NBCDI thanks the Walmart Foundation for their generous support of the Parent Engagement Initiative
# NBCDI Parent Power #

**PARENT POWER BOOTCAMP**

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#NBCDIParentPower

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PARENT POWER BOOTCAMP
U.S. Department of Education
Wednesday, May 18, 2016
9:30 AM – 2:30 PM

AGENDA

9:30 AM – 10:30 AM  Registration and Breakfast
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM  Welcome and Opening Remarks
10:45 AM – 10:55 AM  Overview of Agenda
10:55 AM – 11:10 AM  "The Haves and Have Nots" Framing Funding Equity
11:10 AM – 11:25 AM  Social Media Engagement and Transition
11:25 AM – 1:30 PM  Breakouts and Lunch (Auditorium and Library)
  • 11:25 AM – 11:55 AM  Session I
  • 12:05 PM – 12:50 PM  Session II and Lunch
  • 1:00 PM – 1:30 PM  Session III
1:30 PM – 1:40 PM  Return to Auditorium
1:40 PM – 2:10 PM  Guided Action-Planning and Reflections
2:10 PM – 2:30 PM  Call to Action and Closing Activities

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**PARENT POWER BOOTCAMP**

**DETAILED SESSION INFORMATION**

**“The Haves and Have Nots” Framing Funding Equity**
Facilitated by **David Johns**, Executive Director
*The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans*

**“This Is NOT a Test!”**
Facilitated by **Lynn Jennings**, Director of Field
*The Education Trust*
- Assessments
- Public Reporting
- Standards
- Teachers and School Leaders

**“Follow the Money”**
Facilitated by **Liz King**, Senior Policy Analyst and Director of Education Policy; **Josh Porter**, Policy Analyst; and **Jheanelle Wilkins**, Senior Field Manager
*The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights*
- Title I
- Funding Resources

**“What’s Being Taught and Who’s Teaching It?”**
Facilitated by **Janel George**, Senior Education Policy Counsel
*NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund*
Co-facilitated by **Lorraine Wright** and **Kandise Lucas**, Parent Advocates
- Accountability
- Family Engagement and Advocacy

#NBCDIParentPower
Introduction

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the latest reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which was last reauthorized in 2002 as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Since its inception, the intent of the law has been to raise achievement for low-income and otherwise disadvantaged children. The civil rights community has long recognized equitable educational opportunity as central to our struggle to achieve equity for all Americans. Without the robust and thoughtful implementation of ESSA over the next decade, we will miss an important opportunity with the students we represent will continue to be denied the full protections they need and are entitled to under federal law.

Whether African-American, Latino, Asian American, Native American students, students with disabilities, those who speak English as a second language, or those from low-income families—the challenges are different than they were in the 1960s, but the stakes are just as high. This law, and its implementation, creates new opportunity for advocates to fight for educational equity and equal opportunity for all students.

Accountability

Accountability systems* are a set of policies that states use to measure how schools are performing and to identify schools that need support and improvement when all students or groups of students are behind or are not making academic progress. These types of systems are especially important to the civil rights community. Without meaningful accountability, students can continue to fall behind without any changes made in the school to meet their needs. Under ESSA, states must set goals every year to increase the performance of students in reading and math and to raise high school graduation rates. These goals have to be set for all students, as well as students from major racial/ethnic groups, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and low-income students. After setting goals, each state must rate schools based on how they perform on the goals for all students, including a breakdown for each group of students based on race and ethnicity, disability, native language, and socioeconomic status. The school's rating must indicate if a group of students in a school is consistently underperforming, which will trigger that school for targeted support and improvement. (Please see below.)

These systems of school ratings must include multiple factors (or “indicators”) at the school level, such as graduation rates, English Language Proficiency, indicators of school quality, etc. These indicators are used to indicate how well schools are doing overall and for all groups of students. The ratings system design must ensure individual groups of students matter in the ratings given to schools.

Under ESSA, there are two categories of schools that must receive support and improvement:

*See glossary for definitions of bolded terms.
• **Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools**: This category includes the lowest performing 5 percent of Title I schools and all high schools with graduation rates below 67 percent ("dropout factories"). For schools in this group, districts must develop improvement plans, which may include a review of the school and district budgets.

