



Afterschool Alliance

ESSA Playbook

Introduction & Timeline

The implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides tremendous opportunity for the state afterschool networks and other statewide afterschool organizations to elevate the importance of afterschool and summer learning programs with key audiences and secure additional out-of-school time resources.

This playbook is designed to help networks and their allies understand which parts of the new law have the most potential to support afterschool and summer learning programs. It provides guidance and tools to help networks engage with state and local audiences, including information about who to engage, which messages to use, and how to participate in critical discussions.

Networks may share the messages and materials in this playbook during presentations, at meetings, and via newsletters, websites, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, listservs and other platforms. The materials can be shared verbatim or tailored to meet specific needs within a state.

Every state will be operating on its own distinct timeline, so networks should check with state education agencies to determine exact points of engagement. However, a general time frame is as follows:

Summer/Fall 2016 States creating advisory committees and seeking required stakeholder engagement on drafting of Title I plans

Fall/Winter 2016 Draft state ESSA plans posted on state department of education's websites for public feedback

April 3, 2017 First possible deadline for state ESSA Title I plan, due to the U.S. Department of Education

September 18, 2017 Second possible deadline for state ESSA Title I plan, due to the U.S. Department of Education

Fall/Winter 2017 ESSA goes into effect and funds are made available to states

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Chapter 1: Background and Opportunities for Action

What is the Every Student Succeeds Act?

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the new K-12 federal education law, which reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and replaces No Child Left Behind. It was signed into law in 2015 and will be phased in over the next few years. The law was designed to increase opportunities for local input and flexible decision making based on what communities and states need. A key goal of the new law is to ensure all students have access to a quality education—inside and outside the classroom.

Why does ESSA matter to afterschool and summer programming?

Many areas in the law provide opportunities to boost student achievement by building and strengthening before, afterschool and summer learning opportunities. The following describes each relevant title of the law and opportunities for state networks to engage in the implementation process.

Title I

Every state will need to submit a new Title I plan to the U.S. Department of Education. This plan will determine the accountability measures and the types of supports schools will use to track and improve student outcomes—at the state level and at the local district level. Each state also must show the U.S. Secretary of Education that public comments were taken into account before the plan is approved. States are required by law to make a draft plan available for public comment for at least 30 days. There are multiple opportunities for afterschool networks to weigh in on their state’s plan to position afterschool and summer programming as a support that will help states achieve their goals AND make the case for more resources for out-of-school time programming.

Title I: Opportunities for Action

Provide input on the state plan

- **Ask your state education agency** if your network or a provider can be formally included in the development of the state plan. Some states are forming advisory councils and are including afterschool representation as part of the council.
- **Participate in any listening tours** your state education agency is having and share stories, facts and any materials you have to show how afterschool and summer programs are critical to academic success.
- **Make sure the state agency knows** that afterschool is an allowable use of Title I funding.
- **Sign up for any email lists** that provide updates about how the state is moving forward with its plan. Understand and track your state’s timeline.
- **Meet with superintendents** and other education officials to provide input on your state’s plan. Submit model language for your state’s plan.

Chapter 1: Background and Opportunities for Action

Review and comment on state plan

- **Understand the timeline** for release of the state plan in your state.
- **Monitor the release** of your state plan and submit comments.
- **Learn more about fifth indicators.** Get informed about discussions of accountability indicators for school quality and student success. *Learn more about fifth indicators.*
- **Share those comments** with providers and other partners and encourage them to submit similar comments.

Ensure allocation of Title I funding includes afterschool

- **Work with principals** to ensure they are aware that funding can be used to support afterschool programming.
- **Encourage parents** to advocate for quality, affordable afterschool opportunities.

Title II: Teacher Preparation and Development

Title II aims to increase the effectiveness of educators throughout their teaching career so they can help all students improve their academic achievement, especially low-income and minority students. The U.S. Department of Education released *guidance* in September 2016 encouraging states and districts to use Title II funds to make sure all children have access to an effective teacher and to ensure teachers in high-need schools have the extra support they need. Uses of Title II include many areas relevant to the afterschool field, including:

- Providing high quality trainings in STEM and Career & Technical Education.
- Supporting the integration of technology into curricula and instruction.
- Recruiting qualified individuals from other fields, including mid-career professionals.
- Assisting local educational agencies and schools in effectively recruiting and retaining teachers, principals, or other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement.

