



Engage for Education Equity: A Toolkit for School Communities on the Every Student Succeeds Act

An Overview

What is the Toolkit?

The Dignity in Schools Campaign (DSC), Partners for Each and Every Child, a project of the Opportunity Institute, and the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. developed this Toolkit to serve as a call to action and to empower parents, families, care-givers, students, and other community members with the information and tools they need to be actively involved in improving their schools under the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA).

Why ESSA?

ESSA is the United States' national law for public education from pre-K through grade 12, and the decisions states have made under the law significantly affect schools across the country. It is critical that we all play a key role in the local decision-making processes around ESSA in order to move toward greater equity and justice for our children — together.

Making the Toolkit

This Toolkit was created by and for families, students, organizers, school board members, teachers, and other school community members from across the United States, with input and resources from national and state-based advocates. Starting in the summer of 2017, this Toolkit was imagined, written, edited, and published with support from over 200 community members who came from towns and cities across the United States to more than 20 calls, meetings, and events; wrote in feedback online; and called in with ideas and edits.

Using the Toolkit

This Toolkit is designed to support **organizers and leaders** as they work with students, families, and community members on decisions around ESSA. We recommend that you begin with the **Organizer's Packet** to learn more about ESSA and opportunities to improve schools, and then think about attending district- or school-led events or hosting a meeting or event of your own.



DIGNITY IN SCHOOLS



What is in the Toolkit?

The Toolkit contains information, worksheets, and meeting materials to support you as you engage with others in your community around school improvement under ESSA. We recommend that you start with the Organizer's Packet, and then flip through to the other tools, depending on what you are most interested in.

Toolkit Resources Include:

Worksheets:

- Equity & ESSA: The Organizer's Packet
- Students: Take Action on ESSA!
- Parents & Families: Get Involved in ESSA!
- Worksheet: What Does an Engaged School Community Look Like?

Fact Sheets:

- School Improvement Under ESSA
- Needs Assessments
- School Report Cards
- Opportunities to Promote A Positive School Climate in ESSA
- Opportunities to Promote Early Learning in ESSA
- What Funds are Available Through ESSA?

Meaningful Engagement In Action:

- New York City's Young Women's Initiative
- Dayton Ohio Public Schools' Culturally Relevant Curriculum
- Boston's Student Advisory Council

Organizing Tools:

- Who Affects Policy in Education?
- How to Help Your Administrators Better Engage with You
- Improve Your School: What to Advocate for
- Improve Your School: Where to "Write it Down"
- Template: Letter to Decision-Makers
- ESSA's Local Engagement Requirements

Meeting Materials:

- How to Make Your Meetings Accessible
- Sample Meeting Norms
- Sample Meeting Exit Survey
- Sample Meeting Agendas (3)

Glossary



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