• **Targeted Support and Improvement Schools**: This category includes schools with a "consistently underperforming" group of students. These schools must develop improvement plans which must be approved by the district. These schools must put together district-approved improvement plans, but these improvement plans also have to address resource inequities. States must set levels of performance for these schools that schools have to reach to exit this category. If a school is unable to exit in a state-determined number of years, they are added to the Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools category.

**Academic Standards**

One way to ensure high-quality education is through creating challenging academic standards for education. Academic standards set clear, consistent goals for what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade. Under ESSA, states must demonstrate that they have adopted challenging academic standards for all public school students in math, reading/language arts, and science. These standards must be aligned with entrance requirements for credit-bearing coursework in the state’s public universities and the state's career and technical education standards.

States can use alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. However, the standards must promote access to the general education curriculum and be aligned to ensure readiness for postsecondary education or employment. States must also show that they’ve adopted standards for English-language proficiency that are aligned with the state’s academic standards for English Learners.

**Assessments**

Statewide annual assessment, as required under ESSA, provides valuable data about how much students know and are able to do. In order to measure student progress toward meeting the grade level standards, states must test all students in reading/language arts and math every year from third through eighth grade and once in high school. They must also test students in science once between grades three and five, once between grades six and nine, and once again between 10 and 12.

Every year, states also have to measure English Learners’ progress toward English-language proficiency on statewide assessments. In their first year in U.S. schools, states may choose to excuse English learners from taking the reading/language arts assessment. Starting in their second year in U.S. schools, all English learners have to participate in all statewide annual assessments.

Almost all students with disabilities must take the general assessment and there is a 1 percent cap on the percent of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who can be given...
the alternate assessment aligned to alternate achievement standards. In order to ensure the performance of all students is taken into account, the law requires states to ensure the participation of 95 percent of all students, and all groups of students, in the assessment.

**Reporting**

Access to data is an important advocacy tool to advance educational equity and it’s essential for the public to identify areas where schools or districts need to improve. ESSA requires states and districts to publish annual report cards with information about the state as a whole and all districts and schools within the state. Most of this information must be broken down by student characteristics including major racial and ethnic groups, family income, disability status and language status. Some data must also be disaggregated by gender, foster care status, homeless status, military connected status and migrant status. This information must be made available in a language that parents can understand.

The data that must be reported includes:

- Details of the state accountability system, including which schools were identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement and Targeted Support and Improvement;
- Results on all accountability indicators (such as student achievement and high school graduation); and
- Important opportunity measures (including AP/IB/dual enrollment, suspension and expulsion, chronic absenteeism, educator qualifications, and per-pupil expenditures).

**Parental Engagement and Consultation**

Parent and family engagement and consultation have been key components of the law since it was first passed in 1965, although these requirements haven’t always or even usually, been meaningfully implemented or enforced. The new law creates a new opportunity to make these provisions meaningful and use them as leverage to influence how the law is implemented and the way children are educated.

School districts are required to “set aside” at least one percent of their Title I* funds to carry out parent and community engagement activities. Parents and family members of low-income students must be included in decisions regarding how these funds are spent. There is also a new grant program in ESSA for statewide organizations to establish family engagement centers.

In addition to funding for regular engagement, there are also provisions which require consultation with parents and other stakeholders when states or districts are making decisions. These requirements apply to the development of: state and district plans, state report cards, school support and improvement plans and the use of Title I funds. Consultation requirements create the most obvious entry point for advocates seeking to influence planning in their state, district and school. Even when consultation is not explicitly required, advocates should continue to press for a focus on equity whenever decisions are made.

*See glossary for definitions of bolded terms.
The National Black Child Development Institute has been improving & advancing the quality of life for Black children & families for 46 years. Learn more at www.NBCDI.org.

- Challenge early learning systems to eliminate suspensions and expulsions in early childhood education and provide appropriate support for teachers responding to the needs of children.

- Challenge early learning centers and elementary schools to provide comprehensive, aligned wrap-around supports as a core service.

- Challenge school districts to better equip educators to meaningfully partner with parents and humanely engage and effectively educate Black children of diverse backgrounds.

- Challenge parents and caregivers to engage in daily brain development activities and healthy practices that support social-emotional and cognitive development.

- Challenge all adults in the Black community to invest their energy and talents in public education spaces to ensure the success of every Black child.
Additional ESSA Resources
On Dec. 10, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into law. ESSA is the most recent version of the federal government’s biggest K-12 law, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which came into effect in 1965.