To receive grants under Title II, both the state and local agencies are required to undertake **meaningful consultation** in developing an application, which includes involvement of “teachers, principals, other school leaders, as well as other organizations with relevant and demonstrated expertise in teacher training and preparation.” Afterschool providers can be among those consulted.

Title II: Opportunities for Action

Work with local and state education agencies to ensure they know afterschool settings can be considered environments where teachers gain real-world training experience and earn hours of practice and observation.

Ask your state education leaders to ensure the final state plans enable school staff and afterschool staff to attend all joint trainings and professional development opportunities, particularly in the fields of positive youth development and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Chapter 1: Background and Opportunities for Action

Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

Districts receiving these funds will have great discretion in how to allocate them—with the intent of providing states and districts with more flexibility in assisting students and families. Regardless, districts that do receive funds are expected to coordinate them in partnerships with non-profits. Funds can be used to pay for increasing collaborations between schools and STEM afterschool programs and for funding resource counselors to establish community partnerships, as well as programs to support mentoring and healthy lifestyles for students. Because these funds will flow to schools and students where these types of needs have been identified, state level afterschool advocates can help local afterschool providers and parents participate in the needs assessment process in local communities.

Title IV, Part A: Opportunities for Action

Work with local education agencies to prioritize afterschool

- **Inform local needs assessments.** If your local education agency must conduct a needs assessment (because they are set to receive more than \$30,000), work to ensure that access to safe, supportive programs from 3 to 6 p.m. is part of the assessment for a well-rounded education.
- **Create fact sheets** about how afterschool supports a well-rounded education and safe and healthy schools so that key stakeholders can make the most informed decisions.
- **Work with local afterschool providers** that are part of your network to ensure they have the tools they need to engage in the needs assessment process.

Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Each state is required to submit a plan for implementing 21st CCLC as part of either a consolidated state plan or as a stand-alone Title IV plan. As with Title I, states are required to show that public comments were taken into account. Statewide afterschool networks can engage with state agencies to provide input on the plan.

Based on the plan submitted, state education agencies will need to write a new request for proposals (RFP) for 21st CCLC. States are required to engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders in the development of the new 21st CCLC RFP. The state education agencies will be revisiting and updating eligibility criteria, competitive priorities and indicators as part of the re-write. In addition to weighing in on those changes, afterschool networks can remind SEAs about the role networks and intermediaries can play in providing professional development, capacity building, technical assistance and training to grantees and potential grantees through the increased percentage in funding for 21st CCLC state activities under ESSA.

Chapter 1: Background and Opportunities for Action

Title IV, Part B: Opportunities for Action

Weigh in on state application

- **Use the process** to develop and/or maintain a relationship with your state's 21st CCLC director.
- **Make the case** that afterschool advocates should be included among those consulted about the new RFP.
- **Offer input** on the updated RFP regarding eligibility criteria, competitive priorities, quality, professional development and outcomes measurement.
- **Provide ideas** on the how your state 21st CCLC office can utilize the statewide afterschool network and similar intermediaries to provide professional development, capacity building and technical assistance and training to grantees and potential grantees through the increased percentage in funding for 21st CCLC state activities under ESSA.

Offer technical assistance

- **Work** with the 21st CCLC directors to roll out the updated RFP.
- **Work with state your education agency** to serve as a technical assistance provider to sites receiving 21st CCLC funding.
- **Look for opportunities** to help the state improve the quality of its programs through professional development.

For more detailed instructions and discussion questions, please visit [Chapter 2](#).

Chapter 2: Spotlight on 21st CCLC RFP

As the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is implemented at the state level, afterschool advocates have the opportunity to provide feedback to their state education agency (SEA) on Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers. The first step will be helping to shape the 21st CCLC section of the state ESSA application that will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education. Even while those applications are under development, SEAs will be revising their RFP process for 21st CCLC funding.

This tool is specifically designed to help afterschool advocates shape the 21st CCLC RFP.

