
ESSA -- Why are we wasting the opportunity of the Every Student Succeeds Act by continuing to marginalize student/learning supports?

From UCLA Center

ESSA Plans Continue to Give Short Shrift to Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching

Need more evidence about how marginalized efforts to significantly improve student and learning supports continues to be in school improvement policy and practice?

See today's "analyses" presented in *Education Week* of the state plans related to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) – http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2017/04/a_look_at_which_states_have_tu.html

Then, use our Center's earlier analysis of ESSA for an appreciation of how the legislation and plans continue the piecemeal approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students and families. See "ESSA, Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to Learning" – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanal.pdf>

As we continue to analyze state plans, we find:

- They clearly recognize (especially in the goals and the nonacademic accountability indicators) that barriers to learning need to be addressed so that many more students will be able to meet challenging state academic standards.

At the same time,

- They continue to address such barriers in a piecemeal and mostly indirect manner.

As a result,

- They present a fragmented plan that lacks coherence with respect to essential student and learning supports.

Student and learning supports need to be unified and developed into comprehensive system if they are to significantly enhance equity of opportunity as an essential component in enabling every student to succeed.

If states and LEAs are to move away from existing fragmented and marginalized approaches for dealing with factors interfering with student success, they will need to use the transition to local control as a time to plan beyond the limitations of federal formulations.

As our analysis underscores, attention to *transforming HOW* schools can improve efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. With this in mind, the Center report also highlights frameworks and prototypes that can be used as planning aids and guides in developing a unified, comprehensive, equitable, and systemic approach for transforming student/learning supports.