

Accountability Requirements for Subgroups of Students

As the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is implemented, the Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation (CSAI) has received queries regarding accountability requirements, particularly in regard to reporting data for subgroups of students. CSAI recently sought to answer this latter question by reviewing the ESSA and Final Regulations. Additionally, CSAI reviewed states' draft plans to get a sense of the subgroups of students that states are considering or will include for accountability reporting purposes. This CSAI Update provides the results of that review.

According to Section 1111(c)(2) of ESSA, a "subgroup of students" in statewide accountability includes

- ◆ students from major racial and ethnic groups;
- ◆ economically disadvantaged students;
- ◆ children with disabilities; and
- ◆ English learners.

States will be required to continue to report and disaggregate data for these groups of students.

Additionally, under ESSA, states will also be required to report information for students

- ◆ who are homeless;
- ◆ who are in foster care; and
- ◆ whose parent(s) serve(s) in the Armed Forces or National Guard.

Under Section 1111(h) of ESSA, each state report card shall include, at a minimum, the requirements listed in Table 1.

Table 1. State Report Card Requirements

REQUIREMENTS	INFORMATION ABOUT SUBGROUP OF STUDENTS (IF APPLICABLE)
A clear and concise description of the state's accountability system	—
Achievement on state academic assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students group • Students from major racial and ethnic groups • Economically disadvantaged students • Children with disabilities • English learners • Students with homeless status • Children in foster care • Students with a parent who is a member of the Armed Forces or National Guard¹

¹ According to the Final Regulations, a parent who is a member of the Armed Forces on active duty includes a parent on full-time National Guard duty (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p. 212).

REQUIREMENTS	INFORMATION ABOUT SUBGROUP OF STUDENTS (IF APPLICABLE)
Academic progress (performance on other academic indicator for public elementary and secondary schools that are not high schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students group • Students from major racial and ethnic groups • Economically disadvantaged students • Children with disabilities • English learners • Students with homeless status • Children in foster care
Adjusted cohort graduation rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students group • Students from major racial and ethnic groups • Economically disadvantaged students • Children with disabilities • English learners • Students with homeless status • Children in foster care
Number and percentage of English learners achieving English language proficiency	—
Performance on school quality or student success indicator(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students group • Students from major racial and ethnic groups • Economically disadvantaged students • Children with disabilities • English learners
Progress toward meeting state-designed long-term goals and progress against state measurements of interim goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students group • Students from major racial and ethnic groups • Economically disadvantaged students • Children with disabilities • English learners
Percentage of students assessed and not assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students group • Students from major racial and ethnic groups • Economically disadvantaged students • Children with disabilities • English learners
Information about measures of school quality, climate, and safety, and the number and percentage of students enrolled in preschool programs and accelerated coursework	—
Professional qualifications of teachers	—
Per-pupil expenditures of federal, state, and local funds	—

REQUIREMENTS	INFORMATION ABOUT SUBGROUP OF STUDENTS (IF APPLICABLE)
Number and percentages of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who take an alternate assessment, by grade and subject	—
Results on NAEP reading and mathematics assessments in grades 4 and 8	—
Cohort rate at which students who graduate from high school enroll (for the first time) in postsecondary education in/outside the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students group • Students from major racial and ethnic groups • Economically disadvantaged students • Children with disabilities • English learners
Any additional information that the state believes will best provide parents, students, and the public with information regarding the progress of each of the state's public elementary and secondary schools (e.g., the number and percentages of students attaining career and technical proficiencies)	

As shown in Table 1, for each appropriate requirement, student-level data must be disaggregated by subgroup: All students group, all major racial and ethnic groups, economically disadvantaged students, children with disabilities, English learners, students with homeless status, children in foster care, and students with a parent in the Armed Forces or National Guard.

Per the Final Regulations (U.S. Department of Education, 2016), there were two subgroup-related comments/suggestions:

1. The proposed regulations should be clarified to reflect that each subgroup of students should not include duplicated students, and
2. The use of combined subgroups could be used in place of individual subgroups to help address the issue of including students in multiple subgroups.

According to the Final Regulations, some students may belong to or be identified by more than one subgroup under ESSA (e.g., an English learner who is also a student with a disability): “this duplication is essential to ensure that statewide accountability systems account for and help address what often are the multiple needs of individual students for different types of academic and non-academic support. Reducing such duplication through the use of a combined subgroup could mask underperformance by individual subgroups of students and thus inhibit the provision of needed services and supports for such students” (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p. 72).