ESSA contains a number of meaningful levers that education leaders, parents, members of the business and civil rights communities, and advocates can use to advance education equity. These levers, covered in detail on the following pages, include:

- Consistent, state-adopted standards for all students that are aligned with the demands of postsecondary education and work;
- Statewide annual assessments aligned with statewide standards;
- Clear requirements that statewide accountability systems must expect more progress for the groups of students who have been behind, base school ratings on the progress of all groups of students, and expect action when any group of students is consistently underperforming;
- Richer public reporting on academic outcomes and opportunities to learn for all groups of students, including, for the first time, school-level per-pupil spending and access to rigorous coursework;
- Resources to support teachers and leaders, and a demand that states and districts report on and address inequities in the rates at which low-income students and students of color are assigned to ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers; and
- Continued targeting of federal funding to the highest poverty schools and districts.

To be clear, none of these levers will guarantee gap-closing and improved achievement for all. No law, no matter how strong, could ever do that.

But taken together, they represent key building blocks for an equity-focused school system — one that sets high expectations for all students, provides resources necessary for meeting those expectations, measures and reports progress toward them, and ensures action when any school — or any group of students — falls off track.

We at The Education Trust look forward to working alongside equity advocates from all corners — from classrooms to statehouses, community centers to boardrooms — to take hold of these blocks and together build the schools and systems all students need and deserve.

The following pages include more information on each of these levers, including information on what ESSA requires and questions equity-minded advocates should be asking. Those looking for even more detail about the specifics of ESSA can check out our detailed summary.

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1. When used in this document, the term “district” refers to both traditional public school districts and charters.
Why do accountability systems matter for equity?

Accountability systems are the set of policies and practices that a state uses to measure how schools are performing for students, reward those that are serving all of their students well, and prompt improvement in those that are not. Strong accountability systems create a clear expectation that schools must make progress with all groups of students, not just some; help focus attention and resources on the full range of student groups; and ensure that accountability isn’t limited to the lowest performing schools: When any group is struggling, schools and school systems can’t simply sit by and watch — they have to act.

What does the Every Student Succeeds Act require?

School ratings based on the performance of all groups of students

States must set goals for increasing the percentage of students who reach state standards in reading and math and for raising graduation rates. These goals have to be set for all students, and for low-income students, students from major racial/ethnic groups, students with disabilities and English learners, respectively. They must require improvement for all groups and faster improvement for the groups that have been behind, meaning that, if the goals are met, gaps between groups will narrow.

Each state must then rate schools based on how they perform on these goals and other indicators, for all students and for each student group. If any group of students in a school is consistently underperforming, the school’s rating has to reflect that fact.

Here are the required indicators:

Academic achievement: A measure of how schools’ proficiency rates in reading/language arts and math for all students and each student group compare with state-set goals. For high schools, states can also include student growth as part of this indicator. When calculating proficiency rates, states have to count most students who do not participate in the assessment as not proficient.1

Another academic indicator: For high schools, a measure of how graduation rates for all students and each student group compare with state-set goals. For elementary and middle schools, this measure may include individual student growth or another statewide, valid, and reliable indicator of student learning.

English-language proficiency: A measure of the progress that a school’s English learners are making toward English proficiency. (This measure is for the English learner group only.)

Additional indicator of school quality: Another valid, reliable, and statewide indicator of school quality, which may include measures of postsecondary readiness, student engagement, or school climate. The indicator must measure these results for all students and each student group.

States will determine exactly how much each indicator will count in school accountability ratings, but the first three indicators (academic achievement, another academic indicator, and English proficiency) must each carry substantial weight, and together, carry much more weight than the additional measure of school quality.

In addition to including these indicators, states must also explain what will happen to a school’s rating if

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1. For the purposes of the accountability system, states have to calculate proficiency rates by dividing the number of students who score at the proficient or advanced levels by the larger of two numbers: a) The number of students who took the test, OR b) 95 percent of students who were supposed to take the test.
fewer than 95 percent of all students, or of any group of students, participate in the state assessment.

Supports and intervention when students overall, or any
group of students, are struggling

The Every Student Succeeds Act specifies three categories of schools that must receive support and intervention:

**Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools:**
This category includes the lowest performing 5 percent of Title I schools and all high schools with graduation rates below 67 percent. For these schools, districts must develop improvement plans, which may include a review of district- and school-level budgeting. The state has to review and approve these improvement plans and set “exit criteria” for these schools (i.e., levels of performance that they have to reach to no longer be identified in this category). If a school fails to meet these criteria within no more than four years (the state can set a shorter time frame), the state has to intervene.