Goal	Action Steps
<p>Be a partner: Ensure the afterschool community is meaningfully consulted in the development of the new 21st CCLC RFP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contact your state 21st CCLC director to ask how the new RFP is being designed ■ Ask to join the design process, bringing your expertise of programs on the ground
<p>Be an interpreter: Ensure the new 21st CCLC RFP incorporates revisions based on new language in ESSA, such as changes to allowable activities and performance measures, and retains key provisions, such as eligible entities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help to navigate the complicated language (e.g., the inclusion of “external organizations”) ■ Highlight the new language on expanded learning programs ■ Clarify that community-based organizations are allowable lead applicants
<p>Add your technical expertise: Help your SEA understand that external organizations are technical assistance providers (like networks or intermediaries) that may help provide a grantee with professional development or technical assistance to help them reach quality standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make the case that your SEA increase its reserve for training and technical assistance and position your network to provide these services, as appropriate ■ Look for opportunities to help the state improve quality through professional development and technical assistance
<p>Provide insights on grant RFPs: Use your knowledge of the field and what the youth and the state need to design strong RFPs that lead to effective programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer feedback or suggestions on eligibility criteria, competitive priorities, quality, performance measures, etc.
<p>Inform and educate: Help legislators, partners, businesses, parents, and other stakeholders learn about the process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider looping in friendly state legislators to let them know how the process is moving forward and how they can help

Chapter 2: Spotlight on 21st CCLC RFP

Become/Remain a Partner with Your State Education Agency

Develop/continue to build a relationship with your state’s 21st CCLC director. Find time to meet with your 21st CCLC director to find out how he or she is addressing 21st CCLC in the state ESSA application and what the process will be for revising the state RFP. Offer to be a resource to your SEA in the process.

Make the case that afterschool advocates should be included among those consulted about the new RFP. In preparing new RFPs, ESSA requires SEAs to conduct meaningful consultation with: parents, teachers, principals and other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, students, community-based organizations, local government representatives, and other stakeholders who have relevant and demonstrated expertise in programs and activities.

Help Your State Education Agency Understand and Interpret the New Law

Clarify for your state education agency the meaning of “external organizations.”

- The new law mentions “external organizations” and “partners”—these are two distinct ideas.
- External organizations are technical assistance providers (like networks or intermediaries) that for example, may provide a grantee with professional development or technical assistance to help them reach quality standards.
- Partners are the organizations written into local grants that will have a role in providing services to students.
- This distinction is important because states under the law should create a list of pre-approved external organizations but not partners.

Ensure the meaning of “expanded learning programs” in Title IV, Part B of ESSA is understood. This section of the law requires that states that choose to allow grantees to extend their school day for all students with 21st CCLC funding must: 1) add a minimum of 300 additional hours of programming each year; 2) ensure programming be ‘afterschool-like’ in nature and not an extension or addition of traditional classroom activities; and 3) require partners for any local education agency seeking this type of grant. Regular afterschool, before school, and summer programs are not subject to these special conditions.

Clarify that schools and community-based organizations continue to be eligible lead applicants for 21st CCLC grants. Either schools or community-based organizations are legally able to apply as long as they propose to serve populations of students in which 40% or more are eligible for Free and Reduced Meal Status (FARMS) or target their services to schools identified by the state as being in need of support.

Chapter 2: Spotlight on 21st CCLC RFP

Be a Technical Expert

Remind your state that the set aside for quality has increased from 3% to 5%. Research¹ shows that the quality of afterschool programs is key to significant positive outcomes. Many statewide afterschool networks, as well as other state and local intermediaries, are well-positioned with the tools and training that can help programs

develop, monitor, and increase quality. Encourage your SEA to increase the resources devoted to quality improvement activities and share the tools and resources your network has (i.e., for capacity building, parent engagement, and professional development) to make the case for using the additional investments in technical assistance.

Provide Insights into Building a Strong Grant Program

Weigh-in on competitive priorities that your SEA may be considering. Based on needs assessments, gaps analysis, and other research that your network has conducted in your state, consider making recommendations about competitive priorities, such as middle school and/or STEM programs.

