

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Every Student Succeeds Act is a long, complex piece of federal legislation. This FAQ will help to sort through the most common questions about how the law affects you, your students, and your school.

❖ **Do students still have to take the Smarter Balanced Assessment?**

Yes. ESSA maintains testing in reading/language arts and math in grades 3-8 and once in high school. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) has not made any decisions about discontinuing the use of the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

❖ **Will Oregon still use student test scores from the Smarter Balanced Assessment in educator evaluations?**

No. [ODE issued guidance on April 25, 2016](#) stating that Oregon will not require the use of Student Growth Percentiles, a measure of student growth on standardized tests, for evaluations. Educators in tested and non-tested grades and subjects can use other measures of student learning and growth for their 2015-16 Student Learning and Growth Goals.

❖ **Do educators still have to meet the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) requirements under No Child Left Behind (NCLB)?**

School districts will have to report whether or not educators met HQT in 2015-16, but districts do not have to develop plans for how those educators will meet those requirements. Starting in 2016-17, educators must meet state licensure and certification requirements. In Oregon, [the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, TSPC](#), is the licensing agency for all educators.

❖ **What about special education teachers? Do they still have to meet the HQT requirements?**

No. Special education teachers, like other educators, must meet state licensure and certification requirements. [In Oregon](#), this means they must have obtained full certification as a special education teacher or passed the State Special Education Teacher Licensing Examination, and hold a license to teach in the state as a special education teacher.

❖ **I'm a paraeducator in a Title I school. Will the requirements for my job go away?**

No. ESSA kept in place the highly qualified requirements for paraeducators. [The requirements are](#): a high school diploma and either two years of college, an associate degree or higher, or passing a state or local exam.



OPPORTUNITY + ACTION

Every Student Succeeds Act

- ❖ **My school is a priority or focus school. Will it stay that way?**

Yes, through the 2016-17 school year. [Oregon](#) will redesignate schools in the 2017-18 school year using the new state accountability system, which is currently in development. Oregon chose to freeze all school designations during the transition from NCLB to
- ❖ **My school has a School Improvement Grant. Will we lose that money?**

No. Schools were receiving School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds in 2015-16 will continue receive money in 2016-17. Starting in 2017-18, federal SIGs will go away. States will receive the funds instead and states must increase the amount of money they set aside for school improvement, from 4% to 7%.
- ❖ **When does ESSA go into effect?**

ESSA goes into full effect in the 2017-18 school year. The 2016-17 school year is a transition year. During that year, all states will submit their Title I plans to the U.S. Department of Education. Oregon may also revise rules, statutes and legislation related to ESSA. Oregon's NCLB waiver becomes null and void on Aug. 1, 2016. The U.S. Department of Education has put out [guidance on the transition](#) from NCLB to ESSA.
- ❖ **What is Oregon's state plan?**

[ESSA doesn't go into effect immediately](#). The [Oregon Department of Education](#) is working on a state plan that it will release in the 2016-17 school year for public input. ODE is collecting input from a variety of Oregonians including at [community forums](#) with students, families, and others across the state; four [workgroups](#) made up of teachers, principals, community members, and others; and an [advisory committee](#).
- ❖ **How can I learn more?**

Visit the [OEA ESSA webpage](#) to find a variety of shareable resources, to sign up for the ESSA newsletter, and a [blog](#) exploring various components of ESSA. You can also visit ODE's website for information and to give input on your vision for the state plan. You can also start talking with teachers and school leaders in your community about what you believe is important in education and what you believe leads to [school quality and student success](#).