

PROCESS AND PROTEST

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY -

Thoughtful and ongoing dialogue between and among actors at a federal, state, and local level is vitally important for educational equity and excellence. **PROCESS** and **PROTEST** are closely, and beneficially, related: good approaches to stakeholder engagement actively enable and incorporate the voicing of differences of opinion. The opportunity to meaningfully voice and promptly address disagreements can build trust among groups, better inform policy decisions, and create a bipartisan base of support for sustained efforts to advance excellence and equity.



By “stakeholder engagement,” we mean the close collaboration of federal, state, and local groups to help our most vulnerable students and schools.

HAVE STATE ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS UNDER ESSA BEEN MEANINGFUL?

THE REVIEW

WHAT WE REVIEWED

Process and Protest analyzes the consolidated ESSA state plans submitted to US ED for the April/May 2017 for SEA efforts to establish systems for ongoing stakeholder engagement.

WHAT WE FOUND

We looked at each state’s consolidated ESSA plan, as well as accompanying materials such as appendices and online resources. Where possible, we conducted informational interviews with state and local officials and advocates.

There is currently a great deal of variation among states as to how they plan to implement ESSA’s requirements for stakeholder engagement. A number of states have demonstrated **promising practices** to support ongoing engagement with communities at the statewide and local levels. All states have some room for improvement.

WHY IS ENGAGEMENT ESSENTIAL FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUITY?

The advancement of equity and excellence under ESSA depends on the ability of states, districts, and schools to build, strengthen, and sustain stakeholder engagement throughout planning, transition, and implementation. True transformation requires staffing and resources, long-term investment and accountability, and a strongly held commitment to an iterative process of collective inquiry and reflection. We hope that this report provides useful guidance for SEAs, LEAs, and advocates in supporting a comprehensive system and culture of engagement as a foundational part of decision-making and continuous improvement.

PROMISING PRACTICES IN THE STATES: PRIORITIZING EXCELLENCE & EQUITY

1. REACH THE UNREACHED, THE LEFT BEHIND, AND THE LEFT OUT

Prioritize outreach to underserved groups by determining whether voices are absent from the discussion and what can be done to support their inclusion.

PROMISING PRACTICES IN: [Connecticut](#) [Vermont](#) [Oregon](#)
[Maine](#)

2. SHOW YOUR WORK

Prioritize transparency in ongoing engagement efforts by ensuring all stakeholders know how and when to make their voices heard, and where to direct their feedback.

PROMISING PRACTICES IN: [New Jersey](#) [Colorado](#) [Illinois](#)

3. SHOW SOME GRIT

Assign specific staff and advisory committees to support stakeholder engagement going forward.

PROMISING PRACTICES IN: [Nevada](#) [Delaware](#) [Tennessee](#)

4. MAXIMIZE YOUR RESOURCES

Leverage external partners to amplify stakeholder engagement by using the resources and expertise of external groups to extend the capacity of SEAs and LEAs.

PROMISING PRACTICES IN: [Massachusetts](#) [Washington, D.C.](#)
[Michigan](#)

5. DOUBLE DOWN

Prioritize equity via separation of powers and parallel processes because separate stakeholder engagement efforts can identify issues of bipartisan interest.

PROMISING PRACTICES IN: [New Mexico](#) [Louisiana](#)

WHAT ELSE IS IN THE REPORT?



**CASE STUDY:
ILLINOIS**



OUR RUBRIC



**ADDITIONAL
RESOURCES**

WHAT COMES NEXT?

Partners *for* is collaborating with partners in several states to use the ESSA planning, transition, and implementation process to advance educational excellence and equity in a bipartisan way. Stay tuned for our upcoming *Meaningful Local Engagement Under ESSA: A Handbook for LEA and School Leaders*, a collaborative effort with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and many partners.

Partners *for*
Each and Every Child

a project of the:

 OPPORTUNITY
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