Help your SEA determine new performance measures to consider as part of 21st CCLC. Under ESSA, states have the opportunity to expand beyond the currently required GPRA indicators to include performance measures that better reflect the strengths of the afterschool field, such as school engagement, school day attendance, employability skills, or other areas based on 21st CCLC state data.

¹ www.afterschoolalliance.org/research.cfm

Chapter 2: Spotlight on 21st CCLC RFP

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program has been preserved and updated in the new federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). State education agencies (SEAs) are currently reviewing the changes to the law as they prepare new Requests for Proposals (RFPs). The following discussion questions are intended to help the afterschool field and providers offer their input to state agencies as RFPs are developed.

Discussion Questions to Help Shape RFP

- Under ESSA, states have the opportunity to expand beyond the currently required indicators used to evaluate 21st CCLCs to include performance measures that better reflect the strengths of the afterschool field, such as school engagement, school day attendance, employability skills, or other areas based on 21st CCLC state data. What performance measures do you think the state should look at to determine success of 21st CCLC?
- If an external organization were to provide you with technical assistance and training before, during, or after receiving a 21st CCLC grant, what sort of topics would you most like to see offered? Are there current technical assistance offerings provided by the SEA that you would change to better meet your needs?
- ESSA now allows an SEA to automatically renew 21st CCLC grants based on an entity's performance during the preceding sub grant period, if it so chooses. Should the SEA automatically renew 21st CCLC grants based on performance in the previous grant cycle? Why or why not? What specifically do you think the criteria for renewal should be?
- What aspects of your state's RFP process may be impacting equity across the state and how should your state address that? For example, how can the SEA ensure distribution of sub grantees is equitable across rural and urban communities? Should the SEA reconsider the length of grants and/or reconsider different step-down formula for funding in years 2-5?
- ESSA now requires the program activities to align with the challenging state academic standards to improve student academic achievement and overall student success. What types of supporting information should/should not be requested by the SEA in an RFP to illustrate that activities align with state academic standards to improve student academic achievement and improve overall student success?
- ESSA presents an opportunity for the SEA to consider new priorities within the RFP process. Are there state priorities related to high-poverty, low-performing schools that we should consider? Priorities that could help promote college and career readiness? Priorities that could strengthen services for families and promote stronger family engagement? Other suggestions?
- In addition to 21st CCLC under Title IV, Part B, ESSA allows Title I and Title IV, Part A funds to be used to support afterschool programs, but that decision will be based on local school and community needs assessments and local school and district officials. How can your program build or strengthen relationships with school and community leaders to make a case for these funds supporting quality afterschool programs for children?

Chapter 3: Engaging ESSA Audiences

Who should I talk with?

State Education Agencies and State Superintendents

State education agencies are responsible for writing and submitting the new Title I plan to the U.S. Department of Education. The agencies will be soliciting feedback throughout the writing process and posting the draft plan online in the winter.

[Find contacts at your state education agency](#)

[Find your chief state school officer](#)

- Understand their timeline
- Get on their email lists
- Attend their meetings
- Review their plans
- React/submit comments on their plans

Local Education Agency (LEA) Superintendents

LEA superintendents will be responsible for orchestrating the local plans needed under the law. They will also determine how Title IV, Part A Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant dollars can be spent, including the creation of a needs assessment where applicable.

[Learn more about local superintendents](#)

- Aim to get afterschool mentioned in your local plan
- Aim to get afterschool listed in outgoing guidance from LEA to schools
- Ask LEA advocates to reach out to their superintendent to encourage he/she prioritize afterschool

Principals

Principals control the use of Title I dollars and make decisions on how the funding can be spent. Some principals are already champions of afterschool and summer programming because they understand the connection back to academic success, but others need to become informed so they can become champions as well. Principals will also be key to the needs assessment process for Title IV, Part A funds.

- Develop relationships with principals in your state
- Ensure they understand afterschool is an allowable use of Title I funds
- Encourage parents to contact their principals and share stories
- Invite principals to visit afterschool sites

State 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) Coordinators

Coordinators or directors will be developing the new proposal process and funding application for 21st CCLC programs.