**Targeted Support and Improvement Schools:**
These are schools where one or more groups of students are consistently underperforming, as noted in the ratings. These schools must develop improvement plans, which have to be approved by their district. If schools fail to improve within a district-determined number of years, the district has to require additional action.

**Additional Targeted Support and Improvement Schools:**
These are schools that have one or more groups of students whose performance would place them in the bottom 5 percent of Title I schools. Like Targeted Support and Improvement schools, these schools are required to put together improvement plans that must be approved by their district, but these improvement plans also have to address resource inequities. In addition, states must set exit criteria for these schools, and if schools don’t meet these criteria in a state-determined number of years, they become Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools.

**What key questions should equity-minded advocates be asking?**

- What are aggressive but achievable goals, especially on new assessments aligned with college- and career-ready standards?
- Beyond tests and graduation rates, what indicators will add to the picture of school performance for all students as opposed to masking important outcomes?
- What’s a rigorous definition of “consistently underperforming” for student groups, especially on indicators for which there aren’t clear goals?
- What are the appropriate supports and interventions for the lowest performers? For schools with underperforming groups?
- What time frames for supports and interventions allow time for improvement activity to take hold, but don’t allow students to languish?

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2. When used in this document, the term “district” refers to both traditional public school districts and charters.
Why do assessments matter for equity?

Statewide, annual assessments aligned with state standards are an important way of measuring student progress consistently across classrooms, schools, and districts.¹ They provide parents with objective information about whether their children are academically on-track. They help educators benchmark the performance of their students against those across the state. And they give parents and the public an objective measure of how schools are doing at improving learning for all groups of students.

What does the Every Student Succeeds Act require?

**Statewide, annual assessment**

States have to test all students on statewide assessments in the following areas: reading/language arts and math every year in grades three through eight and once in high school; and science once between grades three and five, once between six and nine, and once again between 10 and 12.

These tests must provide valid, reliable, and comparable information on whether all students are meeting state standards in each subject.

**Assessment of English learners**

States have to measure English learners’ progress toward English-language proficiency on statewide assessments given to all English learners annually.

States have to give English proficiency and math assessments to English learners starting in their first year in U.S. schools. In that first year, states may choose to excuse English learners from taking the reading/language arts assessment. Starting in their second year in U.S. schools, all English learners have to participate in all statewide annual assessments, though the reading/language arts assessment may be administered in the student’s native language for up to five years.

**Strictly limited exceptions for students with disabilities**

States can develop alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, but can administer these assessments to no more than 1 percent of all students statewide. (Research shows that this fraction — which is equivalent to about 10 percent of all students with special needs — captures the number of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.)

**Options for high school tests**

States can choose to let districts give a nationally recognized assessment — like the SAT or ACT — in place of the statewide high school assessment. In order to use this option, the state has to make sure that the nationally recognized assessment is aligned to state standards, meets the same technical quality requirements as the state assessment, generates information that’s comparable to the information generated by the state test, and can be used in the state’s accountability system.

**Options for assessment innovation**

The U.S. Secretary of Education can establish a pilot program for states that want to develop innovative assessment systems, such as competency-based or performance-based assessments. Participating states can choose to initially try out these assessments in only some of their districts, but must use them statewide after successful piloting, or discontinue their use. These systems must also meet all the technical requirements of statewide assessments, including providing comparable data for all students.

**Support for reducing unnecessary tests**

The law encourages states to review all the assessments they and their districts give in order to get rid of low-quality or duplicative tests, and provides funding to states to support this process.

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¹. When used in this document, the term “district” refers to both traditional public school districts and charters.
What key questions should equity-minded advocates be asking?

- Both the option to use a nationally recognized assessment at the high school level and the innovative assessment pilot introduce the possibility of students in different districts taking different tests. What safeguards need to be in place to ensure that these assessments are rigorous and truly comparable to statewide tests?

- Have states developed appropriate assessments for English learners, including assessments in the students’ native languages? How will they ensure that English learners are provided with the right assessment accommodations?

- How will states ensure that students with disabilities are provided with the right assessment accommodations? Have states developed appropriate alternate assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?
Why does funding matter for equity?

