



# NEWS

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DR. DIANNA R. WENTZELL, COMMISSIONER

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## **Connecticut's Plan for Every Student Succeeds Act Receives Federal Approval**

(HARTFORD, CT) – Commissioner of Education Dianna R. Wentzell announced the U.S. Department of Education (USED) today confirmed that it has accepted Connecticut's plan to meet the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the nation's school accountability law, which replaced the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

"We are extremely proud of receiving final acceptance of our state plan and believe that every student in Connecticut can achieve at high levels, regardless of family wealth, race, gender, disability, English language proficiency, or zip code," said Governor Dannel P. Malloy. "Connecticut's ESSA plan reaffirms our commitment to ensuring that every child has access to an equitable, high-quality education that opens the door to a brighter future. When we set high standards and expect high levels of achievement, the students across our state are rising to the challenge."

"The acceptance of our plan by the USED is a great achievement for our state," said Commissioner Dianna R. Wentzell. "We remain committed to the work of ensuring that all Connecticut students have access to a high-quality education that prepares them for success in college, career, and life, and we are confident that our ESSA plan provides a blueprint to help us do just that."

Connecticut originally submitted its plan to USED in April. A four-member USED panel reviewed it and sent it back with clarifying questions and helpful feedback. The CSDE addressed the reviewers' comments, making clarifications and adjustments where necessary. The plan was resubmitted in July.

"Today's announcement is a victory for the children of Connecticut and validates the months of stakeholder engagement and hard work our Department did to make this happen," said Deputy Commissioner of Education Ellen Cohn, who led the Department's efforts to create the plan. "Our ESSA plan sets a course for how we will educate students for many years to come and the USED's thoughtful assistance during this process was greatly appreciated."

Connecticut's ESSA plan is based on strong stakeholder input over a period of several years. It incorporates a holistic Next Generation Accountability System that uses a broad set of 12 indicators to help tell the story of how well a school is preparing its students for success in college, careers and life. The new system moves beyond test scores and graduation rates and instead provides a more holistic, multifactor perspective of district and school performance and incorporates student growth over time.

The plan also includes different levels of interventions and supports for districts and schools that are based on the results from the accountability system. It is designed to help recruit, prepare, induct, evaluate, support, and advance a strong and diverse educator workforce.

Connecticut's ESSA plan is posted on the SDE's [ESSA webpage](#), along with resources used to develop the plan.

The plan was developed following an extensive and comprehensive process consisting of focus groups, an online survey, a Commissioner's Equity and Excellence Tour last fall, and a final collection of public comment to the draft plan in February. Over 450 parents, teachers, students, and other education stakeholders participated in the focus groups and the survey garnered nearly 7,000 responses.

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