[Find your 21st Century Community Learning Center coordinator](#)

- Develop a relationship with your director/coordinator
- Share success stories
- Contribute to the proposal rewrite process

Chapter 3: Engaging ESSA Audiences

Who should I talk with? (cont.)

State and Local Boards of Education

This may be a good venue to do a presentation to ensure that the connections between afterschool, student support, and opportunities in ESSA are explicitly drawn out.

Find out how many seats there are on your state board of education

Learn more about your state board of education

Learn more about your local school boards

Providers

Afterschool and summer providers throughout your state can be champions for ensuring afterschool is a priority throughout state plans. They can talk with principals and superintendents and share stories and data about how their afterschool programs help students increase academic achievement, reduce absenteeism and help working families. Providers can also comment on the draft plans issued by the state and encourage parents to weigh in as well.

Individual Parents and Parent Groups

Parents are able to share their stories, contact their policymakers and talk with their principals about why they support afterschool and summer programming and how important it is to working families.

Students

Students, especially middle and high school students, can share valuable input about the types of supports they need to help ensure academic success. They should be included in the process of determining student supports. Informing them of their options and listening to their needs will be important.

Chapter 3: Engaging ESSA Audiences

How should I prepare?

Research shows that out-of-school time programs contribute to many of the goals outlined in ESSA, including helping schools graduate academically prepared students on time and ready for college and career; reducing absenteeism; closing achievement gaps; and building strong partnerships between schools and communities. Quality afterschool and summer learning programs also provide critical support to working

families, benefit the economy, and help build strong, safe communities.

Leaders and others who influence implementation of ESSA need to understand the benefits of out-of-school programs and how they contribute to priorities defined within individual state education plans, as well as top priorities set by districts and schools.

Consider the following in preparation for meetings, presentations, events and other opportunities to engage with important stakeholders:

- **Know your audience.** Think about their perspective—what do they need to hear? What is in it for them? Be as specific as possible when asking them to do something.
- **Be clear about your message.** What are the two or three points you want the person to learn or remember? Test your message with a teenager or a neighbor. Do they get it? Are they “sold”? If not, try again.
- **Tell brief stories.** People are moved by stories and the emotion behind them more than they are by data. Prepare in advance a short, simple story that paints a picture of how afterschool or summer programming has helped a child, teacher or family. It should convey your optimism and connect to an issue that is important to your audience.
- **Anticipate tough questions and practice the answers.** You should almost never be caught off guard or surprised. Sometimes the hardest question is “how can I help.” Know what you want your audience to do. Be prepared to make a plan and agree on next steps.
- **The ask.** An “ask” is a specific request that you make of someone during a meeting. A good ask is within the power of the person you’re talking with, and gives him or her a specific task that will help your network. Your ask should be timely and connected to an issue that is important to the person you’re talking with.

Chapter 3: Engaging ESSA Audiences

What should I share?

The ESSA toolkit (essa.afterschoolalliance.org) includes a series of factsheets and graphics that connect out-of-school programs to a range of topics that are prioritized within ESSA: chronic absenteeism, academic achievement, STEM learning, graduation rates, student discipline and behavior, student health and wellness, social emotional learning, summer learning loss and closing achievement gaps.

These materials were developed to help networks and partners prepare for formal meetings, speaking opportunities, casual conversations, and media interviews. The

intent of the messages is to provide top-line language that describes our collective efforts to increase support and funding for quality afterschool and summer learning programs.

Some of the factsheets and graphics include data from the America After 3PM series that can be tailored with state-specific data.

Networks are encouraged to share these assets at meetings, during presentations, and with providers, parents and partners. The materials can be printed, included in presentations and shared via email and across a variety of online platforms.

If you have any questions about the messages or need additional information about the factsheet series, please contact Jillian Luchner, JLuchner@afterschoolalliance.org.

Chapter 4: Influencing Your State’s ESSA Plan

This resource is intended to help the afterschool field participate in meetings focused on ESSA implementation and offer direct input to the statewide education plans required by ESSA.

The following is provided for each relevant title of the law:

Talking points about the role of afterschool in ESSA implementation to help networks and advocates prepare for and participate in listening sessions and other meetings. You also may need to create some talking points of your own!