Inequities in funding are foundational to all sorts of other inequities in our schools. Yet as a nation, we continue to spend less on educating our low-income students and students of color — the very students who could benefit most from additional support. The federal government has an important role to play in providing investments for vulnerable students in exchange for improved outcomes for those students.

What does the Every Student Succeeds Act require?

**Targeting of dollars to the highest poverty schools and districts**

While far from perfect, the Title I formula allocates Title I funds in a way that benefits the highest poverty districts1 and schools in each state. High-poverty districts within a state generally receive more Title I dollars per poor student than wealthier districts. Within districts, high-poverty schools must be first in line for Title I funds.

**Protections to ensure state investment in education**

Almost all federal funds have to be used to add to, not replace, state and local dollars. The ESSA includes requirements to push states to maintain their investment in education:

- **Maintenance of effort**: States cannot reduce their investment in education by more than 10 percent from year to year. If they do, they may lose some of their federal funding.
- **Supplement, not supplant**: Districts must demonstrate that schools received all the state and local funds they would have gotten if there were no federal dollars on the table.
- **Comparability**: Districts must demonstrate that schools that receive Title I funds got at least as much state and local funding as schools that do not receive Title I dollars.

**Transparency**

For the first time, states must include actual per-pupil spending by school on state, district, and school report cards. These expenditures must be reported by funding source (federal, state, and local), and must include actual personnel salaries, not district or state averages.

**Opportunity for district-level innovation**

The U.S. Secretary of Education can set up a pilot program that would allow up to 50 districts to combine funding from multiple federal sources, as well as state and local sources, to create a weighted student funding formula. To be approved for this opportunity, districts will need to show that their formula allocates more money per low-income child, and at least as much money per English learner, to each high-poverty school than that school received before the pilot. If the pilot is successful, the secretary may expand the program to all districts.

What key questions should equity-minded advocates be asking?

- How can the new data on school-level expenditures be used to fight for greater funding equity?
- How will districts that choose to participate in the weighted student funding pilot distribute funds to schools?

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1. When used in this document, the term “district” refers to both traditional public school districts and charters.
Why does public reporting matter for equity?

Information on how all groups of students are performing academically, and whether all groups of students have access to key resources for learning, is a key tool for parents making important decisions for their children, as well as for parents and community groups working to spark necessary improvements.

What does the Every Student Succeeds Act require?

**Annual state and local report cards**

Every year, each state must publish a statewide report card and each district\(^1\) must publish a district report card. District report cards must include information for the district as a whole, as well as for each school in that district. These report cards must include, at minimum:

1. Details of the state accountability system, including schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement and Targeted Support and Improvement.
2. Disaggregated results on all accountability indicators, including state assessments and graduation rates.
3. Disaggregated assessment participation rates.
4. Disaggregated results on the indicators that the state and its districts are already reporting to the Civil Rights Data Collection, including, but not limited to:
   a. access to advanced coursework, such as AP, IB, and dual enrollment;
   b. exclusionary discipline rates; and
   c. chronic absenteeism.
5. The professional qualifications of educators, including the number and percentage of
   a. inexperienced teachers, principals, and other school leaders;
   b. teachers teaching with emergency credentials; and
   c. teachers who are out-of-field.

Districts and state report cards must include comparisons of high-poverty and low-poverty schools on these metrics.

6. State, local, and federal per-pupil expenditures, by funding source. These expenditures have to include actual personnel expenditures for each school, not just district averages.

7. The number and percentage of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities taking the alternate assessment.

8. At the state level, results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, as compared with national averages.

9. Disaggregated rates at which high school graduates enroll in higher education, if available.

What key questions should equity-minded advocates be asking?

- How can states present all of these data in a way that is understandable to parents and community leaders? Will states make these report cards available in languages other than English?
- What kinds of tools, training, or accompanying materials would help parents and advocates use this information to fight for stronger opportunities to learn for all children?
THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT: WHAT’S IN IT? WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR EQUITY?

STANDARDS

JANUARY 2016

Why do standards matter for equity?

Academic standards are shared expectations for what all students need to know and be able to do at each grade level. Consistent, high expectations linked to the demands of postsecondary education are critical for ensuring that all students — not just some — get access to meaningful learning opportunities that prepare them for success after high school.

What does the Every Student Succeeds Act require?

