

Comparison of Federal and State Accountability System Requirements

The Kentucky Department of Education is responsible for implementing the statewide school accountability system. Every component of Kentucky's accountability system is mandated by federal or state law.

Federal Requirements

[The Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#) requires that states have robust, multi-indicator statewide accountability systems for all public schools. The indicators must be the same for all schools and include valid, reliable, and comparable measures disaggregated by student demographic groups.

Indicator weights are established by the state; however, academic indicators must receive "much greater weight" overall than non-academic indicators.

States must meaningfully differentiate schools by providing a summative determination from among at least three distinct, understandable categories and provide support to the identified lowest-performing schools. Kentucky uses the federally defined classifications of Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI).

States must also meaningfully engage parents and other stakeholders by providing access to information about how schools are doing through data dashboards (school report cards) that include full accountability information.

Kentucky Requirements

[Senate Bill 158 \(2020\)](#) made significant changes to Kentucky's accountability system. The bill includes an exclusive list of state indicators:

1. Student assessment results;
2. Progress toward achieving English proficiency by limited English proficiency students;
3. Quality of school climate and safety;
4. High school graduation rates;
5. Postsecondary readiness for each high school student
6. Any other factor mandated by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95, or its successor.

Each state indicator must be evaluated for Status (current year performance) and Change (current year compared to prior year). For each state indicator, there are five status levels ranging from very high to very low and five change levels ranging from increased significantly to declined significantly. Status and change combine to provide a color-coded performance level for each state indicator that is displayed on a dashboard.

Each school receives an overall performance rating that aggregates all available data for the state indicators. A school's overall performance rating is classified into one of five colors (blue, green, yellow, orange, red) on the basis of cut scores.

Federal classifications (CSI/ATSI/TSI) are assigned to the bottom 5% of schools, as determined by the overall performance rating index score, independent of a school’s color designation. ATSI and TSI focus on performance of student groups using the same criteria for CSI.

Elementary and Middle Schools

| ESSA Indicator Requirements | Kentucky Indicator Requirements |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Academic Achievement | ❖ State Assessment Results in Reading and Mathematics (Status only) |
| Other Academic Indicator | ❖ State Assessment Results in Reading and Mathematics (Change only) ** |
| English Language Proficiency | ❖ English Learner Progress |
| School Quality or Student Success | ❖ Quality of School Climate and Safety Survey ❖ State Assessment Results in Science, Social Studies, and Writing |

High Schools

| ESSA Indicator Requirements | Kentucky Indicator Requirements |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Academic Achievement | ❖ State Assessment Results in Reading and Mathematics |
| English Language Proficiency | ❖ English Learner Progress |
| School Quality or Student Success | ❖ Quality of School Climate and Safety Survey ❖ State Assessment Results in Science, Social Studies, and Writing ❖ Postsecondary Readiness ❖ Graduation Rate (Change only) ** |
| Graduation Rate | ❖ Graduation Rate (Status only) * |

**Independent of overall performance, high schools with a four-year graduation rate below 80% are identified as CSI.*

***The evaluation of Status and Change for each indicator, as required by Kentucky legislation, presents challenges in alignment to ESSA indicator categories. Therefore, within ESSA Indicators, “Change” must be separated from current year performance (Status) for reading and mathematics performance in elementary and middle school and for graduation rate in high school.*

Summary

All ESSA-required components must be included in Kentucky’s accountability system so that federally funded programs are not jeopardized. Kentucky legislation includes additional components beyond the requirements of ESSA.

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