Afterschool asks detailing what we would like to see in draft and final plans. We also encourage you to consider specific “asks” for your state and to focus on key points provided below that help support those asks.

Sample language for draft ESSA plans that can be shared with key decision-makers and stakeholders involved in writing the statewide plans that will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education. You may also [download a one-page Word document](#) with the sample language for all relevant titles.

Factsheets and other resources available on the ESSA toolkit (<http://essa.afterschoolalliance.org>) may help supplement your talking points and asks. If you have questions, need additional support, or want to share points that resonated effectively at one of your meetings, please contact Jillian Luchner, JLuchner@afterschoolalliance.org.

Title I

Talking points: The role of afterschool in ESSA implementation

- Afterschool and summer programs are an allowable use of Title I funding.
- Title I explicitly lists afterschool as an intervention for schools identified for targeted support, because many students need additional time, alternative settings, and safe, supportive spaces to interact with adults.
- Quality afterschool provides evidence-based supports for academic indicators and “fifth indicators,” that are related to school quality and/or student success, including attendance, behavior, coursework, health and wellness, and STEM.
- Afterschool programs define quality through multiple student indicators, including parent and student survey tools, behavior, homework, and attendance. This allows afterschool networks to provide states with expertise about how to incorporate such indicators for a more holistic picture of student success and well-being.
- Afterschool provides supports for well-rounded students, increasing student engagement in school and developing health and wellness, hands-on learning, social and emotional skills, leadership, and employability skills, among others.
- Students’ connections to passions and career interests are often sparked in out-of-school time, which can lead to greater perseverance during the school day and throughout the education pipeline from kindergarten through career. Three in four Nobel winning scientists say their passion was first sparked in out-of-school settings.¹
- Quality summer learning programs can help close the achievement gap and have been shown to reduce—and even eliminate—the “summer slide.”

¹ <http://www.click2sciencepd.org/about/why-out-school-stem-important>

Chapter 4: Influencing Your State's ESSA Plan

- High-income parents (those in the top 20% of the income distribution) spend up to seven times as much on enrichment for their children compared with families in the lowest income distribution, which makes access to afterschool programs an important equalizer in resource equity and opportunity.
- Afterschool leverages community funding and parent and community engagement. For example, on average, a 21st CCLC program brings in \$67,000 per partner and averages nine partner organizations per grantee.
- Only one in three 21st CCLC grants get funded nationally, which means many more schools and communities need these programs.

Asks: What we'd like to see in draft and final plans

- List afterschool and summer programs as an allowable use of Title I funds in the state plan.
- List afterschool as an evidence-based intervention for supporting student success.
- For the school quality and student success indicators (fifth indicators), adopt a dashboard of multiple indicators including, at a minimum: attendance, school engagement, safety, and opportunities for participation in afterschool and summer programs. *[Note: some states currently employ school climate surveys that address multiple indicators at once, however not all of these include access to afterschool and summer programs, which may need to be added as a separate indicator.]*
- Include access to and involvement in afterschool programs with enrichment and academic components as a mandatory component in any state and local needs assessments.
- Include access to and involvement in afterschool programs in any report cards issued by schools and/or districts.
- Include access to and involvement in afterschool in all conversations about resource equity.
- Work with state afterschool networks to provide technical assistance to districts and schools that provide (or are hoping to provide) quality afterschool and summer programs.

Sample language for draft ESSA plans: Title I

- The state recognizes that afterschool and summer learning programs are an effective use of Title I funds. The state, therefore, encourages district level administrators, school boards, and principals, to include afterschool and summer learning programs as an allowable expenditure for student support and school intervention and to inform parents, students, teachers and other stakeholders of the availability of afterschool offerings.
- State and district level needs assessment tools must include questions about student access to and participation in afterschool and summer academic and enrichment programs.
- School report cards and/or performance reviews must include at least one measure of access to afterschool and summer learning programs available to students who attend the school. Examples of such a measure might include the percentage of students in the school who report having access to and the percentage of students utilizing affordable afterschool and summer opportunities.

Chapter 4: Influencing Your State’s ESSA Plan

- District level ESSA plans on the issue of resource equity should include measures of access to quality afterschool and summer learning programs for all children.
- The state will work with the [insert name of statewide afterschool network] to provide quality evaluation tools and professional development to afterschool and summer learning programs funded under this title.

