Every Student Succeeds Act
Revised Consolidated State Plan Template

Today, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) released a revised consolidated State plan template to support States in meeting the requirements for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The Department worked to ensure that the revised template is structured to promote innovation, flexibility, transparency, and accountability and to reduce burden, while maintaining essential protections for all students.

Consistent with section 8302(b)(1) of ESEA, as amended by ESSA, the Department collaborated with State educational agencies (SEAs), as well as other State and local stakeholders, to develop the revised template. The revised template includes only those descriptions and information that the Secretary has determined are absolutely necessary for the Department's full consideration of each State's consolidated plan.

On March 9, 2017, pursuant to the Congressional Review Act (CRA) (5 U.S.C. §§ 801-808), Congress approved a joint resolution repealing the Department's regulations, meaning that the Department's regulations related to the consolidated State plan, statewide accountability systems, and data reporting would have no force and effect. The President is expected to sign the Congressional resolution of disapproval shortly. As a result, the Department would be unable to collect information using the previous consolidated State plan template that was associated with the regulations.

The Revised Template

When considering which descriptions and information were absolutely necessary for inclusion in a consolidated State plan, the Department focused its review on the State plan requirements in statute for each of the ESEA programs included in the consolidated State plan.

The revised template is organized by the grant programs an SEA may choose to include in its consolidated State plan, rather than overarching topic areas across programs (as reflected in the previous template). Therefore, it may appear as if whole sections, such as performance management, have been removed from the revised template. Where the Department determined that the ESEA, as amended by ESSA, deems certain descriptions and information as absolutely necessary for the Department's full consideration of a consolidated State plan, such descriptions and information are required under specific programs. For example, the revised template includes a number of program-specific requirements related to SEA support and use of data for continuous improvement, which are generally included in an organization's performance management system.

In comparison to the prior template, there has been a significant reduction in the requirements related to supporting excellent educators because the regulations that were repealed by Congress required specific data and information regarding how low-income and minority students in Title I, Part A schools are not served at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, and inexperienced teachers. Because each SEA must only provide the statutory description based on school level data, many of the additional data requirements, are not required, including the requirements to calculate, report, and address differences in the educator equity rates at the student-level.

Finally, there are three new requirements in the revised template: 1) how each SEA will assist eligible entities in meeting long-term goals for English language proficiency and challenging State academic standards; 2) how each SEA will award subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs) under the new Student Support and Academic Enrichment program in Title IV, Part A of the ESEA; and 3) how youth will receive assistance from counselors to advise and prepare for college under the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youths program.
It is important to note that, although the content of the revised template has been limited to what is absolutely necessary for the Department to fully consider a consolidated State plan, each SEA is responsible for implementing and abiding by all of the SEA requirements of the ESEA and all applicable Federal laws, including applicable civil rights laws.

Plan Submission

An SEA may submit a consolidated State plan using either the revised template provided by the Department on March 13, 2017 or an alternative template that addresses each requirement identified in the revised template and developed with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). If an SEA does not use the revised template provided by the Department, it must submit a table of contents or guide that indicates where the SEA addressed each requirement in its consolidated State plan. To help ensure timely submissions, the National Governors Association will be working closely with Governors, CCSSO and Chief State School Officers to support the plan submission process.

An SEA must submit its consolidated State plan or individual program State plans by either **April 3, 2017**, or **September 18, 2017**. The Department will have a spring and summer peer review window (following each submission deadline). Further information on the "spring 2017 peer review window" are discussed more fully below.

For any program not included in a consolidated State plan, the SEA must submit an individual program State plan that meets the statutory and regulatory requirements of each respective program. The Department will not provide a template for individual program State plans.

Consultation

The Department encourages timely and meaningful consultations by SEAs with a variety of stakeholders consistent with the individual State plan consultation requirements for each program. This type of engagement will help an SEA submit a high-quality consolidated State plan that is designed to ensure that schools, LEAs, and the SEA meet the needs of all students in the State.

It is important to note that under section 8540 of the ESEA, each SEA must consult in a timely and meaningful manner with the Governor (or appropriate officials from the Governor's office), including during the development and prior to submission of its consolidated State plan to the Department. Since the Department has issued a revised consolidated State plan template an SEA may not rely on solely on the consultation with the Governor on the previous consolidated State plan template to meet the above requirement. Each Governor must have 30 days to sign the consolidated State plan prior to the SEA submitting its plan to the Department. If the Governor has not signed the plan within 30 days of delivery by the SEA to the Governor, the SEA may submit the plan to the Secretary without such signature.

For an SEA's consolidated State plan to be considered during the spring peer review window, the Department expects that on April 3, 2017 an SEA will either submit a completed consolidated State plan with the Governor's signature or an indication that the Governor has waived his or her review.

The Department recognizes, however, that in some States the Governor may not have time to complete his or her full 30-day review by April 3, 2017. Therefore, to be considered during the spring peer review window a SEA, in this case, must submit its plan to the Governor for review by at least April 3, 2017 and subsequently submit its plan to the Department no later than the end of the 30 day review period or May 3, 2017, whichever is earlier. In this case, the SEA should notify the Deputy Director of the Office of State Support, Roberta Miceli at Roberta.Miceli@ed.gov that the State would like to be considered for the April peer review window and include the date on which the SEA provided its consolidated State plan to the Governor for review.

Assurances and Allocation of Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 ESEA Formula Grant Funds

The Department is operating under a continuing resolution. When the Department receives a final FY 2017 budget, we will take steps to ensure that SEAs receive FY 2017 ESEA formula grant funds no later than July 1, 2017. To help ensure timely allocations, for the programs included in a consolidated State plan, each SEA must submit a set of assurances to the Department. In the near future, the Department will publish an information collection request that details these assurances; this collection will be available by no later than June 2017. The Department's decision to award funds based on an SEA's submission of a set of assurances is consistent with the Department's transition authority under section 4(b) of the ESSA and applies

only to FY 2017 funds. An SEA's receipt of FY 2017 funds is not contingent upon the Department's approval of its consolidated or individual State plans.

Next Steps

Within the coming weeks, the Department will post the State plan peer review criteria, which will replace the existing State plan peer review guidance and which SEAs may find helpful to review as they finalize their plans. In addition, the Department will hold two webinars to help SEAs understand the descriptions and information that must be included in each consolidated State plan and the process for submitting plans on either April 3, 2017, or September 18, 2017.

The first webinar, which will be held on March 15, 2017, will review the consolidated State plan requirements and submission procedures. The second webinar, which will be held on March 22, 2017, will review the consolidated State plan peer review process.