



The District's Dime

Going Beyond the Budget Book

The DC Fiscal Policy Institute blog
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What Does the New ESSA Law Mean for How We Measure Progress in DC Schools?

By Soumya Bhat

DC residents have an important chance to weigh in this week on new efforts to measure the quality of our schools, as well as new strategies for improving lower-performing schools. The public is invited to learn about the District's new proposals for school accountability and to offer input at [community meetings](#) being held throughout the city this week.

Congress recently adopted the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to replace the No Child Left Behind Act that has governed federal education policy since 2002. Rather than a one-size-fits-all federal approach, this new legislation allows DC and the states flexibility in measuring how well their schools are educating students, as well as in developing strategies to improve schools that do not meet those standards. States will also receive dedicated funding to identify and intervene for the lowest performing schools (bottom 5 percent).

The DC State Board of Education (SBOE) and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) are currently developing a new locally-driven accountability system and will submit a plan to the U.S. Department of Education next spring. ESSA does not go into effect until the 2017-18 school year.

This week, the State Board of Education is holding a series of meetings across the city (see dates below) so that members of the community can learn more about the ESSA changes and offer input on what should or should not be included in the new accountability plan. For example, new measures should recognize when schools show academic progress, even if this is not reflected in overall proficiency rates, and test score data could be broken out further to better track the progress of low-income students.

If you are not able to attend a community meeting, the SBOE is also collecting feedback through this [online survey](#). For more information, see <http://sboe.dc.gov/page/essa-updates>.

Date	Time	Location	Ward
Thurs. June 2	5:30-6:30pm	Petworth Library	Ward 4
Sat. June 4	1:00-2:00	Columbia Heights Education Campus	Ward 1
Sat. June 4	4:00-5:00pm	Capitol View Library	Ward 7
Mon., June 6	6:00-7:00pm	Turkey Thicket Recreation Center	Ward 5
Wed., June 8	7:00-8:00pm	Tenley-Friendship Library	Ward 3
Mon. June 13	6:00-7:00pm	MLK Memorial Library	Ward 2

Thurs., June 16	6:30-7:30pm	Anacostia Library	Ward 8
Tues. June 21	6:30-7:30pm	Capitol Hill Montessori @Logan	Ward 6