Title II: Teacher Preparation and Development

Talking points: The role of afterschool in ESSA implementation

- Afterschool settings provide opportunities for training teachers by giving them experience in diverse settings with diverse groups of students.
- School day teachers and afterschool staff in some places are already participating in joint training in the areas of positive youth development, race and equity issues, and hands-on STEM.

Asks: What we’d like to see in draft and final plans

- Provide opportunities for school staff and afterschool staff to attend joint training and professional development.
- Provide teachers with real-world training and experience in diverse settings, including afterschool and summer programs, as part of the process for earning their hours of practice and observation.

Sample language for draft ESSA plans: Title II

- The state encourages collaborations among educational instruction providers, for example local universities, schools of education, and training institutions like science centers and museums, to create collaborations for training teachers in hands-on and experiential learning.
- The state encourages districts to coordinate teacher in-service training and professional development with local school and community-based afterschool provider staff so that students are receiving consistent, coordinated evidence-based supports, positive youth development training, and resources that extend from the school day through to other programming.

Chapter 4: Influencing Your State's ESSA Plan

Title IV, Part A: Student Support Grants

Talking points: The role of afterschool in ESSA implementation

- Well-rounded supportive education includes the wrap-round services offered by afterschool and summer programs that help to support students' academic, social, and personal development, as well as a safe and supportive environment.
- Afterschool and summer programming supports students during their transitions between grades and levels of schooling and has an evidence base of improved graduation rates for students who regularly attend quality programs.
- Afterschool program participation is associated with fewer behavioral infractions during the school day and fewer suspensions.
- Afterschool programs show the greatest effects on student improvement in high-risk populations (e.g., low-income, minority students).
- Afterschool and summer programs provide opportunities for families to be part of their students' academic and enrichment experiences outside of the school day.
- When schools partner with community-based organizations, they are able to tap into additional resources, including staff and youth development expertise. This exponentially increases the supports available to students.

Asks: What we'd like to see in draft and final plans

- Explicitly state that the Department of Education recognizes afterschool and summer programs as evidence-based supports that help provide a well-rounded supportive education for students—and that districts can choose afterschool and summer programs as such supports.
- Encourage local districts to build on STEM learning during the regular school day by using Title IV, Part A funds to provide afterschool STEM programs that offer hands-on engagement and help students develop their interests, confidence, and experience in career building pathways.

Sample language for draft ESSA plans: Title IV, Part A

- The state recognizes afterschool and summer programs as evidence-based supports that help provide a well-rounded supportive education for student success.
- State and district level needs assessment tools must include questions about student access to and participation in afterschool and summer academic and enrichment programs, particularly in the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and math).
- The state encourages collaborations among school, afterschool program, and informal program personnel to improve the integration of programming and instruction in the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and math).

Chapter 4: Influencing Your State's ESSA Plan

Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Talking points: The role of afterschool in ESSA implementation

- 21st CCLC providers need access to knowledgeable and trusted resources who understand the needs of afterschool and summer providers and have a history of helping to advance afterschool.
- Staff quality is a key determinant of program quality. 21st CCLC providers need quality professional development opportunities and access to vetted resources who can help them achieve results for kids and families.

Asks: What we'd like to see in draft and final plans

- Ensure that afterschool networks, programs, parents, and students are meaningfully consulted in the development of RFPs and are included in state-level advisory groups for 21st CCLC.
- Use the increased available quality set aside at the 5% level with the understanding that the SEA will work with experienced technical assistance providers (intermediaries, such as networks) to build program quality and provide staff professional development opportunities that can contribute to student outcomes.
- Define "external organizations" and "partners" as two distinct ideas. "External organizations" are technical assistance providers (like networks or intermediaries). For example they may help provide a grantee with professional development or support reaching quality standards. "Partners" are the organizations in local grant applications that will provide a role in the provision of services to students. This distinction is important because states under the law should create a list of pre-approved "external organizations" but not "partners."
- Ensure "expanded learning programs" for states allowing extended school days follow the law and 1) add a minimum of 300 additional hours of programming each year; 2) ensure programming be 'afterschool-like' in nature and not an extension or addition of traditional classroom activities; and 3) require partners for any LEA seeking this type of grant. Regular afterschool, before school, and summer programs are not subject to these special conditions.
- Clarify that both schools and community-based organizations are eligible to apply for 21st CCLC grants.