Statewide academic standards aligned with postsecondary expectations

States have to demonstrate that they’ve adopted challenging academic standards for all public school students in math, reading/language arts, and science. These standards must be aligned with both the entrance requirements for credit-bearing coursework in the state’s public higher education system and the state’s career and technical education standards.

Aligned standards for English learners

States must demonstrate that they’ve adopted standards for English-language proficiency for English learners that are aligned with the state’s academic standards.

Meaningful alternate standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities

States can use alternate academic standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, but the standards must still be rigorous enough to prepare students for postsecondary education or employment.

What key questions should equity-minded advocates be asking?

• How will states demonstrate that their standards are aligned to entrance requirements for credit-bearing coursework for higher education?
• Whose entrance requirements for credit-bearing coursework will states align standards to? Community colleges? Four-year institutions?
• How will states and districts ensure that educators have the supports and instructional resources they need to teach all students to college- and career-ready standards?
• How will states and districts monitor how well standards are being implemented in high-versus low-poverty schools?

1. When used in this document, the term “district” refers to both traditional public school districts and charters.
THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT: WHAT’S IN IT? WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR EQUITY?

TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS

JANUARY 2016

Why do teachers and school leaders matter for equity?

Research and experience show the powerful impact that teachers and school leaders have on student learning. But far too often, the students who most need the strongest teachers and leaders are the least likely to be assigned to them. Turning this pattern around is one of the most important things we can do to close gaps and raise achievement for all.

What does the Every Student Succeeds Act require?

Attention to — and action on — equity

States and districts must ensure that low-income students and students of color are not taught at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers, and must measure and report on progress toward eliminating inequities.

Transparency

State and district report cards must include data that show how high-poverty and low-poverty schools compare based on the number and percentage of:

- Inexperienced teachers, principals, and other school leaders;
- Teachers with emergency or provisional credentials; and
- Out-of-field teachers.

Funds to support improved attention to equity

ESSA’s Title II program provides grants to states and districts that can be used on activities that improve access to strong teachers and leaders for low-income students and students of color. These funds can be used to, among other things, address inequities in access to effective teachers, provide professional development, improve teacher recruitment and retention, and develop and implement evaluation systems. If states choose to use federal dollars for development or implementing educator evaluation systems, these systems have to include measures of student achievement as one of multiple indicators.

States and districts can also apply for additional competitive grant dollars for programs designed to improve teacher and school leader effectiveness, recruitment, and retention.

What key questions should equity-minded advocates be asking?

- How will states measure educator effectiveness? Will this measure allow your state to identify teachers who are particularly strong or particularly weak at improving student learning?
- How will states and districts live up to their responsibility to ensure equitable access to effective, experienced, in-field teachers?

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1 When used in this document, the term “district” refers to both traditional public school districts and charters.
A New Law—An Old History
Signed into law on December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) serves as the latest reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. ESEA was developed in response to the demands of communities during the civil rights movement that more be done by the federal government to address poverty and limited educational opportunity for people of color. ESEA was last reauthorized in 2002 and signed into law by President George W. Bush as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

The ESSA gives states and school districts significantly more flexibility to make decisions about education policy than NCLB, which makes the actions of community stakeholders even more essential to ensuring a quality education for all students. This fact sheet seeks to inform parents and community stakeholders about the requirements of this new law so that they are able to use these tools to demand the education all children deserve.

Funding Available
Title I Parent and Family Engagement Set-Aside: Each district is required to reserve at least one percent of its Title I funds to carry out parent and family engagement activities, including those described in the written policy section below. The law further requires that parents and family members of low-income students must be involved in decisions regarding how these engagement funds are spent.

These parent and family engagement funds must be used for at least one of the below activities:
- Supporting programs that reach families at home, in the community and at school
- Disseminating information on best practices focused on engagement, especially for increasing engagement of economically disadvantaged families
- Giving subgrants to schools to collaborate with community-based organizations or businesses that have a track record of improving family engagement
- Any other activities that the district believes is appropriate to increase engagement

Written Policies
Each district must jointly develop with and distribute to families, in a language they can understand, a written parent and family engagement policy. The engagement policy must be periodically updated to reflect the needs of families and be incorporated into the district plans described below. Title I receiving schools in the district must also distribute parent and family engagement policies agreed to by the parents.

