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## US Dept. of Education's streamlined ESSA planning template

### Just released: the U.S. Department of Education's "streamlined consolidated state plan template"

With the ESSA planning template's release this week, the Department indicates that "an SEA may either submit a consolidated State plan using the revised consolidated State plan template or an alternative template that addresses each requirement in the revised template...."

[https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-secretary-education-betsy-devos-announces-release-updated-essa-consolidated-state-plan-template?utm\\_content=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_name=&utm\\_source=govdelivery&utm\\_term=](https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-secretary-education-betsy-devos-announces-release-updated-essa-consolidated-state-plan-template?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=)

The Department states that "The updated template ensures greater flexibility for state and local education leaders to do what they know is best for children, while also maintaining important protections for economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English learners."

Doing what's best for children, of course, means making *innovative improvements* so that the move to the Every Student Succeeds Act effectively enhances equity of opportunity for all students to succeed at school and beyond.

Our analysis of ESSA took this approach, and given the indicated enhanced planning flexibility, it can help in reworking state and district plans.

See

### ***ESSA, Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to Learning\****

**An analysis of how the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) focuses on addressing barriers to learning and re-engaging disconnected students – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanal.pdf>**

### Among the Conclusions

- The legislation clearly underscores 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, the act addresses such barriers in a piecemeal and mostly indirect manner.
- As a result, ESSA conveys a fragmented picture and a lack of 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.

## Thinking Out of the Box

The analysis indicates the imperative for transformative system change. From this perspective, the 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 addressing barriers to learning and re-engaging disconnected students.

\*This report is from the national Center for MH in Schools in the Dept. of Psychology at UCLA. The center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor. Website: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/> Send comments to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

For information on the *National Initiative to Transform Student and Learning Supports*, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

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**Please forward this to a few colleagues you think might be interested.**

**For those who have been forwarded this and want to be part of ongoing exchanges,  
send an email to [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu) .**

**Looking forward to hearing from you.**  
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