Sample language for draft ESSA plans: Title IV, Part B

- The State Education Agency will convene a 21st Century Community Advisory group for meaningful engagement by inviting all the partners explicitly stated in the law, as well as parents, teachers and students who will be instrumental in re-designing the Requests for Proposals, including contributing to the priorities, performance measures and methods of measurement.
- The state designates up to 5 percent of its allocation under ESSA Sec. 4202 (c) (3) to ensure quality and professional development efforts, including through contracts with the [insert name of statewide afterschool network] to provide the quality measurement tools, monitoring, and professional development support for new and returning grantees.

Chapter 4: Influencing Your State’s ESSA Plan

- The state clarifies that the “external organizations” expected to undergo state pre-screening in the law are those providing generalized technical assistance and professional development, not those partners applying jointly with school districts or as community based organizations. External organizations with experience delivering professional development, skills training, research-based curriculum support, or quality assessment tools in the school-age care community will be sought out to apply for pre-screening. In contrast, grantee community partners working with schools and local education agencies to provide services for students and/or families are not expected to undergo this process.
- The state stipulates that the “expanded learning programs” referenced in this section of the law are those which extend the school day for all students at a particular school. Grantees desiring to apply under this provision must: 1) add a minimum of 300 additional hours of programming each year; 2) ensure programming be ‘afterschool-like’ in nature and not an extension or addition of traditional classroom activities; 3) require partners for any local education agency seeking this type of grant. Regular afterschool, before school and summer learning programs, which are distinguished from expanded learning programs by not being applied to the whole school population, are not subject to the above conditions.
- The state clarifies that while schools and community based organizations may choose to apply independently each as their own lead grantee, those that apply jointly together as collaborative partners will be awarded competitive priority. The state recognizes that many regional high schools have large concentrations of high need students without meeting the Title I threshold because they serve a mix of students from a broad and diverse area. The state welcomes applications proposing to serve students attending these non-Title I schools under the condition of high need.

Additional Resources

The Afterschool Alliance:

- Ongoing Policy Blogs with more on ESSA on [Afterschool Snack](#)
- Hosted webinar: [ESSA: What does it mean for Afterschool and Summer Learning](#)
- Produced a [Frequently Asked Question sheet on ESSA](#)
- Prepared a [Side by Side chart](#) comparing 21st CCLC under NCLB and ESSA
- [Submitted comments to ED](#) on the implementation of Title IV part B (21st CCLC)
- Submitted to ED comments on [Title I](#)
- Produced a [summary of opportunities for afterschool in ESSA](#)
- Additional Webinars: [Sign up here](#) to learn more.

Learn more about [your state's plans for implementation](#) on the Collaborative for Student Success Website and find [your state ESSA webpage](#) through the National PTA

U.S. Department of Education:

U.S. Department of Education provides background information about what ESSA is, how it is different from No Child Left Behind, and updates on how it will be implemented nationally.

Coalition for Community Schools ESSA Resources:

Provides resources and tips on how stakeholders can engage with states about ESSA, as well as other partner resources to learn more about ESSA.

Get ESSA Right:

Provides information from the National Education Association about ESSA implementation at the federal and state level. Also includes resources specifically for communities, a state map with contact information for each state's Education Association, and general ESSA updates.

Ed Reform Now:

Breaks down information and provides news updates on what is happening with ESSA state-by-state.

Council of Chief State School Officers Guide:

Provides a Guide on Stakeholder Outreach document, breakdowns of various ESSA components, and some individual state plans and comments.

Questions PTA Advocates should ask about ESSA Implementation:

Provides ideas for important guiding questions when speaking with ESSA leaders in your state, as well as a link on the last page to find your state's ESSA website.

National Association for Family, School and Community Engagement:

A quick summary of what ESSA asks parents and families to do to engage in ESSA implementation.