Note that states are “not required to report disaggregated data for information required under section 111(h) of [ESSA] if the number of students in the subgroup is insufficient to yield statistically sound and reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student” (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p. 351).

In reviewing states’ draft plans, CSAI found that of the 13 states with publicly available draft plans, six states (Delaware, Idaho, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Washington) made available information about the subgroups that will be included in their state accountability system. Table 2 shows the subgroups included by each state, and includes links to sources of information.

Table 2. State Accountability System Subgroups as Specified in States’ Draft Consolidated Plans

STATE	INFORMATION ABOUT SUBGROUPS	SOURCE
Delaware	<p>Subgroups in the Delaware accountability system include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students group • American Indian • African American • White • Hawaiian/Pacific Islander • Asian • Hispanic • Multiracial • Students with disabilities • English learner • Low socioeconomic status • Homeless status • Foster care status • Military dependent 	<p>http://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib09/DE01922744/Centricity/Domain/425/ESSA%20State%20Plan%20Draft.pdf</p>
Idaho	<p>Required historically underperforming subgroups are included in both federal reporting and identification of comprehensive and targeted schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economically disadvantaged students (free/reduced price lunch status) • English learners • Minority students (who are not white) • Students with disabilities 	<p>http://www.sde.idaho.gov/topics/consolidated-plan/files/11-16-16-Idaho-Consolidated-State-Plan.pdf</p>
North Carolina	<p>North Carolina disaggregates data by the required student subgroups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Indian • Asian • Black • Hispanic • Two or more races • White • Economically disadvantaged • Students with disabilities • English learners • Academically gifted (not required, but data are also reported for this group) <p>Note that in the draft state plan, there is a placeholder for information about subgroups that will be used in the state accountability system (p. 26).</p>	<p>http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/succeeds/draft-state-plan.pdf</p>

STATE	INFORMATION ABOUT SUBGROUPS	SOURCE
South Carolina	<p>Subgroups in the South Carolina accountability system include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students group • Economically disadvantaged • Students with disabilities • African American • Hispanic • English language learners • Asian/Pacific Islander • Migrant • Students in foster care • Military-connected • Gifted and talented • Homeless status 	<p>http://ed.sc.gov/newsroom/every-student-succeeds-act-essa/draft-consolidated-state-plan/</p>
Tennessee	<p>Subgroups in the Tennessee accountability system include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students group • Economically disadvantaged • Children with disabilities • English learners • African American • American Indian or Alaska Native • Asian • Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander • Hispanic or Latino • White <p>“Tennessee will hold districts and schools accountable for four primary subgroups: economically disadvantaged (ED), students with disabilities (SWD), English learners (EL), and Black/Hispanic/Native American (BHN). Further, in instances when schools do not meet the threshold n-count for any one of the four aforementioned subgroups, they will be accountable for student performance in that subgroup through the “super subgroup”, which will include any student who is a member of any one of the four focus subgroups—ED, SWD, EL, and BHN” (p. 63).</p> <p>“For transparency purposes, Tennessee will be reporting at the level of individual racial and ethnic groups, as well as lowering n-count to 10 for the purposes of reporting. The state report card will include the progress of all subgroups, including each racial/ethnic subgroup, and data will be disaggregated including progress against subgroup [annual measurable objective] AMO targets” (p. 63).</p>	<p>https://tn.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/ESSA_Draft_Plan_Full.pdf</p>

STATE	INFORMATION ABOUT SUBGROUPS	SOURCE
Washington	<p>The student-level data include five student groups used in Washington for federal accountability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students • Free and reduced price lunch status • Special education program • English learner • Minority (aggregated number of race/ethnicity subgroups except for white) <p>Race/ethnicity is further broken down by subgroup:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White • Hispanic/Latino • Asian • Black/African American • American Indian/Alaska Native • Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander • Two or More Races 	<p>http://www.k12.wa.us/ESEA/ESSA/pubdocs/WashingtonESSA-DraftConsolidatedPlan.pdf</p>

References

Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, 20 U.S.C. § 1111 (2015).

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2016). Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act—Accountability and state plans final regulations. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essaaccountstplans1129.pdf>.



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