



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: June 18, 2025
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: ESEA Directors, LEA and School Administrators, Staff Involved with the Coordination of ESEA Programs
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services

United States Department of Education Approves the New Jersey Every Student Succeeds Act State Plan

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is pleased to announce the approval of the updated and revised Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan by the United States Department of Education (USDE). The New Jersey ESSA State Plan outlines the state's strategy for leveraging federal programs to ensure that all students receive a high-quality education and to identify and support schools in need of improvement. Initially approved in 2017, the plan was revised and resubmitted in December 2024. The updated version is now in effect and available on the [NJDOE's website](#), along with additional resources.

ESSA State Plan At-A-Glance

Consistent with ESSA, New Jersey evaluates school performance using multiple indicators: student proficiency and growth in English Language Arts and Math, graduation rates, progress of Multilingual learners achieving English language proficiency, and chronic absenteeism. Schools are identified for comprehensive and targeted support based on these indicators. The plan sets ambitious goals to raise academic achievement and graduation rates over time, with a strong focus on closing achievement gaps, supporting local needs, and maintaining transparency through regular updates and public reporting.

ESSA, the 2015 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), requires states to outline how they meet the law's provisions. New Jersey's Consolidated ESSA State Plan details how the state uses federal ESSA funds consistent with the law's requirements, including Title I for high-poverty schools, Title II for educator development, Title III for multilingual learners, and Title IV to improve school climate, reduce chronic absenteeism, and support the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports (NJTSS).

Meaningful Consultation and Continuous Improvement

New Jersey's ESSA plan reflects the NJDOE's ongoing efforts to strengthen the state's education system and ensure that every student has access to a high-quality education. Throughout 2023 and 2024, the NJDOE collaborated with internal teams, researchers, and stakeholders to review and revise the original 2017 ESSA State Plan. This process involved analyzing the written input received during the NJDOE's public comment period and convening an ESSA Stakeholder Working Group—

representing over 50 New Jersey organizations—which provided feedback on proposed updates. Summaries of the meetings and public input are available in the appendix.

The 2024 updates result from this engagement and reflect the NJDOE’s commitment to ongoing improvement. By implementing thoughtful, incremental changes, the NJDOE aims to continuously enhance the support system for schools, educators, and students.

Additional Information

The most recent version of the plan, now approved by USDE, is available on the [NJDOE’s website](#), along with summaries of updates to long-term goals and annual targets. Please reach out to ESSA@doe.nj.gov with questions.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group