1 “Title I” refers to Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act. These funds are allocated from the federal government to the state and then to the district and school. The amount of money a district receives depends on the number and percent of students in poverty. The amount of money a school receives depends on enrollment in free and reduced price meal programs and decisions the district makes.
The district parent and family engagement policy must describe how the district will:

- Involve parents in the joint development of the district plan and support in its implementation
- Involve families in schools activities, which may include establishing an advisory board to develop, revise and review the engagement policy

The school parent and family engagement policy must describe how the school will:

- Convene an annual meeting at a convenient time, to which all parents of low-income students are encouraged to attend, in order to inform parents that their school receives Title I funds, that these funds come with requirements of the school, and that parents have the right to be involved in decisions about the use of the funds
- Ensure effective involvement of parents and support a partnership among the school, parents and the community to improve student academic achievement by the following required and allowed activities:
  - Required:
    - Ensuring that information is sent to parents in a format and a language the parents can understand;
    - Providing opportunities for the informed participation of families with limited English proficiency or disabilities in a format and language they understand.
    - Providing reasonable support for engagement activities as requested
  - Allowed (voluntary for the school):
    - Involving parents in the development of engagement training for staff
    - Paying reasonable and necessary costs associated with engagement activities including transportation and child care costs, to allow parents to participate

Consultation Required

State Plans: In order to receive funding under Title I, each state must submit a state plan to the U.S. Department of Education (ED). ED has the authority to approve, deny, or ask a state to revise the plan. The department can also take action when states fail to comply with their own approved plans. When developing plans, states must meaningfully consult with parents

District Plans: Each district must submit a plan to the state. The state has the same authority over district plans as ED has over state plans. When developing plans, districts must meaningfully consult parents of children in schools receiving Title I funds. Among other requirements, district plans must describe the strategies the district will employ to meet the parent and family engagement requirements. If the district plan is not satisfactory to the parents of low-income students, the school district must submit any parent comments to the state.
Conclusion

The civil rights community has long recognized the impact of families as central to our struggle to achieve equality for all Americans. If states do not meaningfully engage families while implementing ESSA, we will have missed a crucial opportunity and the students we represent will continue to be denied the full protections they are entitled to under federal law. Demanding inclusion in the implementation of ESSA and policies and practices that promote equity puts schools, districts, and states on notice that deviating from the needs and priorities of those students the law was designed to help will not be accepted any longer. The stakes are high, family engagement is critical to closing the achievement gap, and our children deserve our best.
1. **What is the ESSA?**

The ESSA is the most recent version of the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965**, replacing No Child Left Behind (NCLB). ESEA governs federal K-12 funding and places conditions on state receipt of funding. Currently, 42 states and the District of Columbia are receiving waivers from NCLB. These waivers will expire **August 1, 2016**.

2. **What does ESSA say about school climate and school discipline reform?**

ESSA gives states the option of choosing school climate and safety as an indicator of overall school quality and student success. This is an advocacy opportunity to urge states to choose this indicator. However, we have to be clear about what positive and inclusive school climate means—it means implementing discipline alternatives, like restorative practices, instead of practices that push children out of school.

3. **What school climate and discipline reform programs does ESSA provide funding for?**

ESSA allows states to use federal funds to implement programs that promote positive and inclusive school climates and reduce the use of exclusionary discipline, like: Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS); professional development on classroom management; school-based mental health care; trauma-informed services; partnerships with community-based organizations; parent and family engagement programs; site resource coordinators; and conflict resolution and crisis intervention. We must urge states and Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to use funds to implement these alternatives.

4. **What are key points for intervention for DSC members?**

**State Plans** - You must identify who in your state will be writing your state plan (i.e. your state school superintendent, school districts leaders) and ensure that you are involved in the process to develop the state plan—with meaningful input. This will give you the opportunity to advocate for inclusion of school climate and safety as an indicator for school quality and student success, for meaningful parent and family engagement policies and programs, and funding of positive discipline programs. States will soon start working on their plans, which are due August 1, 2016.

**Federal Regulations** - We will notify you of opportunities to submit written comments and to participate in public meetings on the law hosted by the Department of Education (ED). ED will be developing regulations and guidelines to states to implement ESSA—and this is our chance to weigh in.

**Federal Peer Review Teams** - Please let us know if you are interested in participating in the Multi-disciplinary Peer Review teams that ED will be convening to review state plans. We will forward DSC members names for consideration.

