups of students.

As part of these designations, we are part of a review process with the New York State Education Department to help identify strengths and weaknesses of our current programs. This is a continuous improvement process that will continue until the appropriate levels of growth are achieved. We will be actively working with the NYS Education Department to create a strategic plan to address the academic performance of our students. In February, the district sent out a comprehensive culture and climate survey to families, staff, and students that identified strengths and areas in need of growth. Analysis of this data will assist us in creating our plan and provide us with meaningful feedback that will be very valuable as we seek to improve our instructional programs on behalf of our students.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the accountability of the District, please contact our Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Colleen Root, at croot@mexicocsd.org.

Sincerely,

Dr. Donna Runner
Superintendent

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Things every parent should know about New York State's plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act



What is ESSA?

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is a law that outlines how states can use federal money to support public schools. In January 2018, the federal government approved New York State's plan to spend the approximately \$1.6 billion the state receives annually under ESSA.

Why does it matter?

New York State is committed to ensuring that all students succeed and thrive in school no matter who they are, where they live, where they go to school, or where they come from. Since fall 2016, New York State asked for feedback to design a plan that improves equity, access, and opportunity for *all* students.

What do parents need to know?

Below are highlights of important elements for parents and families in the plan. We encourage you to visit [the ESSA Section of NYSED's website](#) to learn more about the plan.

1

New York State values a well-rounded education for all.

Parents and families should know how their child's school is performing in many areas, not just academic subjects.

Schools and districts will be measured annually on these indicators

Future indicators

For all schools

For high schools

- English language arts
- Math
- Science
- Progress in learning English (for those who are learning English as an additional language)
- Chronic absenteeism (absent 10% or more instructional days)

- Social studies
- Graduation rate
- College, career, and civic readiness index: taking advanced coursework, earning technical education certificates, etc.

- Out-of-school suspensions (beginning with 2018-19 results)
- Being ready for high school (once data becomes available)

2

New York State wants to reduce testing time and improve the testing experience.



State tests in grades 3-8 English and math will be reduced from three to two days each.

95%

The law requires that 95% of students in each tested subgroup take the appropriate state tests. New York State will work with parents, schools, and districts to increase participation.



New York State will continue to translate state math and science tests into more languages, and when funding becomes available, will create a language arts tests in students' native languages.

3

New York State will help teachers and school leaders be ready for success and ensure that all students have access to an excellent educator.



The state will look at changes in how teachers and leaders are prepared to make sure they are ready on day one.



New York State has many excellent teachers. We will ensure that all schools have the ability to attract and keep them.

4

New York State is piloting a process to ask parents for additional help when their child's school is identified for improvement.



If your child's school is identified as low-performing ...



... then it will have to ask parents, teachers, and students how they think the school can do better ...



... and you will be able to participate in deciding how your school spends part of the federal money it receives to improve.

5

New York State will provide parents with a more complete picture of their child's school.



New public reports will show information on student test scores, graduation rates, and other outcomes for schools, districts, and the state, consistent with privacy laws.



The reports also will give information on things parents care deeply about, such as class size or opportunities for students to participate in the arts.



Parents will know how much each school is spending per student through the new reports.



The New York State Education Department will use the information in these reports to help districts adjust spending or come up with new ways to meet students' needs.