



The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was a bill approved by Congress in December 2015 to grant states more flexibility for strategic, customized plans for education.

[The Every Student Succeeds Act](#) replaces No Child Left Behind (NCLB). ESSA encourages states and schools to innovate, while at the same time maintaining a focus on accountability, an emphasis on state and local systems of improvement, and a more balanced assessment system.

ESSA establishes a framework for preparing [Alabama's](#) students for life beyond K-12, whether that is attending college or pursuing a career. A prepared graduate should have the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in college, technical, or trade schools, or enter directly into the workplace without having to take remedial courses.

ESSA will help guide and improve the educational landscape in [Alabama](#) and reflects many of our state's educational priorities including:

- Ensuring students graduate high school ready for college and the workplace
- Reducing gaps among student groups in achievement, opportunity, and graduation
- Supporting and improving struggling schools
- Expanding access to high-quality early learning opportunities for our youngest learners
- Keeping the focus on high-quality classroom instruction through professional development and meaningful feedback for educators

A [Task Force](#) was established by the Governor to determine how Alabama can put in place a more equitable educational system. The Task Force, which is comprised of educators, lawmakers, school board members and parent advocates, is currently meeting and seeking recommendations on how the state should:

- Hold local school systems accountable for improvement
- Improve teacher effectiveness
- Determine when the State Department of Education should intervene on behalf of failing systems, among other topics.

The committee work will continue throughout 2016, culminating with a final recommendation made to the Governor, followed by a vote by the Alabama State Board of Education.

