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Update on Changes to School Accountability System

LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S OFFICE

Presented to:
Senate Education Committee
Hon. Benjamin Allen, Chair
Assembly Education Committee
Hon. Patrick O'Donnell, Chair





State Accountability System Adopted in 2013



Eight State Priority Areas

- Statute specifies eight priority areas for districts: (1) student achievement, (2) student engagement, (3) other student outcomes, (4) course access, (5) school climate, (6) basic services, (7) implementation of state standards, and (8) parent engagement.



Associated Performance Measures

- Statute specifies certain performance measures linked to the eight priority areas.



Annual Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs)

- Districts must set goals and specify actions they will take to improve in the eight state priority areas. Goals are set based upon the performance measures.
- In developing LCAPs, districts must seek feedback from school employees, students, and parents.
- District LCAPs must be approved by county offices of education (COEs).



Evaluation Rubrics Adopted in September 2016



2013 Legislation Requires State Board of Education (SBE) to Adopt Evaluation Rubrics

- Intended to assess performance of school districts using the performance measures specified in law.
- Districts to use rubrics as a self-assessment tool.
- COEs to use rubrics to identify districts that need assistance.



State Performance Indicators for Areas Where Statewide Data Is Available

- Encompasses most of the eight state priority areas, including student achievement (academic indicator and English learner indicator), student engagement (graduation and chronic absence rates), school climate (suspension rates), and course access (college/career indicator).
- Performance measured for each district, school, and numerically significant student subgroup.
- Performance assessed based on a combination of current performance and improvement over time.
- Uses five color categories to classify performance: red (lowest), orange, yellow, green, and blue (highest).



Local Performance Indicators for Areas Where No Statewide Data Is Available

- Districts develop their own local measures for basic services, implementation of state standards, parent engagement, and school climate.
- Districts report progress on each indicator using a self-assessment tool. Performance standard can be “met,” “not met,” or “not met for more than two years.” Districts are considered meeting standard if they properly report progress.



Evaluation Rubrics Adopted in September 2016

(Continued)



Performance on Indicators Used to Determine if Support Needed

- Districts generally to receive assistance if any student subgroup is in lowest performance category for two or more priority areas. “Red” category used for state indicators and “not met for more than two years” used for local indicators.
- Districts to receive more intensive intervention if three or more student subgroups are in lowest performance category for two or more priority areas in three out of four consecutive years.



California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (Collaborative)

New Statewide Agency to Provide Advice and Assistance in Improving Student Outcomes

- Intended to contract with experts in improving outcomes for students. Can provide assistance to districts needing intensive intervention.
- Governed by a five-member board appointed by the Legislature and Governor.

Provides Training and Support to Districts

- State provided \$10 million one-time funding in 2013-14 budget to establish Collaborative and fund its initial operations. Collaborative hired Executive Director and core group of staff. From 2013-14 through 2015-16, Collaborative spent a total of \$4.4 million.
- The 2016-17 budget included \$29.6 million—\$5.6 million carry over from the initial appropriation and an additional \$24 million—for Collaborative to (1) provide statewide training on how to use the evaluation rubrics (at least \$20 million) and (2) create a pilot program to assist school districts in improving student outcomes (up to \$9.6 million).



Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Enacted in December 2015



No Uniform Federal Accountability Model

- States develop own systems, but they must receive approval from federal government.



Required Components of a State Accountability System

- At a minimum, system must measure academic achievement, four-year graduation rates (for high schools), academic growth (for elementary and middle schools), progress in proficiency of English learners, and additional indicator of school quality (such as school climate).



Two Levels of Support for Schools

- Targeted support for schools in which any student subgroup is persistently underperforming, with increasing state involvement if improvement does not occur moving forward.
- Comprehensive support for the lowest 5 percent of schools, high schools graduating less than two-thirds of their students, and schools in which any student subgroup scores low enough to be in the lowest 5 percent of schools.



State Determines Consequences for Schools That Do Not Improve

- States must take more rigorous action within four years if a school does not improve. Specific actions not specified in federal law.



Implementation of State ESSA Plan to Date



Uncertainty Regarding Federal Regulations Issued in November 2016

- Congress has delayed implementation and is considering a repeal of ESSA regulations. If repealed, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) would be prohibited from issuing the same, or substantially similar, regulations in the future unless Congress provides explicit authority.



SBE Intends to Submit ESSA Plan in September 2017

- Final regulations gave states the option to submit plans in either April 2017 or September 2017. In a letter to chief state school officers dated February 10, the Secretary of Education specified USED intends to keep existing deadlines. The SBE intends to submit plan in September 2017.



Major Spending on New Accountability System



To Date, State Has Used One-Time Funds to Develop and Implement New System

- \$2 million (2013-14) for SBE to develop LCAP template, spending regulations, and evaluation rubrics.
- \$40 million (2014-15) for COEs to assist school districts in developing their LCAPs.
- \$34 million (2013-14 and 2016-17 combined) for the Collaborative to hire core staff, conduct statewide training on evaluation rubrics, and develop pilot programs with school districts.



State Must Use Portion of Ongoing Federal Funding Beginning 2018-19

- State required to use 7 percent of annual Title I funding (about \$140 million) for schools in need of support.



Issues for Legislative Consideration



Providing Support for Districts and Schools

- How will COEs, the Collaborative, and other entities provide assistance to identified school districts and schools?
- How would such support be coordinated to meet the requirements of both state and federal law?



Funding Support for Districts and Schools

- What is the cost to provide targeted or comprehensive support to identified districts and schools?
- How will the state pool state and federal funds to provide this support?



Long-Term Role and Funding for Collaborative

- What are the long-term expectations for the agency's mission?
- How much funding is required to fulfill the agency's mission?