**Ongoing Funding and Implementation** - At the state and local level, DSC members can continue advocating for funding of positive discipline programs and practices funded under ESSA. DSC members can also participate in district-level **needs assessments** required before districts can receive ESSA money from the state. These assessments are intended to identify lower performing schools and help to target funding and needed interventions—this is another chance to advocate for funding of programs to improve school climate and student achievement. LEAs are required to conduct needs assessments every 3 years under the law.
**PARENT POWER BOOTCAMP**

**K-W-L CHART**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session/Topic</th>
<th>Know: What do you already know about the topic?</th>
<th>Want to Know: What would you like to know about the topic?</th>
<th>Learned: What have you learned about the topic?</th>
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</table>
## PARENT POWER BOOTCAMP
### K-W-L CHART

| Session/Topic | Know  
|               | What do you already know about the topic? | Want to Know  
|               | What would you like to know about the topic? | Learned  
|               | What have you learned about the topic? |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
|               |                                         |                                             |
|               |                                         |                                             |
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|               |                                         |                                             |
|               |                                         |                                             |
|               |                                         |                                             |
|               |                                         |                                             |
# PARENT POWER BOOTCAMP
## ACTION PLAN

### Advocate:

### Date:

### Objective:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Resources Needed (Including Collaboration)</th>
<th>Date Due or Frequency</th>
<th>Anticipated Challenges</th>
<th>Potential Solutions to Challenges</th>
<th>Status/Outcome</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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</table>
GLOSSARY

**Accountability Systems:** Accountability systems are a set of policies that states use to measure how schools are performing and to identify schools that need support and improvement when all students or groups of students are behind or are not making academic progress.

**Assessment:** Assessment refers to testing that provides valuable data about how much students know and are able to do.

**Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools:** This category includes the lowest performing 5 percent of Title I schools and all high schools with graduation rates below 67 percent (“dropout factories”). For schools in this group, districts must develop improvement plans, which may include a review of the school and district budgets.

**Targeted Support and Improvement Schools:** This category includes schools with a “consistently underperforming” group of students. These schools must develop improvement plans which must be approved by the district.

**Standards:** Refers to a set of clear, consistent goals for what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade.

**Title I:** “Title I” refers to Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). These funds are allocated from the federal government to the state and then to the district and school. The amount of money a district receives depends on the number and percent of students in poverty. The amount of money a school receives depends on enrollment in free and reduced price meal programs and decisions the district makes.
**PARENT POWER BOOTCAMP**  
**SESSION EVALUATION FORM**

Please read each statement and check the box that best describes how you feel about each session. Your survey will help to inform and improve NBCDI’s Parent Power BootCamp sessions in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>“This Is NOT a Test!”</th>
<th>“Follow the Money”</th>
<th>“What’s Being Taught and Who’s Teaching It?”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The session was helpful.</strong></td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Neutral</td>
<td>□ Neutral</td>
<td>□ Neutral</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The group participation was valuable.</strong></td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Neutral</td>
<td>□ Neutral</td>
<td>□ Neutral</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I would recommend this session to others.</strong></td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Neutral</td>
<td>□ Neutral</td>
<td>□ Neutral</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The materials provided were helpful.</strong></td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Neutral</td>
<td>□ Neutral</td>
<td>□ Neutral</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>This session was beneficial to me.</strong></td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
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<td>□ Neutral</td>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>This session should be presented again.</strong></td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
<td>□ Agree</td>
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<td>□ Neutral</td>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
<td>□ Disagree</td>
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</table>

**Comments:**
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Please complete the back of this survey.

Thank you for your cooperation and feedback. It is greatly appreciated.
Thank you for your cooperation and feedback. It is greatly appreciated.

PARENT POWER BOOTCAMP
OVERALL EVENT EVALUATION FORM

Please read each statement and circle the number that best describes how you feel. Your survey will help to inform and improve NBCDI’s Parent Power BootCamp event in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The presenters were effective.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The sessions met my expectations.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The registration check-in was fast and easy.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff was hospitable.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend this Parent Power BootCamp to others.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How did you learn about NBCDI’s Parent Power BootCamp? Please check one of the boxes below.

☐ NBCDI
☐ NBCDI Affiliate
☐ U.S. Department of Education
☐ Other (Please specify.) _______________________________________________

How can we improve upon NBCDI’s Parent Power BootCamp in the future?
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Please return your completed survey (front and back) to NBCDI staff before exiting the room.

Thank you for your cooperation and feedback. It is greatly appreciated.